

DCMS



PANTHERS

DECATUR COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT
HANDBOOK 2021-2022

On behalf of the faculty and staff, I would like to welcome you to Decatur County Middle School. We are excited to begin the 2021-2022 "Adventure" with you. As with any "Adventure", there will be some obstacles that we will have to overcome. We can overcome these obstacles by working together. You are an important and valued person at Decatur County Middle School. Our goal through this "Adventure" is for you to grow more confident in your abilities - not just academically but also socially. Benjamin Franklin stated that "without continual growth and progress, such words as improvement, achievement, and success have no meaning." As we go through this "Adventure", you will need to know the expectations that are required of you. After you have read over the handbook, if you or your parents have any questions, please feel free to call Assistant Principal Matt Marshall or me. We ask that you and your parents sign the last page of the handbook and return it to your homeroom teacher.

Vision

At Decatur County Middle School, we want every student to feel welcomed, connected, and part of the DCMS Family.

Mission Statement

The mission of Decatur County Middle School is to enhance opportunities, unlock potential, and to inspire every student to grow in his/her academic abilities, and to prepare them to be successful high school students and good citizens.

Beliefs

At Decatur County Middle School we believe

- All students can and will learn
- As educators we are responsible to use all available resources along with our professional abilities to guide and to help young people develop their fullest potential: physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually.
- We must provide our students a safe environment and one that is filled with energy and enthusiasm for learning.
- We should provide opportunities for development of critical thinking, ethical and lawful behavior, responsible citizenship in a pluralistic society.
- Learning is a lifelong process and as educators we should help foster a love for learning in our students.
- When schools and committees are involved in children's learning at school and at home, schools work better and students learn more.

**Decatur County Schools
2021-2022
Calendar**

July 27 th -28 th , Aug. 2 nd	In-service Days for Teachers
July 29 th	Registration Day for Students
July 30 th	Administrative Day
August 3 rd	First Full Day of School
September 6 th	Labor Day Holiday
September 9 th	In-service Day 9:00-12:30; Parent Teacher Conference 2:00-6:00
September 10 th	Staff Development Day (No Students)
October 4 th -8 th	Fall Break
October 15 th	Report Card Day
November 22 nd -27 th	Thanksgiving Break
December 17 th	Last Day of 1 st Semester – Abbreviated (Buses run @ 9:00)
December 20 th -January 3 rd	Christmas Break
January 4 th	In-service Day for Teachers
January 7 th	Report Card Day
January 17 th	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
February 17 th	In-service Day 9:00-12:30; Parent Teacher Conference 2:00-6:00
February 18 th	Staff Development (No School for Students)
February 21 st	President's Day
March 11 th	Report Card Day
March 26	Teacher Inservice (No Students)
March 14 th -18 th	Spring Break
April 15 th	Good Friday
April 18 th	Staff Development Day (No Students)
May 26 th	Administrative Day (No students)
May 27 th	Last Day of School – Abbreviated Day and GRADUATION DAY

Teacher Assignments

Name	Grade	Subject	Room Number
Andrew Pirtle	5	Math	8
Leslie Starrrett	5	Math	7
Katie Vise	5	ELA	Vocational Building #35
Jacie Hayes	5	ELA	Vocational Building #33
Joel Jones	5	Science	Upstairs Vocational #34
Alan Wyatt	5	S.S.	Upstairs Vocational #34
Elaine Carrington	6	Math	10
Haley Harris	6	Math	9
Chasidee Puckett	6	ELA	14
Gina Pratt	6	ELA	12
Justin Kelley	6	Science	15
Mark Mathis	6	S.S.	16
Stephanie Walker	7	ELA	17
Kayla Tharp	7	ELA	19
Carol Lunsford	7	Science	21
Ammie Yarbro	7	S.S.	22
Liz Harden	7	Math	23
Jami Beasley	7	Math	24
Josh Sinclair	8	S.S.	6
Brad Dyer	8	Math	2
Charlotte Taylor	8	Math	3
Hayley Box	8	ELA	4
Donna White	8	Science	5
Emily Keeton	8	ELA	1
Veronica Shelton	5-8	SPED	20
Angie Mangrum	5-8	SPED	18
Ericca King	5-8	SPED	18
Keith Dickson	5-8	ISS/Alt.	
Tammy Marshall	5-8	Library	105
Dalton Cook	5-8	Health/P.E.	25
Greg Powers	5-8	Health/P.E.	27
Janet Pettigrew	5-8	Computer	104
Kendall Beecham	6-7	Band	26
Tina Smith	5-8	RTI Coordinator	105

Keith Walker – Principal
Matt Marshall – Assistant Principal
Amanda Salas – Counselor

Teacher Email Addresses

Name	Grade	Subject	Email Address
Andrew Pirtle	5	Math	andrew.pirtle@decaturschools.org
Leslie Starrett	5	Math	leslie.starrett@decaturschools.org
Katie Vise	5	ELA	katie.vise@decaturschools.org
Jacie Hayes	5	ELA	jaci.hayes@decaturschools.org
Joel Jones	5	ELA	joel.jones@decaturschools.org
Alan Wyatt	5	S.S.	alan.wyatt@decaturschools.org
Elaine Carrington	6	Math	elaine.carrington@decaturschools.org
Haley Harris	6	Math	brande.smith@decaturschools.org
Chasidee Puckett	6	ELA	chasidee.puckett@decaturschools.org
Gina Pratt	6	ELA	gina.pratt@decaturschools.org
Justin Kelley	6	Science	justin.kelley@decaturschools.org
Mark Mathis	6	S.S.	mark.mathis@decaturschools.org
Liz Harden	7	Math	elizabeth.harden@decaturschools.org
Jami Beasley	7	Math	jami.beasley@decaturschools.org
Stephanie Walker	7	ELA	stephanie.walker@decaturschools.org
Kayla Tharp	7	ELA	kayla.tharp@decaturschools.org
Carol Lunsford	7	Science	carol.lunsford@decaturschools.org
Ammie Yarbro	7	S.S.	ammie.yarbro@decaturschools.org
Brad Dyer	8	Math	brad.dyer@decaturschools.org
Charlotte Taylor	8	Math	charlotte.taylor@decaturschools.org
Emily Keeton	8	ELA	emily.keeton@decaturschools.org
Hayley Box	8	ELA	hayley.box@decaturschools.org
Donna White	8	Science	donna.white@decaturschools.org
Josh Sinclair	8	S.S.	josh.sinclair@decaturschools.org
Veronica Shelton	5-8	SPED	veronica.shelton@decaturschools.org
Ericca King	5-8	SPED	ericca.king@decaturschools.org
Angie Mangrum	5-8	SPED	angie.mangrum@decaturschools.org
Ruben Yarbro	5-8	Alt.	ruben.yarbro@decaturschools.org
Tammy Marshall	5-8	Library	tammy.marshall@decaturschools.org
Dalton Cook	5-8	P.E.	dalton.cook@decaturschools.org
Janet Pettigrew	5-8	Computer	janet.pettigrew@decaturschools.org
Greg Powers	5-8	P.E.	greg.powers@decaturschools.org
Kendall Beecham	6-7	Band	kendall.beecham@decaturschools.org
Quinn Frost	5-8	P.E	quinn.frost@decaturschools.org
Tina Smith	5-8	RTI	tina.amith@decaturschools.org
Amanda Salas		Counselor	amanda.salas@decaturschools.org
Matt Marshall		Asst. Principal.	matt.marshall@decaturschools.org
Keith Walker		Principal	keith.walker@decaturschools.org

Decatur County Middle School Dress Code

- 1. If jeans/dress slacks have holes, tears, patches, or frays (above the kneecap) leggings must be worn underneath the clothing. Pants must have loops for a belt.**
- 2. Jeans, dress slacks, dress shorts, skirts and dresses are acceptable. Shorts and skirts must be of the same material as jeans or slacks and be no shorter than (2) inches above the knee. Dresses must meet the requirements laid out for shirts. If leggings are worn, the sweater or dress must be no shorter than two inches above the knee. No sleeveless shirts unless they are a dollar bill wide.**
- 3. All jeans, slacks, and dress shorts will be worn at the waist line. Skirts will also be worn at the waistline. No straps or chains can hang from pants. No sweatpants or athletic shorts of any kind can be worn. On ROAR Days or Activity Wear Days when athletic wear can be worn, sliding shorts/leggings are to be worn underneath the shorts. All shorts need to be no shorter than two inches above the knee.**
- 4. T-shirts may be worn; any shirt or sweatshirt that exceeds the length of a traditional back pants pocket must be tucked in.**
- 5. All other shirts must be crew neck, button up, or polo. All buttons on shirts must be buttoned with the exception of the top two buttons.**
- 6. No scoop neck, low-cut blouses, may be worn unless a crew neck t-shirt is worn underneath. If skin is showing at the chest, it should not be worn.**
- 7. No muscle shirts may be worn.**
- 8. Earrings may be worn in the ears. No other visible body piercing jewelry will be allowed.**
- 9. The following attire is not acceptable: clothing with drug, alcoholic beverage, or tobacco logo or name; clothing with obscene, crude, profane, or threatening language or insignias; or anything that the teacher and/or principal may deem inappropriate. No clothing that is associated with gangs or hate groups will be allowed.**
- 10. Students will not wear the following: dog type collars, hats, sunglasses, hair picks, hair brushes, hair combs, wallet chains or belt chains, or teeth coverings.**

When in doubt do not wear that particular article of clothing.

Punishment for violations will follow the Discipline Plan with consequences progressively increasing.

Behavior Expectations

The faculty and staff at Decatur County Middle School believes that acceptable behavior is an essential part of an effective education program. We expect students to conduct themselves in such a manner as to reflect favorably upon themselves, their community, and their school. Two years ago, we began a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Program which has the acronym ROAR. We expect students to be Respectful, Outstanding, Accountable, and Responsible. Throughout each nine weeks grading period (on a daily basis), faculty, staff, bus drivers, cooks, janitors, anyone associated with DCMS will give out tickets to students when they witness the types of behaviors outlined in the ROAR Program. These tickets can be used for multiple purposes. Some of the ways students may use their tickets include:

- Homework passes and other special classroom privileges
- Purchase items in the ROAR Store
- Use for special drawings for awards on ROAR Day
- Attend ROAR Sessions
- Hat/Athletic Wear Day
- Turn in to teacher for homeroom rewards.

Also, at the end of the nine weeks, the students can earn tickets based upon their grades. We will have a ROAR day the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th nine weeks to celebrate those who have met ROAR expectations. The expectations are as follows: no F's on the report card, cannot have been suspended from school or from the bus, cannot have spent a full day or more in ISS for a major discipline issue, cannot have been placed in ISS during lunch/recess for more than three days, no more than three (3) after school detentions, and earn 40 out of 45 possible points for showing ROAR Expectations.

The next 3 (three) pages will describe the behavioral expectations at different area/times at school:

- Classroom
- Restroom
- Arrival and Dismissal
- Hallway □ Cafeteria
- Assemblies.

Classroom Expectations



Respectful

- *Follow teacher's directions
- *Use appropriate language
- *Keep hands/feet to self
- *Raise your hand to talk

Outstanding

- *Help other students who are struggling
- *Help keep the room clean
- *Use encouraging words

Accountable

- *Be on time and be prepared
- *Complete all assignments
- *Use appropriate websites
- *Use active listening
- *Stay in your seat

Responsible

- *Participate actively in class
- *Give your best effort
- *Use equipment properly



Restroom Expectations



Respectful

*Respect other student's privacy

*Keep hands/feet to yourself

*Use appropriate language

Outstanding

*Report problems to custodian or to the office staff

Accountable

*Keep the restrooms clean

*Boys: stand close to the urinal/commode when using the restroom *Girls: throw toilet paper and feminine products in trash can

Responsible

*After using the bathroom -Flush the toilet, wash your hands, throw trash away, and go straight to class

Arrival/Dismissal Expectations

R Respectful

- *Stay in seat on the bus
- *Follow directions given by the bus driver
- *Use appropriate language
- *Keep hands and feet to self

O Outstanding

- *Report problems to the bus driver or to the office
- *Let the driver know when you will not be riding

A Accountable

- *Keep your area of the bus clean
- *Putt your window up when getting off the bus
- *Be on time at the bus stop
- *Upon arrival turn in cell phones

R Responsible

- *Have your materials with you to go to/from school



Hallway Expectations



Respectful

- Keep hands and feet to yourself.
- Follow directions given by teacher/staff
- Use appropriate language

Outstanding

- Report inappropriate behavior
- Pick up trash in the locker area

Accountable

- Have materials needed for next class
- Be considerate of those around you

Responsible

- Go to the restroom before you go to class
- Be on time and be prepared

Cafeteria Expectations

R

Respectful

- * Keep hands and feet to self
- * Follow directions given by cafeteria staff, and lunchroom monitors

O

Outstanding

- * Pick up trash left behind
- * When someone spills food/drink help them clean it up

A

Accountable

- * Enter/exit through designated doors
- * Get all items needed before sitting down
- * Get permission from the lunchroom monitor before leaving

R

Responsible

- * Stay in your seat until the lunchroom monitor tells you to leave
- * Clean up your trash and put items in appropriate places before you leave



Assembly Expectations



Respectful

R

- *Follow teachers' instructions
- *Listen to speaker
- *Keep hands/feet to self
- *Use respectful language

Outstanding

O

- *Report inappropriate behavior
- *Answer questions asked by the speaker

Accountable

A

- *Enter/Exit through designated doors
- *Leave with your assigned teacher

Responsible

R

- *If refreshments are served, clean up your area

After-School Program

DCMS has an after school program which is designed to help students who are struggling academically, especially in the subject areas of Language Arts and Math. This is a free service available to all DCMS students. It is strongly recommended that if your child struggles or begins to struggle in either of these two areas, that they immediately begin attending the program. If your child is not mastering 80% of the tasks/standards in these classes, the after school program provides teachers who give additional instruction and tutoring. There is no charge for your child to attend. For additional information, you can contact Mrs. Amy Clenney at the Decatur County Board of Education (852-2391) or check out the school's website.

Attendance

It's the law. Tennessee Compulsory Attendance Law TCA-49-6-3001 part (c) states that every parent, guardian, or other legal custodian residing within this state having control or charge of any child or children between six (6) years of age and seventeen (17) years of age, both inclusive, shall cause the child or children to attend public or nonpublic school, and event of failure to do so, shall be subject to the penalties provided in this part.

The state of Tennessee requires the school year to contain 180 days. It is the policy of Decatur County Board of Education that all students K-12 must attend school for a total of 170 days in order to receive credit or be promoted to the next grade. All days (excused or unexcused) that bring a student below 170-day requirement must be made up.

After a child has two (2) days of unexcused absences, **in the same semester**, the parents will be notified by phone or by mail. When a student has three (3) days of unexcused absences, **in the same semester**, there will be a conference with the student and the student's parent/guardian. An attendance contract, based on the conference, will be signed by the student, the parent/guardian, and the principal/designee. When a student has four (4) days of unexcused absences, **in the same semester**, Ms. Amy Clenney will make a Well Child Visit to discuss the reasoning for the unexcused absences.

Truancy is defined as an absence for an entire school day, a major portion of the school day or the major portion of any class, study hall or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled. After five (5) days of unexcused absences, total (1st semester and 2nd semester combined), the student and parent(s) will appear before the Decatur County Disciplinary Board.

Absences shall be classified as either excused or unexcused as determined by the Principal or his/her designee. Excused absences shall include:

1. Personal illness
2. Illness of immediate family member
3. Death in the family
4. Extreme weather conditions
5. Religious observances
6. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal create emergencies over which the student has no control

Written excuses are to be submitted for absences, tardies, or checkouts upon return to school. A student must have permission from his/her parents and the principal before checking out of school.

After three (3) written parental excuses per semester, a student will be required to have a doctor's statement or Health Department statement for every absence thereafter. Doctor's statements are due within three (3) days upon returning to school. Failure to follow this procedure will result in an unexcused absence that may not be removed.

All missed class work or tests (whether from excused or unexcused absences) may be made up provided the student makes the request immediately upon returning to school and provided class time is not taken from other students.

Any administrative decision regarding attendance may be appealed initially to the director and ultimately to the board. The appeal shall be made in writing within five (5) days following the action or the report of the action, whichever is first.

Alcohol and Drug Use

The use of any alcoholic beverages or drugs is strictly prohibited. Any possession, use or sale of drugs or alcoholic beverages on school grounds, at school functions, or on school busses is prohibited at all times.

Suspected Drug Abuse (Includes Alcohol and Marijuana)

The principal has the overall responsibility within the school for the disposition of drug related incidents. All referrals must be made to the principal or his/her designated representative. At the beginning of each school year, all personnel shall be informed of this policy:

1. A student exhibiting unusual changes in behavior shall be referred to the principal immediately.
2. The principal, if he or she feels that drugs are involved, will notify the parents or guardian and arrange for an immediate conference with the parents or guardian, student, and the person reporting the student.
3. Any student suspected to be under the influence of drugs will be isolated from other students immediately. In cases where the parents cannot be reached, the principal will call a local doctor and follow the advice given.
4. All information gathered from the investigation of each incident will be available to the police when deemed appropriate or necessary.
5. In any case, when proven to be under the influence, the user will be suspended. The regular due process and suspension procedure shall be followed.
6. Any student who possesses, sells, furnishes, or barter any type of drugs shall be termed as a "pusher". A student apprehended as a "pusher" shall be suspended and referred to the Decatur County Board of Education for appropriate action.

Policy on the Use of Tobacco
(TCA 39-17-1501)

The Decatur County Board of Education proposes to eliminate use of tobacco products in all forms from its buildings and grounds. Students in schools having grades k-8, or any combination thereof, shall not be allowed to smoke while on school property, or while participating in a school sponsored event. Smoking will be prohibited inside all buildings owned and operated by the Decatur County School Board. This includes all schools, central office, and ancillary buildings belonging to the school system. This policy also includes not only routine daily school activities but also extracurricular nighttime activities.

Public Display of Affection (PDA)

Public display of affection such as hugging, kissing, and touching will not be allowed at school or during school functions and events. Disciplinary action will be taken if necessary.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal behavior of a sexual nature. Some examples of sexual harassment include making inappropriate noises, making obscene gestures or comments, obscene name-calling, inappropriate or unwanted touching, purposeful invasion of someone's personal space, or involvement in "dirty" notes or storytelling. Remember, if the person that the comment or action was directed to perceive it to be uncomfortable or threatening, then the behavior is considered to be sexual harassment.

Telephone/Cell Phone Calls

Students needing to use the telephone for emergencies during school time should use the main office telephone with permission of the administration. Students should not use a cell phone to call anyone during the school day unless given permission by the administration. Any faculty or staff member that sees a student with a cell phone is required to take it up and bring it to the office. It may be necessary that the parent come to school and pick up the cell phone.

Zero Tolerance Behaviors and Consequences

The state of Tennessee has a Zero Tolerance Law which every public school in Tennessee must follow. The purpose of this law is to ensure a safe and secure learning environment free of drugs, drug paraphernalia, violence, and dangerous weapons. Any student who is found guilty of a zero tolerance offense is placed in an alternative school program away from the general school population. The maximum length of the school suspension is for one calendar year, starting on the day in which the action was taken by the student. Once the student has completed sixty days in the alternative program, the Director of Schools can review the student's case and modify the suspension. This is done on a case by case basis. Zero tolerance offenses are as follows:

- Any student bringing or possessing a drug, marijuana, drug paraphernalia or dangerous weapon onto a school bus, school property, or to any school event or activity.
- Any student who while on a school bus, school property, or while attending any school event or activity:
 1. is under the influence of a drug or marijuana or
 2. possesses drug paraphernalia or dangerous weapon or
 3. assaults or threatens to assault a teacher, student, or any other person.

Medications (Prescribed or Over-the-Counter)

All medications, prescribed or over-the-counter must be given to the school nurse. Proper medical forms are available in the office or can be downloaded from the school website. Parents should bring the completed form along with the medication in its original container and give to the school nurse. At no time should a student possess, take, or dispense any kind of medication while on the school bus, school grounds, or school sponsored events or activities. Exceptions would include students who have permission to carry inhalers and/or epi-pens. If you have any questions concerning this policy, feel free to call the school and speak to the nurse.

Breakfast and Lunch Prices

Student: Free

Faculty/Staff: Breakfast \$2.00
Lunch \$3.75

Visitor's: Breakfast \$2.00
Lunch \$4.00

Students are allowed to buy an extra plate for breakfast or lunch. Ice cream will also be available for .50. Extra juice is available for .35 per carton and milk .30 per carton. Due to state law, students will not be allowed to bring soft drinks for lunch or snack.

Paying for Breakfast and Lunch:

Lunch money is taken up in the mornings and entered into the register prior to students eating lunch. No change is given in the mornings when students pay for their meals. Any change due will be credited for the next day or week. It is recommended that parents send a check for student's breakfast and lunch all week (or longer). Should a child not eat one or more days, the computerized cash register will credit them for the next week. Students can buy extra juice or ice cream only if they have money in their account. All schools' lunchroom accounts have been centralized at the Decatur County Board of Education. If you have questions about your child's lunchroom account, you should call Decatur County Board of Education at 852-2391 and ask for Sherry Boroughs in food service.

Breakfast and Lunch Charges:

The number of charges allowed for (Pre-K-12th grade) is 2 weeks OR \$40.00. Phone calls and/or letters will be sent home to parents when charges reach \$20.00. If payment is not made within one week of notification, the situation is turned over to the Principal of the school for further action. **Students who have not paid their charges may not be allowed to attend ROAR or other non-academic activities until they are paid.** State law requires that the school's individual general account must be used to pay any student's breakfast and lunch charges at the end of the school year. Because there is very little funds in the school's general account and cannot afford to pay the charges, DCMS has to closely monitor all charges. We are sorry for any inconveniences this may cause. However, we are following school board policy.

Care of Building and Property

Care of Books:

Textbooks and library books are available free to students as a loan. Parent(s) will accept full responsibility for the proper care, preservation, and return, or replacement of textbooks issued to the student. You will also be liable for library books and teacher classroom library books which the student checks out. The condition of each book and a book number shall be recorded by the teacher issuing it. The life of a textbook is considered six years. Charges for lost books will be the remaining life of the book. Damage fines will be based on the wear beyond that normally expected for one year. For one year's wear there will be no charge. Fines may be assessed for overdue, damaged, or lost library books. Fines cannot exceed the current cost of replacing the book.

Care of Building:

This is your school. We encourage you to help take care of your school building and school grounds. We want DCMS to be a place everyone can take pride in. You can help by:

- Keeping floors and grounds free of paper.
- Use wastebaskets for waste materials, indoors and out.
- Do not mark or carve on desks, wall, or other surfaces.
- All books, textbooks, library books and other materials should be treated as you would your own property.
- Help keep restrooms clean by flushing and throwing paper towels in wastebaskets.
- Keep your locker and locker area clean.

Cafeteria:

The school is for the convenience of all students and teachers. This is the student's cafeteria, and their cooperation is needed to maintain a clean and pleasant environment while eating. Please help the lunchroom management and your fellow students by cooperating with the following rules:

- All students are required to eat their meals in the cafeteria.
- Deposit all litter in the garbage cans and return trays and utensils to the dishwashing area.
- Leave the table and floor in a clean condition.
- No food/Drink may be taken from the cafeteria.
- Tables and chairs are not to be moved from their regular places.
- Help prevent damage or destruction of all property in the cafeteria.

It is the policy of the Decatur County Board of Education to require any student who defaces or destroys school property to restore or replace the damaged item.

Bullying

The Decatur County Board of Education has determined that a safe, civil, and supportive environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. In order to maintain that environment acts of bullying, cyberbullying, discrimination, harassment, hazing or any other victimization of students, based on any actual or perceived traits or characteristics, are prohibited.

Definitions:

Bullying/Intimidation/Harassment – An act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, and has the effect of:

- Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property
- Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage a student's property;
- Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or □ Creating a hostile educational environment.

Bullying, intimidation, or harassment may also be unwelcome conduct based on a protected class (race, nationality, origin, color, gender, age, disability, religion) that is severe, pervasive, or persistent and creates a hostile environment.

Cyber-bullying – A form of bullying undertaken through the use of electronic devices. Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, telephones, cellular phones or wireless telecommunication devices, text messaging, emails, social networking sites, instant messaging, videos, web sites or fake profiles.

Hazing – An intentional or reckless act by a student or group of students that is directed against any other student(s) that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of the student(s) or that induces or coerces a student to endanger his/her mental or physical health or safety. Coaches and other employees of the school district shall not encourage, permit, condone or tolerate hazing activities.

Complaints and Investigations:

Alleged victims of the above-referenced offenses shall report these incidents immediately to a teacher, counselor or building administrator. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal/designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy.

While reports may be made anonymously, an individual's need for confidentiality must be balanced with obligations to cooperate with police investigations or legal proceedings, to provide due process to the accused, to conduct a thorough investigation or to take necessary actions to resolve a complaint, and the identity of parties and witnesses may be disclosed in appropriate circumstances to individuals with a need to know. The principal/designee at each school shall be responsible for investigating and resolving complaints. The principal/designee is responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy, and such act shall be held to violate this policy when it meets one of the following conditions:

- 1) It places the student in reasonable fear or harm for the student's person or property;
- 2) It has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- 3) It has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- 4) It has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in activities or benefit from the services of the school.

Response and Prevention:

School administrators shall consider the nature and circumstances of the incident, the age of the violator, the degree of harm, previous incidences or patterns of behavior, or any other factors as appropriate to the properly respond to each situation.

A substantiated charge against a student may result in corrective or disciplinary action up to and including suspension. Any student disciplined for violation of this policy may appeal the decision in accordance with disciplinary policy and procedures.

Retaliation and False Accusations:

Retaliation against any person who reports or assist in any investigation of an act alleged in this policy is prohibited. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

False Accusations accusing another person of having committed an act prohibited under this policy are prohibited. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and expulsion.

No Contact Policy:

To cut down on the amount of bullying complaints, DCMS has a "No Contact Policy". For the purpose of this policy, physical contact is defined as hitting, pinching, slapping, kicking, thumping, or inappropriate touching of another student. Physical contact between students often leads to altercations or their behavior is perceived by the other student as bullying. Some students perceive any unwanted physical contact as a form of bullying and intimidation. And although the person initiating the contact may in no way mean it that way, if the person receiving the unwanted contact perceives it as bullying then we have a problem.

- First offense – Student will be written up and a letter will be sent home to the parent or guardian informing them of the offense. (Parent should sign and return to school).
- Second offense – Student will be placed in In-School Suspension during recess and lunch. The student will also be required change classes on the late bell.
- Third offense – Student will be placed in In-School Suspension for three days.
- Fourth offense – Student will have to appear before the Decatur County Hearing Authority.

Depending on the nature of the offense, the administration has the right to skip one or more steps if deemed necessary.

Backpacks

Students are allowed to bring backpacks to school. However, once the 7:30 dismissal bell rings and before they enter homeroom, students must put their backpacks in their lockers. Students are not to carry backpacks around with them throughout the school day. At the end of the school day, students may get their backpacks to carry home.

Cell Phones

Students are not allowed to have cell phones or other electronic devices at school. Should a parent deem it absolutely necessary for a student to have a cell phone before school or after school, they must fill out a form and turn it into the office before they may bring it to school. All students who have a permission form signed and returned to the office will put the phone in a specified place in their teacher's classroom. When they leave the class they will get their phone. If they are seen using their cell phone or other electronic device at school, it will be confiscated and will be kept in the office until a parent/parent designee picks it up **The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen phones.** Violations of the cell phone policy will result in the following consequences:

1st offense – Parent will have to come to the school and pick up the phone. The student will be assigned an After School Detention.

2nd offense - Parent will have to come to the school and pick up the phone. The student will be assigned to three (3) days of In-School Suspension.

3rd offense – Parent will have to come and pick up the phone. The student will be assigned to five (5) days of In-School Suspension

4th offense – Should a student violate the cell phone policy more than four (4) times in a school year, they will be referred to the Principal's Disciplinary Board.

**** If the student is using his/her cell phone, the consequences will be determined by administration.**

A student who brings a cell phone to school and does not have a parent form signed in the office will automatically be given disciplinary action of a second offense.

Gum and Candy

Students are not allowed to chew gum or eat candy during any part of the school day. Teachers may make exceptions as part of the ROAR Program. However, if a student is allowed to chew gum or eat candy in a teacher's classroom, they are to throw the gum in the trash as they leave the classroom.

When a student is caught chewing gum they will be given a write off. If a student continually chews gum, consequences can range from being assigned a detention, being placed in In-School Suspension, or being paddled. In the past, parents have gotten upset because students are required to attend after school detention "because of gum." We ask parents to look at it from a different point of view: They are willfully (after three times) choosing not to follow school rules. Unfortunately, gum does cause issues at school.

Drill Procedures

The goal of an emergency drill is to get every student to the safest place in a calm, quick, and orderly manner. An emergency drill may be called at any time over the public address system. At the beginning of the school year and periodically throughout the year teachers will discuss with students' proper steps to take for the various emergency drills. Drills will include fire, tornado, earthquake, shelter in place, and lockdown. It is important to remember that each and every drill should be taken seriously and as if it were a real emergency.

Fire Drill

1. First person to notice a threatening fire, pull the fire alarm. If unable to pull alarm, contact the front office immediately.
2. Contact 911.
3. Notify administration who will then notify Central Office.
4. When the fire alarm sounds, each area will execute the fire drill procedures that have been practiced.
5. Follow classroom directions for exiting the building.
 - A. Close all doors and windows behind you.
 - B. Stay out of the way of emergency vehicles.
6. Take a roll of students immediately. You will show green – all students present; yellow/white – have extra students; or red – missing some students.
7. All students are to be supervised orderly until returning to class.
8. Once out the building, NO ONE IS TO RETURN INTO THE BUILDING until notified "ALL IS CLEAR".
9. When students are in their activity classes, their activity teacher will be responsible for them. Classroom teachers should make reasonable efforts to join their classes keeping safety in mind.

Tornado Drill

1. An announcement will be made over the intercom to indicate the beginning of the Tornado Drill.
2. Each teacher is responsible for his/her students.
3. Each teacher should have a roll and report those students who are missing to the administrator. The three cards used during the Fire Drill can be used during the Tornado Drill.
4. Students assemble in their designated areas and take tornado position:
 - A. On knees, hands over head, lined up against the interior wall.
 - B. Designated areas should already be predetermined.
5. If not a drill, personnel will assist student's parents that come in. We will encourage parents to stay with child in tornado position at school.
6. If not a drill, determination to move to an alternate site will be made by the administration. The reunification process will begin. Teachers/staff will know their role.

Earthquake Drill

1. When an earthquake occurs and you are in the classroom do the following:
 - A. Drop where you are, onto your hands and knees. This position protects you from being knocked down and also allows you to stay low and crawl to shelter if nearby
 - B. Cover your head and neck with one arm and hand. If a sturdy table is nearby, crawl underneath it for shelter. If no shelter is nearby, crawl next to an interior wall (away from windows). Stay on your knees, bend over to protect vital organs.
 - C. Hold On until the shaking stops. Under shelter: hold on to it with one hand, be ready to move with your shelter if it shifts. No shelter, hold on to your head and neck with both arms and hands.
2. If you are in the gym and close to the stage crawl to the stage and cover yourself with the mats. If closer to the opposite end, crawl to the bleachers and brace yourself.
3. If not a drill, personnel will assist student's parents that arrive to the school. Determination to move to an alternate site will be made by the administration. The reunification process will begin. Teachers/staff will know their role.

Shelter in Place

1. A Shelter in Place will be announced when there is a threat of harm. This may include but not limited to: escaped inmates in the area, robbery that has taken place in the surrounding area, upset parent, custody issue.
2. When we are in Shelter in Place, classes continue as usual. However, no one enters or exits the classroom. Also, no one enters or leaves the school.
3. Each teacher should have a roll and report those students who are missing to the administrator. The three cards used during the Fire Drill can be used during Shelter in Place.
4. Administration will keep teachers/staff updated and may allow students to go the restroom/change classes if he/she feels it is safe to do so.
5. The administrator will announce when the Shelter in Place is lifted.
6. In the event students are away from the school (on a field trip), the administration will contact the lead person on the trip with instructions to stay away from the school until notified otherwise.
7. If not a drill, personnel will assist student's parents that arrive to the school. Determination to move to an alternate site will be made by the administration. The reunification process will begin. Teachers/staff will know their role.

Lockdown

A lockdown announced over the intercom means a school-wide lockdown. Situations requiring a lock-down include but are not limited to: weapon on campus, intruder in the building, hostage situation or other off campus conditions warranting a lock-down.

1. Office will announce lock-down.
2. Move all students into the classroom, lock doors.
3. Place the green card in a visible location near your door so authorities will know the area is safe.
4. Move students away from the line of doors.
5. Keep phone lines clear for emergency use.
6. STAY PUT. DO NOT MOVE UNTIL YOU HEAR THE "ALL CLEAR"

If in the cafeteria, library, gym, or computer lab

7. Immediately move to the nearest shelter.
8. If feasible, homeroom teachers of students in these areas are to make an effort to assist with the supervision of students.
9. STAY PUT. DO NOT MOVE UNTIL YOU HEAR THE "ALL CLEAR" **If Outside**
10. Move students as far away from the building as possible.
11. Take shelter at second alternate evacuation site.
12. In the event students are away from the school (on a field trip), the administration will contact the lead person on the trip with instructions to stay away from the school until notified otherwise.
13. If not a drill, personnel will assist student's parents that arrive to the school. Determination to move to an alternate site will be made by the administration. The reunification process will begin. Teachers/staff will know their role.

Due Process

All students shall be treated with fairness. Before school authorities shall administer disciplinary measures, inquiry shall be made to determine the truth. The nature of an inquiry will vary in degree with the seriousness of the offense and the consequences thereof. For minor offenses, consequences are typically administered by the classroom teacher; no formal procedures required. An inquiry into the incident to insure that the offender is accurately identified, that he/she understands the nature of the offense, and that he/she was on notice to the consequence of the offense shall be the procedure for minor offenses. In case of severe offenses where there is possibility of suspension, the student shall be advised of the nature of the misconduct, questioned about it, and allowed to give an explanation. In the event the principal determines that the offense is of such nature that would warrant removal from school, he/she shall refer the case to the Board of Education which shall hold a hearing at the earliest practical time.

Concerns, Complaints, and Grievances

Should a student or parent have a concern, complaint or grievance against any school faculty or staff member, they must follow the procedure below:

- 1) Fill out a complaint form which can be picked up from the front office or from the guidance counselor.
- 2) Bring the completed form to the office and give it to the principal, the assistant principal or the guidance counselor.
- 3) If after discussing the problem with the principal, and the student or parent is not satisfied with the administrative handling of the matter, their next step is to take the matter to the Director of Schools. Parents and students last recourse would be the Decatur County Board of Education.

Forms

There are forms in the office to be filled out for the following:

- Corporal Punishment – If you do not want corporal punishment to be one of the forms of discipline used on your child, you must have a form filled out in the office.
- Legal Custody – If you have sole custody of your child and have restrictions on who can pick up them up from school please fill out form in office.
- Medication – If your child has to take prescription medication at school, there must be a form filled out in the office. All medications must be in their original container. If a student is going to take non-prescription medication, parents must write a note and give dosage and times to be taken and filed in the office.

Grading and Reporting

Decatur County Middle School is on a nine week grading period. Nine weeks' grade will be calculated as follows:

Weekly grades (avg. of daily grades for nine weeks' period): _____ X 35% = _____

Assessments: (minimum of three and maximum of five): _____ X 40% = _____

Nine Weeks Test: _____ X 25% = _____

Nine Weeks Grade: _____ Total = _____

*A minimum of ten grades, not including 9 wks. test, will be recorded and averaged to determine the Weekly Grade for the nine weeks grading period. **9 week's test will be cumulative.**

If the student is exempt from the Midterm or Final, he/she can still take the test.

To be exempt from midterms or finals, the student must have an 85 average in that class. The student cannot have more than 8 excused absences for the semester. The student cannot have any unexcused absences and no more than three unexcused tardies/checkouts for the semester.

Determining Semester Averages and Final Grade

1st Semester Avg. calculated as follows:

First Nine Weeks Grade: _____ X 40% = _____

Second Nine Weeks Grade: _____ X 40% = _____

Midterm Exam: _____ X 20% = _____

2nd Semester Avg. calculated as follows:

Third Nine Weeks Grade: _____ X 40% = _____

Fourth Nine Weeks Grade: _____ X 40% = _____

Final Exam: _____ X 20 % = _____

Final Grade Determined by:

1st Semester Avg. + 2nd Semester Avg. divided by 2 = _____ (Final Grade)

Numerical Grades are used to determine the pupil's progress. Letter grade equivalents are as follows:

A	93-100
B	85-92
C	75-84
D	70-74
F	Below 0-69 Failing
*I	Incomplete

***Incomplete** – this means a student has failed to make up a test or turn in assignments for sickness or some reason deemed necessary by the teacher to allow a reasonable amount of extra time before the assignment is made up. It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher and clear up the incomplete. If incompletes are not cleared up by the end of the semester, they will result in zero grade for that assignment.

Promotion & Retention

In order for a student to be promoted to the next grade, they must be able to show mastery of at least 70% of the TnReady Standards taught throughout the year. Mastery will be determined by the student's final average for each subject recorded on the report card.

At the end of each Nine Weeks grading period, students who do not show mastery by having a minimum grade of a 70 or higher for either Math or ELA will receive additional instruction during the school day during Response to Intervention (RTI) class.

We will also recommend struggling students to attend the Afterschool Program a minimum of three days a week for additional tutoring. There is no charge for the program. Once they are able to show mastery of the skills (determined by testing), they may choose to discontinue the afterschool program until the next grading period ends.

Students who do not show mastery of at least 70% of the TnReady Standards by the end of the school year and did not attend the Afterschool program may be retained or start the next year in Blue School (DCMS Alternative Program) if Summer School is not available. If Summer School is available, students below 70% must attend in order to be promoted to the next grade.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of Decatur County Middle School and the Decatur County Board of Education. They are provided as a convenience for students. Lockers offer minimum security, and items of value should not be placed in them. Lockers are to be kept neat and clean, with no posters, stickers, etc. on the outside of the lockers. Because lockers are school property, they are subject to search by school personnel or law enforcement officers.

Nondiscrimination Policy:

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

"It is the policy of the Decatur County School System not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or disability, in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Titles VI and VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

It is also the policy of this district that the curriculum materials utilized reflect cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and in the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, and disability. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a pluralistic society.”

Inquirers regarding compliance may be directed to the Decatur County Board of Education, P.O. Box 369, Decaturville, Tennessee, 38329

In The Know

School website - Want to know what's happening at DCMS? Check out the website:

www.dcmspantherpride.org

School Facebook Page

Parent Vue – This allows you 24-hour access to your students' grades, attendance, school calendar, and announcements. See Quick Guide on how to use this system in handbook.

Teacher's Planning Times – Each Grades planning time is as follows: 5th Grade 7:50-9:25; 6th Grade 9:30-10:50; 7th Grade 11:50-1:10; 8th Grade 1:15-2:40; Activity Period Teachers and Special Ed. Teachers planning time is 7:30-7:45 and 11:20-11:50. It is always advisable to call the day before to make an appointment or at least call and make sure the teacher is present and available to meet with you. The number to call is 847-6510.

E-mail addresses - If you just have a question that needs to be answered or need to get a message to a teacher you can contact them by e-mail. All DCMS teacher's e-mails are their first name followed by a period, their last name followed by @decaturschools.org.

Example: keith.walker@decaturschools.org

A sheet is included in the handbook for all teacher's e-mail addresses.

Remind – This is a free app which you can download to your cell phone that allows you to receive texts for special announcements or reminders about tests, special projects, etc. If you are interested in getting the texts, there is a form (attached to Global Communications Form) you can fill out and return.

****All these programs and apps are great for communication purposes; however, it is still the student's responsibility to make sure they are aware of test dates, special events, etc. They will be able to do this with the three forms of communication listed below.**

Plan Sheets - These sheets will be given to students no later than Monday (the week of) which shows what the students will be doing in the classroom for the week. This will also be posted on the school's website.

Pacing Guide - At the first of each nine weeks grading period, students will receive a class syllabus for each of their academic classes. It will list standards to be covered, goals and objectives for the grading period, major test dates, and other academic information.

Curriculum Map – This guide will be posted on the school's website for each academic class. It gives an overview for each class for the academic year.

Sports, Clubs, & Organizations

Football

Head Coach: Dalton Cook
Asst. Coach: Dennis Roach

Softball

Head Coach: Ericca King
Asst. Coach: Brooklyn Taylor

Girls Basketball

Head Coach: Jacie Hayes
Asst. Coach: Nicole McClain

Boys Basketball

Head Coach: Josh Sinclair
Asst. Coach: Shawn Cupples

Cheerleading

Sponsor: Katie Vise
Asst.: Janet Frutis

Dance

Coach: McKell Smith

Baseball

Head Coach:
Asst. Coach:

Band

Director: Adam Wood
Assistant: Kendall Beecham

Golf

Coach: Gina Pratt

Fishing Team

Coach: Justin Kelley

Student Council

Sponsor: Amanda Salas

Beta Club

Sponsor: Tammy Marshall

Yearbook Staff

Chasidee Puckett

Library Assistants

Tammy Marshall

Panthers for Christ

Justin Kelley

Drama Club

Penny Lindsey

Cross Country

David Taylor

****Volunteer Football Assistants: Joe Taylor, Shawn Cupples, Jon Graves**

Student/Parent Signatures for Student Handbook

Please check and return to school:

- We have read and understand the policies contained in the 2021-2022 Decatur County Middle School Handbook

Student's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent's signature: _____ Date: _____

Or

Guardian's: _____ Date: _____

Please list phone numbers you can be reached at in case of an emergency: Check one:

___ Mother

___ Mother

___ Father

___ Father

___ Guardian

___ Guardian

Name: _____

Name: _____

Home phone: _____

Home phone: _____

Work phone: _____

Work phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

Cell phone: _____

Other number: _____

Other number: _____

(Place an * by the number you prefer the school call first.)

Early Dismissal

In case of unplanned early dismissal, please check below what you would like for your child to do:

___ Ride bus as usual

___ Be a car rider as usual

___ Call for instructions

Custody

Please check below who has legal custody of the above named student: _____

Mother ___ Father ___ Both ___ Other ___

Name of guardian (if not mother or father): _____

Your relationship to the above named student: _____