

WESTHILLS ELEMENTARY

“Torchbearer School”

“Leader In Me School”



STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK 2018 – 2019

WE EXPECT SUCCESS
Never settle for less than your best!!!!

**WESTHILLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
710 GLENN ROAD
BESSEMER, ALABAMA 35022
(205) 432-3500
(205) 432-3502 (Fax)**

MISSION STATEMENT

It is our mission at Westhills Elementary School to produce responsible, self-motivated students with the skills and attitudes necessary for success as life long learners.

As a dedicated and knowledgeable staff teaching an age appropriate and motivating curriculum, and with the cooperation of parents and the community, we will accomplish this goal.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

1. The education of a child is the responsibility of, and a combination of the efforts of, the student, family, school and community.
2. High expectations and challenging objectives produce responsible, self-motivated students that become successful, self-directed learners.
3. All students can learn if provided a strong academic program that recognizes and respects each child's unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs.
4. An educational curriculum that promotes critical thinking and problem solving is necessary in order to equip students with the skills they need to become productive members of society.
5. A structured and safe environment that promotes self-discipline is the backbone of a positive learning environment.
6. Teachers deserve to teach, and everyone has the right to learn.
7. Every individual needs, wants and deserves to be treated with fairness and respect.

WESTHILLS ELEMENTARY STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

A Message From the Principal ...

I address you with gratitude, humility and grace as we begin this school year. I am enthusiastically anticipating continuing progress.

I look forward to working closely with parents and the community while educating our children in an environment most conducive for learning. Our staff is committed to obtaining and maintaining academic excellence.

We have been afforded an opportunity to work with extremely valued jewels and we are grateful. Parents/guardians are welcome to visit and share concerns. The contents of this handbook should answer many questions about the rules and activities here at Westhills Elementary.

Please insert our mission statement in your mind and make it a part of your daily life. With that in mind remember, "We Expect Success". Again, welcome to Westhills Elementary School.

Respectfully,

Mildred L. Posey
Principal

Children Need Practice to Develop

- **Critical thinking and problem solving skills.**
- **The ability to function in multicultural, diverse society.**
- **Comfort with technology**
- **The ability to access information.**
- **Positive a attitude toward education, school, health and physical fitness.**
- **Confidence to accept responsibility for their own decisions.**
- **Strong skills in all communication modes, science and math.**
- **The ability to work will with others in a group setting to accomplish s task.**

**Bessemer City Schools
Westhills Elementary
2018 – 2019 School Calendar**

July 4	Independence Day (Schools/Offices Closed)	Wednesday
July 13	11-Month Employees Return	Friday
July 25	10-Month Employees Return	Wednesday
August 2	New Teacher Orientation	Thursday
August 3	Employee Institute/Professional Development	Friday
August 6	9-Month Employees Return	
August 7	Professional Development (System-wide)	Monday
August 8	Teacher workday	Tuesday
September 3	First Day for Students	Wednesday
September 21	Labor Day (Schools/Offices Closed)	Monday
October 11	Professional Development ½ day for STUDENTS	Friday
	1st Quarter Ends (45 days)	Thursday
October 12	2nd Quarter Begins	Friday
October 18	Report Cards	Thursday
October 26	Fall Break (Inclement weather if needed)	Friday
November 12	Veterans Day (Schools/Offices Closed)	Monday
November 19 – 23	Thanksgiving Holidays(Schools and Offices closed)	Mon-Fri
December 19	2nd Quarter/1st Semester Ends (days)	
Thursday		
Dec. 20-Jan. 4	Winter Break for students	
January 3	Professional Development (students do not attend)	Thursday
January 4	Teacher Workday (students do not attend)	Friday
January 7	3rd Quarter/2nd Semester Begins (Students Return)	Monday
January 10	Report Cards	Thursday
January 21	M. L. King, Jr. Day (Schools/Offices Closed)	Monday
February 15	Professional Development-Schools (Students do not attend)	Friday
February 18	President’s Day-school/offices closed/inclement weather if needed	Monday
March 12	3rd Quarter Ends (45 days)	Tuesday
March 13	4th Quarter Begins	Wednesday
March 21	Report Card	Thursday
March 25 – 29	Spring Break (Schools/Offices Closed)	Mon-Fri
April 19	Good Friday (inclement weather if needed)	Friday
April 22	Spring Break (inclement weather if needed)	Monday
May 27	Memorial Day (Schools/offices closed)	Monday
May 29	Last Day for Students/Report cards	Wednesday
May 30	Last Day 9 month employees	Thursday
June 11	Last Day for 10-Month Employees	Tuesday
June 27	Last Day for 11-Month Employees	Thursday

NOTE: Additional Inclement Weather Days TBD as needed

Board Approved: April 17, 2018

Student Days	180
New Teacher Days	188
Teacher Days	187

Westhills School Faculty and Staff Listing

Mildred L. PoseyPrincipal
 Valerie Love-SimmonsCounselor
 Ketina LyonsMedia Specialist
 Erika Amerson.....Kindergarten
 Susan DarrisKindergarten
 Quinetta Horn.....Kindergarten
 Claire Benjamin.....First Grade
 Shandria EvansFirst Grade
 Natasha Boggs.....First Grade
 Tara BrownSecond Grade
 Tiffany ElliottSecond Grade
 Gemetrice StephensSecond Grade
 Shernetta BellThird Grade
 Andrea Gibbs.....Third Grade
 Alexandria Washington.....Third Grade
 Monica Daniels.....Fourth Grade
 Murraray Gonzalez.....Fourth Grade
 Alexandria NixonFourth Grade
 Angela Davis.....Fifth Grade
 Monika Huff.....Fifth Grade
 Tyese Perkins.....Fifth Grade
 Lori MorrisonInstructional Coach
 Charrisa TaylorReading Coach
SpEd/Speech
SpEd/Gifted
 Loretta Greene.....Special Education/Designee
 Alisa King.....Special Education
 Debbie Colburn.....Physical Education
 Anna BrasherOffice Manager
 Ina Watson.....Secretary(Part-time)
 Sandra CooperParaprofessional
 Sabrina Pace.....Paraprofessional
 Gwen Reed..... Paraprofessional
 Titus Simmons.....Paraprofessional
 Keith Brown..... Maintenance
 George Hunter.....Maintenance
 Marcus Russell..... Maintenance
 Linda Hudson..... Child Nutrition Supervisor
 Lakeshia Evans.....Child Nutrition
 Carolyn SimmonsChild Nutrition
 Tignor Thompson.....Child Nutrition
 Lashundra Benjamin.....School Nurse

School Bell Schedule

The first bell rings at 7:50 A.M. for class to begin; the tardy bell rings at 8:00 A.M.

School Hours

School begins at 7:50 A.M. and is dismissed at 2:50 P.M. for ALL GRADES. Students who arrive after 8:00 A.M. will be considered TARDY and recorded as such. **PARENTS MUST COME INTO THE OFFICE AND SIGN IN TARDY STUDENTS.**

School Supervision Hours

School personnel will be responsible for students from 7:30 A.M. until 3:15 P.M. only. FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY, PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO SEE THAT YOUR CHILD IS PROVIDED FOR BEYOND THESE HOURS. **After School day-care van drivers must be on time and show courtesy and professionalism toward students and school employees.**

Morning care is not provided by the school. However, Mrs. Watson supervises students arriving at school between 7:00 and 7:30. These students report to the front door. The cost for this service is \$2.50 per day or \$12.50 per week. **No credit!**

PARENTS ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY IF THEIR CHILD IS LEFT AT SCHOOL AFTER 3:15 P.M. THEY MUST BE SIGNED OUT IN THE OFFICE WHEN THEY ARE PICKED UP AFTER THAT TIME.

Enrollment and Registration

All students must have a birth certificate, social security card, an up-to-date immunization form (Kindergarten students must have Varicella vaccination) and two proofs of residence, (et.al, utility bill, lease/mortgage). Students entering Westhills for the first time must have a withdrawal form from the previously attended school.

Assignment of Students to Classes

Assignment Authority

It shall be the responsibility and duty of the local school principal and professional staff to assign students to classes. The school system shall always endeavor to assign students to classes that are in the best interest of students. The local school principal and staff have full and complete authority to assign students to classes.

Source: Policy JBCCB

Compulsory Attendance Ages

Every child residing in the area served by the school system between the ages of six and 16 years shall be required to attend school for the entire length of the school term in every scholastic year. Every student must attend the entire length of each school term through the day preceding the 16th birthday. If a student under 16 years of age becomes truant, the parent or guardian of said student may be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to punishment by law, unless the parent or guardian files a written statement in court that he or she is unable to control the student.

Source: Policy JBE

Entrance Ages – Regular School Programs

A child who is five years of age on or before September 1st is entitled, based on age, to be admitted to kindergarten classes. A child, who is six years of age anytime with specified year is entitled, based on age, to admission to first grade classes. Any student transferring into the school system from another system (public or private) in a grade other than the first grade shall be accepted on a trial basis in the grade suggested by the transferring school. A child enrolling in kindergarten or initially in the first grade in a school within the school system must present a certified birth certificate or an appropriate passport document.

Source: Policy JBA

Absences and Excuses

Excused Absences

All student absences shall be designated as either excused or unexcused. A student shall be excused for absence from school for the following reasons:

1. Illness.
2. Inclement weather that would be dangerous to the life or health of the student if he/she attended school.
3. Legal quarantine.
4. Death in the immediate family.
5. Emergency conditions as determined by the superintendent or principal.
6. Absence with the permission of the principal and consent of the parent provided however that such request should be required prior to the date of the absence.

Unexcused Absences

Absence for reasons other than those defined above shall be considered as unexcused.

Excuses

In accordance with state law, a parent or guardian must explain the cause of every absence of students under his/her control or charge. Every student upon return to school must bring a written excuse within 3 days from home signed by the student's parent or guardian for each absence and present it to the principal or his/her designated representative.

The principal or designee shall ensure that the student's teacher(s) are notified whether the absence is excused or unexcused. All written excuses shall be retained for the remainder of the school year in the principal's office or other approved locations.

Make-up Work – Excused Absences

If a student is absent for any excused reason as defined above, the student shall be allowed to make up schoolwork and/or examinations missed during said absence or absences. The student shall be responsible for contacting the teacher or teachers to arrange for make-up work. Said student shall contact the teacher or teachers immediately upon return to school to arrange a time within a two (2) week period to make up work and/or examinations. Teachers shall not be required to reteach lessons, but students shall be given a reasonable opportunity to learn the lessons missed due to excused absences.

Make-up Work – Unexcused Absences

Teachers shall not provide make-up work or examination for students absent for unexcused reasons.

Excessive Absences

Students with unexcused absences of more than ten (10) class sessions per semester course or twenty (20) class sessions per year must present their justification for such excessive absences to an appeals committee composed of the students' teacher(s) and principal to receive credit for course work. Days when students are absent from school due to official suspension/expulsion shall not be counted as a part of the ten (10) class sessions per semester.

Each student who has exceeded the limit for absences will be afforded due process as follows:

1. A committee composed of the student's teachers and counselor will review all circumstances associated with his/her attendance record.
2. The student and his/her parents may meet with the review committee and present information for consideration of exemption from excessive absences due to mitigating circumstances.
3. The review committee may assign full credit, deny credit, or require attendance in summer school based on a fair, impartial, and objective review of the facts of each case.

School Participation Absences

Students who are away from school because of participation in official school-sponsored activities shall be marked present and allowed to make up missed work.

Religious Absences

A student will be excused for religious holidays when the student's parent or guardian comes in person to the school and signs a request for the student to be absent for this purpose. When this procedure is followed, the student's absences will be excused and shall not be counted toward the excessive absence clause of this policy. Students shall be allowed to make up work missed during such absences.

Source: Policy JBD

Student Immunization (Inoculations)

STUDENTS MUST HAVE THE REQUIRED IMMUNIZATION FORMS AND MAY NOT REGISTER UNTIL DOCUMENTATION IS PROVIDED. The Varicella vaccination is now required for students entering Kindergarten.

Emergency Drills

Fire Drills

All teachers are required to keep a daily attendance list in case of an emergency.

Practice fire drills occur every month at Westhills Elementary.

Evacuation procedures are reviewed with the faculty, staff and students periodically.

Fire drill code - fire alarm sounds or repeated short bells.

Natural Disaster/Severe Weather

- A Tornado “watch” ...conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop. When a watch has been issued the principal/designee should prepare to initiate the tornado drill.
- A tornado “warning”...a tornado has actually been sighted. If a warning is issued for Jefferson County, North Shelby County, South Walker County, or Tuscaloosa County proceed with tornado drill immediately.
- Westhills is equipped with a NOAA weather radio programmed to be activated when a tornado watch or warning has been issued for Jefferson County, Bibb County, Shelby County, Walker County or Tuscaloosa County.
- Severe weather code – continuous bell

Inclement Weather

Parents should listen to local radio and television stations for instructions concerning school closing. Days missed due to bad weather will be made up on some scheduled holidays on the school calendar or at the end of the school year. Students will be informed of dates for make-up.

Check-in and Check-out Rules

If a student must leave school before the regular dismissal time the PARENT must come to the office and sign the check-out sheet. **NO CHILD MAY LEAVE THE BUILDING DURING THE DAY WITHOUT THE PARENT OR PERSONS LISTED ON PERMISSION TO CHECK-OUT FORM SIGNING THIS SHEET. IF SOMEONE OTHER THAN WHO IS LISTED ON THE PERMISSION TO CHECK-OUT FORM IS COMING TO PICK UP A CHILD, THE OFFICE MUST BE NOTIFIED BY A PARENT IN WRITING OR BY PHONE IN ORDER FOR US TO ALLOW THE CHILD TO BE CHECKED-OUT. A PICTURE I.D. MUST BE PRESENTED TO VERIFY IDENTITY.** No child is allowed to walk home during the day. *STUDENTS MAY NOT CHECK THEMSELVES OUT OF SCHOOL*, even if a parent telephones the school. All check-outs must be made in the main office. No check-outs are allowed after 2:30 P.M. **THIS IS FOR THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF OUR CHILDREN.**

Drop-off and Pick-Up of Students

Drop-off of students is done in the front of the school. For the safety of our children, *ENTER* the school grounds at the top of the hill. *EXIT* the grounds at the lower road. All cars must stay in a *SINGLE* line with no passing. The first car in line should pull to the mailbox—leaving room for four cars at the porch to unload. An emergency lane must be kept open between the porch and marked parking spaces. Should you need to go into the building,

please park in one of the regular parking spaces. **A CROSSING GUARD WILL BE ON DUTY** to aid smooth traffic flow.

NO LEFT TURN INTO THE DRIVEWAY FROM GLENN ROAD IN THE MORNINGS as shown on the traffic pattern.

Pick-up of students who are car riders is done in the back of the building. These students are dismissed to the cafeteria where they are to remain seated until their name/number is called. When everyone cooperates, traffic moves quickly and the wait is not long. For the safety of our children, please do not ask them to walk to meet your car so that you do not have to wait in line. **WESTHILLS SCHOOL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY STUDENT WHO WALKS TO MEET CARS.**

Pick-up of students who are bus and van riders is done in the front of the school. We begin the dismissal of these students with bus riders to the front porch at 2:50 P.M. Each group is called separately. A crossing guard is on duty and is assisted by another teacher in helping the students to load their assigned bus or van.

Walking To and From School

Students who live close enough to walk home are dismissed prior to calling car riders. Please discuss safety rules with your child and ask them to go directly home after school.

Visitors

Parents and visitors are welcome. However, for the safety of our children and least interruption of classes, **ALL VISITORS MUST REPORT TO THE OFFICE, SIGN IN AND GET A VISITOR'S PASS BEFORE GOING INTO A CLASSROOM OR BEING ANYWHERE ELSE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS.** We must protect our valuable instructional time. **PLEASE USE THE FRONT DOOR ONLY.**

School Lunch

Parents may have lunch with their children by making reservations with the lunchroom manager at 432-3510 or informing the child's teacher. Parents are encouraged to visit the classroom or lunchroom monthly. Adult lunches are \$3.75, Carry-out -- \$4.00).

School Breakfast

Breakfast and lunch are free to all students. Breakfast begins at 7:30 A.M. and ends at 7:50 A.M.

Medication

Medication may not administered to students except as it is prescribed and requested in writing by the parent, guardian, or family physician. If your child has to take a prescribed medication at school, an authorization form will be provided for you. **According to school board policy, we must have an authorization form signed by your child's physician. NO MEDICATION WILL BE GIVEN TO A CHILD WITHOUT THE PROPER DOCUMENTATION ON FILE IN**

THE OFFICE. Parents are required to notify the principal in writing in the event a student must bring medication to school. Any student having in his/her possession medication other than the specified daily dosage and who gives away, sells, or attempts to give away and/or sell medication, nonprescription or prescription, may be subject to disciplinary action.

Source: Policies JGC and JGCA

Homebound Services

The superintendent, upon approval by the board, may provide homebound instructional services for regular students based on criteria supplied by board policy. For special education students, homebound services will be provided according to the student's I.E.P.

Source: Policy IDDC

Lost and Found

All lost and found items are located near the office. If you are missing something or need to turn something in, please go to the office and see the school secretary.

Field Trips

A student's educational program may be enhanced by activities conducted outside of school. A required number of parents must accompany students. A written permission slip must be on file with the teacher for a student to participate in any trip off the school grounds. Field trips are a privilege. **Students exhibiting inappropriate behavior in the classroom on a regular basis may be denied the opportunity to participate or may require parental supervision in order to participate.** NO TELEPHONE PERMISSION WILL BE ACCEPTED. Phone calls to obtain written permission will not be allowed on the day of a scheduled trip in order to prevent departure delays.

Limited English Proficiency services are provided for students who are zoned to and attend Westhills.

Textbooks

Each student will receive books necessary for school subjects. These books are the responsibility of the child and the parent. **BOOKS MUST BE PAID FOR IF LOST OR DAMAGED.** State textbooks should not be written in since they must last six years. With state and supplementary funds from school projects, PTA and other donations, consumable books are provided by the school. **IT IS REQUIRED THAT EACH STUDENT HAS A SIGNED TEXTBOOK CARD BEFORE STATE TEXTBOOKS CAN BE ISSUED. REPORT CARDS WILL NOT BE GIVEN AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR TO ANY STUDENT WHO OWES FOR LOST OR DAMAGED TEXTBOOKS.**

Library Books

Media Center rules and regulations will be sent home. Students will check out books and have use of the Media Center all school year. Any student owing money for books will not be allowed to check out books.

Report Cards

Report cards will be distributed on the Thursday following the final week of each nine weeks grading period.

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be sent the week after the third and sixth week of each nine weeks. If a student encounters great difficulty in a class, additional reports will be sent home to alert parents of the problem and a conference will be requested. This is part of our PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY. Notices may also be attached to the report card and/or mailed. In addition, Special Education students will receive progress reports as stated in the IEP.

Student Records

Parents may review official records directly relating to their children. Please make an appointment with the secretary so that this information will be readily available for your visit.

Parent Conferences

Teachers have scheduled conference periods to talk with parents. If you cannot come during the scheduled time, we will strive to make other suitable arrangements. Should you need to talk with a teacher concerning your child, *CALL THE SCHOOL SECRETARY FOR AN APPOINTMENT AT 432-3500.*

Counseling Services

Please contact the school counselor and schedule a conference to discuss various programs that might be of interest to you and your child. The school's counselor may be reached at 432-3500.

PTA

Our PTA demonstrates school and community working together, a cooperative effort for the benefit of our children. Plan to take an active part in PTA activities this year. Dues may be paid to an officer, at the first PTA meeting or to the teacher during the membership drive. Dues are \$6.00 single and \$10 per family. Dates for meetings will be announced.

Parent Volunteers

Parent volunteers are needed to assist in the office and classrooms. Parent Volunteer forms should be completed and returned with the registration packets. Make sure to sign in and obtain a pass upon arrival at the school office.

Student Insurance

Insurance forms will be sent out at the beginning of the school year.

Birthday Parties

No students will be allowed to bring in outside food or have birthday parties. Goodie bags (without candy or food), balloons, stuffed animals are permitted at the end of the day, if **pre-approved** by principal.

Student Illnesses

Should a student become ill at school and the staff feels that the child needs immediate attention; paramedics may be alerted and the secretary will call the parent. Should the child need to go home, regular check-out procedures must be followed.

Accidents

In all school accidents, school officials will immediately notify parents. If the accident is of such a nature as to require immediate medical attention or the service of a doctor when the parent cannot be reached, school officials shall act in loco parentis and do whatever the situation demands. School officials shall make every effort to contact the family physician in the event of an accident. At all times, however, every effort shall be made to contact the parents.

Source: Policy JGC

Authority Over Students

Parents and/or guardian shall be responsible for their children's regular attendance at school and for their arrival on time, properly dressed, and in a condition of physical health and mental alertness to benefit from instruction. Teachers shall have authority over the conduct of students while in their classes, on or near school property, including but not limited to school buses, or in situations where the student's behavior has a negative impact on the school. Teachers shall also have authority over students in their charge when supervising activities of students outside the school hours.

FILE: JBAC

Bessemer City School Board's Statements on Philosophy about Student Discipline

It is the responsibility of the Board to maintain reasonable discipline, law, and order in the schools. **Source: Policy JCDA** Discipline in our schools helps prepare youth to assume their positions of citizenship in our democratic society. Policies and procedures must be engaged to establish respect for authority and to maintain positive learning circumstances free from distractions and misbehavior. The maintenance of a desirable environment in the school setting conducive to meaningful and effective learning experiences requires the combined efforts of the parents or guardians, students and school personnel. The school's primary goal is to facilitate learning. In order to provide an adequate learning environment, order and control must be maintained.

Source: Policy JDEA

We believe that every student is entitled to an education, which shall be offered in an orderly, healthy atmosphere, and to firm, fair, treatment in all matters pertaining to school life. We further believe that every student shall comply with all rules and regulations concerning behavior established by the State Department of Education and the Bessemer City Schools Board of Education. In a democracy there exist many privileges and freedoms, all of which are dependent upon adherence to certain rules and regulations. It

should be made crystal clear that any student, by his/her failure to comply with school regulations, may lose his/her right to a public education.

Source: Policy JDEA

Instruction should occur in an environment that is conducive to learning. Effective instruction requires good order and discipline, which may be described as the absence of distraction, friction and disturbances, which interfere with the effective functioning of the student, class, and school. Schools function best when students attend school regularly and on time, respect other persons and their property, observe reasonable rules and regulations, respect the right to learn, exercise free speech, and take an active role in school functions.

Source: Policy JDEA

For positive learning to occur, the schools and classrooms must be free of disrespectful, boisterous, rough, and violent outbursts of language and temper by all parties involved.

Source: Policy JCDA

In maintaining discipline, teachers must be able to proceed with the assurance that support will be provided by the principal, the superintendent, and the board. In order to give repeatedly the support that the teacher needs, the administrative officers and the Board must know that the teacher's disciplinary procedures have been in accordance with good educational practice. In order to form the basis of mutual understanding between the Board and its employees, the following principles are set forth:

1. Sound discipline is essentially positive rather than negative in nature. It consists of keeping students interested and busy doing things that are constructive and worthwhile rather than punishing them for doing things that are destructive and antisocial.
2. Not all students in a given situation respond to positive discipline when curbing of some kind is required.
3. Sound discipline is always fair, dignified, in good temper, and free of malice.

Source: Policy JCDA

However, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions are necessary for the benefit of the individual and of the school.

Source: Policy JDEA

Positive Behavior Support

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) endorsed by the Alabama State Department of Education is practiced at Westhills Elementary School on a daily basis. PBS is not a specific practice or curriculum; however, it's general approach is to prevent problem behaviors. Students are encouraged to exhibit appropriate behaviors throughout the day and are rewarded for such behaviors. GOTCHA tickets are distributed and can be redeemed for prizes on designated days. At the end of each month, tickets are drawn and these recipients receive still another award/activity.

Student Conduct

All students of the school system are charged with the responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to good citizenship everywhere. Student conduct shall be founded on the basic concept of respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students in the Bessemer schools shall conform to the rules and regulations of the Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools and the school principal. Students may be held responsible for their conduct to and from school if it affects school organization or programs.

Source: Policy JCD

The rules contained in the Student Code of Conduct apply to all ages. It is reasonable to assume that an increase in age and maturity implies greater responsibility for their actions. It is recognized that differences in age and maturity require various levels of disciplinary implementation; however, these general rules and regulations shall apply to all students in Grades K-12.

Source: Policy JDEA

Classification of Student Code of Conduct

Violations of the Code of Student Conduct are categorized into three classes: Minor (Class 1), Intermediate (Class 2) and Minor (Class 3) and are applicable to all K-12 students of Bessemer City Schools. Prior to determining the classification of a violation, the principal/designee will implement the disciplinary procedure, including allowing the student to give his/her explanation regarding the alleged violation prior to deciding the classification of a violation. The principal/designee may confer with additional parties, if necessary, before deciding the classification of the violation and the appropriate consequences for misbehavior.

No student shall be punished for any suspected violation until the person responsible for imposing discipline has heard the student's explanation or made reasonable efforts to provide the student with an opportunity to present his/her explanation.

Each classroom teacher will correct general classroom disruptions by taking in-class disciplinary action, telephoning the parent/guardian, scheduling school conferences and other management techniques that are appropriate for the behavior. When the action taken by the teacher is ineffective or the disruption is severe, the student should be referred to the principal/designee. Failure to bring school supplies or homework or complete class assignments are not cause for disciplinary referrals. When students consistently exhibit poor work habits, a school official should notify the parents/guardians immediately, and students should be referred to a guidance counselor.

Under no circumstances should academic grades be used for maintaining order in a classroom nor should student behavior be included in calculating academic grades. An academic grade should reflect the teacher's most objective assessment of the student's academic achievement.

The principal shall make an immediate effort (same day) to contact the student's parents/guardians about the suspension. No suspended student shall be allowed to leave the school premises during the day until the student's parent/guardian or proper school authorities assume responsibility for him/her. When a student's parent/guardian or designated individual(s) cannot be notified, the student must remain on the school premises until the end of the school day. At the end of the school day, the student will return home via normal transportation methods.

School employees may always file criminal complaints against wrongdoers.

Source: Policy JDEA

CLASS 1 – MINOR OFFENSES

- 1.01 Excessive Distraction of Other Students – Any conduct and/or behavior that is disruptive to the orderly educational process in the classroom or any other student (e.g., excessive talking, interrupting class, provoking student, etc.).
- 1.02 Gambling – Participation in games of chance for minor sums of money and/or other things of value.
- 1.03 Intentionally providing false information to a school system employee, including but not limited to, student information data and the concealment of information directly related to school business.
- 1.04 Possession of nuisance items as defined by the principal/designee (e.g., toys, fake items such as snakes, spiders, etc.).
- 1.05 Cheating or copying the work of other students.
- 1.06 Use of obscene manifestations (verbal, written, or gesture).
- 1.07 Nonconformity to the dress code.
- 1.08 Inappropriate public display of affection, including but not limited to, embracing and kissing.
- 1.09 Unauthorized absence/tardiness from class or classes.
- 1.10 Unauthorized use of school or personal property.
- 1.11 Any other violation that the principal/designee may reasonably deem to fall within this category.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR CLASS I VIOLATIONS

GRADES K-12

First Offense: Administrator and student conference. Circumstances may warrant disciplinary action as outlined under subsequent offenses.

Subsequent Offenses: In-school disciplinary action such as probation, detention, academic research related to offense, work assignments before or after school, Saturday School, and supervised in-school suspension. After the implementation and documentation of interventions, suspension may be imposed for a maximum of two (2) school days at the discretion of the principal/designee. If these disciplinary actions are not effective, the principal/designee may seek additional support from central office staff members.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS FOR CLASS I OFFENSES

The principal/designee should consult with the special education teacher regarding effective discipline procedures when a special education student commits a Class I offense. If these actions are not effective, the principal/designee should initiate procedures to have the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) Committee address the behavior. The IEP Committee will decide if the offense was related to the area of disability and will decide the appropriate actions to be taken as well as consider the need for a functional behavior assessment and a behavior intervention plan.

All revisions to the student's IEP must be documented within the current IEP. If the disciplinary actions decided by the IEP Committee are still not effective, the principal/designee may refer the student to the director of Special Education or the IEP supervisor for further action. However, in no instance may a referral to the director of Special Education or the IEP supervisor result in the exclusion from school of a special education student for more than ten (10) cumulative days for the school year, which are allowable by law or state regulations. Only the IEP Committee may change a special education student's placement.

Consideration must also be given to the protection and rights afforded to 504 students under both federal and state law.

CLASS I OFFENSES MAY NOT BE APPEALED BEYOND THE LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL.

CLASS II – INTERMEDIATE OFFENSES

- 2.01 Defiance of School System Employee's Authority – Any verbal or nonverbal refusal to comply with a lawful direction or order of a school system employee.
- 2.02 Bringing a water gun to school.

- 2.03 Vandalism – Intentionally doing some act that results in injury or damaging by any means real, public, or personal property belonging to another.
- 2.04 Battery upon Students – Actually and intentionally touching or striking another student against the will of the other.
- 2.05 Trespassing – Willfully entering or remaining in any structure, conveyance, or property without being authorized.
- 2.06 Stealing, Larceny, Petty Theft – The intentional unlawful taking and carrying away of personal property valued at less than \$100 belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another.
- 2.07 Extortion, Threats, and/or Intimidation – Verbally, non-verbally, or by a written or printed communication maliciously threatening an injury to a person, property or reputation of another with the intent to extort money or any pecuniary advantage at all or with intent to compel the person so threatened, or any other person, to do any act or refrain from doing any act against his/her will.
- 2.08 Offensive touching of another person with sexual connotations, such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body.
- 2.09 Possession of stolen property with the knowledge that it is stolen and receiving and/or concealing stolen property.
- 2.10 Leaving class or campus without permission.
- 2.11 Directing obscene or profane language to a school system employee.
- 2.12 Minor disruption on a school bus.
- 2.13 Any other violation that the principal/designee may reasonably deem to fall within the category.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR CLASS II VIOLATIONS

GRADES K-12

First Offense:

Administrator, student, parent/guardian conference. In-school suspension, extended work assignments before or after school, or suspension for a maximum of five (5) school days. Circumstances may warrant disciplinary action as outlined under subsequent offenses. If these disciplinary actions are not effective, the principal/designee may seek additional support from central office staff members.

Subsequent Offenses:

Suspension for a maximum of five (5) school days. If these disciplinary actions are not effective, the principal/designee may seek additional support from central office staff members.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS FOR CLASS II OFFENSES

The principal/designee should consult with the special education teacher regarding effective discipline procedures when a special education student commits a Class II offense. If these actions are not effective, the principal/designee should initiate procedures to have the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) Committee address the behavior problem. The IEP Committee will decide if the offense was related to the area of disability and will decide the appropriate action to be taken. The IEP Committee will also conduct a functional behavior assessment and construct a behavior intervention plan.

All revisions to the student's IEP must be documented within the current IEP. If the disciplinary actions decided by the IEP Committee are still not effective, the principal/designee may refer the student to the Director of Special Education for further action. However, in no instance may a referral to the Director of Special Education result in the exclusion from school of a special education student for more than ten (10) cumulative days, which are allowable by law or state regulations. Only the IEP Committee may change a special education student's placement.

Consideration must also be given to the protections and rights afforded to 504 students under both federal and state law.

CLASS II OFFENSES MAY NOT BE APPEALED BEYOND THE LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL.

CLASS III – MAJOR OFFENSES

Principal/designee shall immediately inform the Bessemer Police Department concerning the commission of the following violations:

- 3.01 Stealing, Larceny, Grand Theft – The intentional unlawful taking and/or carrying away of property valued at \$100 or more belonging to or in the lawful possession or custody of another.
- 3.02 Burglary of School Property – Breaking, entering or remaining in a structure or conveyance with the intent to commit an offense therein during the hours the premises are closed to the public.
- 3.03 Criminal Mischief – Willful and malicious injury or damages at, or more than, \$200 to public property or to real or personal property belonging to another.
- 3.04 Sexual Acts – Acts of a sexual nature including, but not limited to, repeated sexual harassment, battery, intercourse, attempted rape, or rape.

- 3.05 Aggravated Battery – Intentionally causing great bodily harm, disability or permanent disfigurement; use of deadly weapon.
- 3.06 Battery – The actual unlawful touching or striking of a school system employee or student intentionally or during the course of a physical altercation between students; the cause of bodily harm.
- 3.07 Drugs – Unauthorized possession, transfer, use, or sale of drugs including over-the-counter and prescription medication.
- 3.08 Alcoholic Beverages – Possession, transfer, use or sale of alcoholic beverages.
- 3.09 Arson – The willful and malicious burning and/or attempt to burn any part of a building or its contents.
- 3.10 Possession of Firearms – Discharging, using, possessing, transferring, giving away, distributing or selling of any firearms, whether operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded (including a starter gun, BB gun or pellet gun) which will, or is designed to, or may readily be converted to, propel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any similar destructive device.

NOTE: Possession of a firearm on school property violates federal and state laws. It is the policy of the school board to require EXPULSION for a period of not less than one calendar year for any student who is determined to have, possess, use, discharge, transfer, give away, distribute, or sell a firearm at school.

- 3.11 Possession of Weapons – Possession of a knife, including but not limited to, a switchblade knife, metallic knuckles, tear gas gun; chemical weapon or device including mace or pepper spray, or any other weapon, instrument, or object which is used in a threatening manner and is seen by the individual being threatened as capable of causing physical harm including a realistic toy, replica, look-a-like, BB or pellet gun.
- 3.12 Bomb Threats – Any such communication(s) directed to a school system employee or any Bessemer City School facility that has the effect of interrupting the educational environment.
- 3.13 Explosives, Ammunition (Bullets), or Firecrackers – Preparing, possessing, or igniting on School Board property explosives likely to cause serious bodily injury or property damage or that disrupts the orderly educational process.
- 3.14 Unjustified activation of a fire alarm, fire extinguisher, or security system on school property.

- 3.15 Possession of a pocket pager or electronic communication device, such as a cellular phone.
- 3.16 Behaviors that threaten the orderly operation of the school, school bus, or school-sponsored activity.
- 3.17 Any major disruption of the educational process caused by the wearing of apparel, possession of writing or drawings, or the performance of gestures or signals which indicate affiliation with a gang (organized or unorganized), secret organization, or other social group whose presence on school grounds pose a threat to the educational environment.
- 3.18 Inciting or Participating in a Major Student Disorder – Leading, encouraging or assisting in major disruptions that place students, staff, and the educational process at risk or which result in destruction or damage of private or public property or personal injury to participants or others.
- 3.19 Simple Assault on School System Employee or Student – The intentional, unlawful threat by word or act to do harm to a school system employee or another student coupled with an apparent ability to do harm, and the performance of some act which creates a well-founded fear in the person that such harm is imminent.
- 3.20 Possession and/or Use of Tobacco Products – Having and/or using tobacco products, including the possession of cigarette rolling papers, on the school premises and property.
- 3.21 Possession of cigarette lighters or matches.
- 3.22 False accusation of sexual harassment.
- 3.23 Sexual Harassment – Use of vulgar or sexually explicit comments, gestures or conduct; obscene or sexually explicit pictures; sexually-oriented kidding/teasing, or practical jokes directed toward another person or offensive to a third party observer.
- 3.24 Fighting – Any physical conflict between two or more individuals.
- 3.25 Any other violation that the principal/designee may reasonably deem to fall within this category.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR CLASS III VIOLATIONS

Commission of a Class III offense shall be reported immediately by the principal/designee to the following individuals:

- Bessemer Police Department
- Student's parent/guardian
- Superintendent of Schools or Designee

If bodily injury, property damage, drugs and/or firearms are involved, the principal/designee will immediately contact the Bessemer Police Department at 425-2411 or 911 for assistance. All drugs and/or firearms found or confiscated on Bessemer City Schools property will be turned in or over immediately to the Bessemer Police Department. Other unauthorized objects found in the possession of students may be returned to the parent/guardian upon a written request to the principal by the parent/guardian.

The normal disciplinary punishment for the commission of a Class III offense is removal from school for the remainder of the school year, or if the offense occurs within the last 20 school days of the school year, removal from school for the rest of the school year and the next school year. In any event expulsion shall not be for less than one semester. The principal/designee, after reviewing the allegations and evidence against a student and giving the student the opportunity to respond to the allegations, is initially responsible for deciding that a Class III offense has been committed and what the appropriate consequences should be. Once that determination has been made by the principal/designee to recommend expulsion, the principal/designee will give the student a suspension notice containing a written statement of the charges (and a statement of mitigating or extenuating circumstances, if any) and shall suspend the student to the superintendent of schools or designee.

The principal/designee shall also mail a suspension notice to the parent/guardian and notify the superintendent of schools or designee.

If the hearing officer decides, based on facts developed at the hearing, that the student committed a Class III offense, the student shall be subject to expulsion. If, however, there are mitigating or extenuating circumstances, the hearing officer shall separately state those circumstances and may consider them in deciding appropriate disciplinary action. Mitigating or extenuating circumstances include, but are not limited to, the absence of severe personal injury, the absence of extensive property damage, handicapping conditions, interventions at the local school level, and no prior record of a Class II offense.

The hearing officer has the option to allow the student to attend the alternative program under the conditions set forth by the Bessemer Board of Education in order to earn admittance to the local school. Should the parent/guardian be offered this opportunity and decline it, the hearing officer may recommend to the superintendent that the student be expelled from all Bessemer city schools.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS FOR EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS FOR CLASS III OFFENSES

When a special education student commits a Class III offense, the principal/designee shall initiate procedures to have the student's Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) Committee address the behavior problem. The IEP Committee will decide if the offense was related to the area of disability and will decide the appropriate action to be taken. The IEP Committee will also conduct a functional behavior assessment if one has not been previously conducted and will consult or construct a behavior intervention plan. All revisions to the student's IEP must be documented within the current IEP. If the disciplinary

actions decided by the IEP Committee are still not effective, the principal/designee may refer the student to the Director of Special Education for further action. However, in no instance may a referral to the director of Special Education result in the exclusion from school of a special education student for more than ten (10) cumulative days, which are allowable by law or state regulations. Only the IEP Committee may change a special education student's placement. Consideration must also be given to the protections and rights afforded to 504 students under both federal and state law.

Source: Policy JDEA

Dress Code

The Board has the responsibility to maintain an appropriate atmosphere conducive to learning. Therefore, any student wearing an article of clothing or a manner of hairstyle or makeup determined by the teachers and principals to be disruptive of the learning environment or hazardous to the health and safety of the student and/or teacher shall not be allowed. The primary guide in determining what is not appropriate is the extent to which such dress code or grooming attracts undue attention in the classroom or school. If the principal determines that the student's dress or grooming is unacceptable, adequate time shall be allowed the student in order to make proper adjustments. However, when a student continues to ignore the required changes, he/she shall be subject to disciplinary action.

The board requires that specific dress code rules and regulations be developed at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

The specific dress code rules and regulations for elementary and middle school grades K-8, shall be as follows:

BOYS, Grades K-8

- Navy slacks (no jeans)
- Navy shorts (knee length) for grade K-3 only
- Plain oxford white shirt or polo style white shirt with long or short sleeves.
- Shirts must be worn on the inside of pants.
- Solid black or navy belt; navy or white suspenders
- Navy, black or white socks
- Navy or white sweater (pull over V-neck, cardigan, or crew neck)
- Westhills Elementary School- plain team purple oxford shirts or polo style shirts with two or three buttons
- Predominately black or predominately white shoes (high-priced, brand-named shoes are not recommended and should not be worn)
- No earrings, necklaces, chains, or body piercing jewelry
- No more than two rings may be worn
- Hair must be neat and well kept
- No designs or patterns in the eyebrows or hair
- Black or brown dress or casual shoes with black, brown or white shoelaces
- No hats, caps, scarves, headbands or bandannas inside the building

GIRLS, Grades K-8

- o Navy slacks (no jeans)
- o Navy A-line or pleated skirt; navy jumper (knee length or below)
- o Navy split skirts (knee length or below)
- o Navy shorts (knee length) for grades K-3 only
- o Oxford plain white shirt or polo style white shirts with three buttons
- o Shirts must be worn on the inside of pants
- o Black or navy belt; navy or white suspenders
- o Westhills Elementary School- plain team purple oxford shirts or polo style shirts with two or three buttons
- o Black or brown dress or casual shoes with black, brown or white shoelaces (no house slippers, beach sandals, sandals or flip-flops)
- o Predominately black or predominately white shoes (high-priced, brand-name shoes are not recommended and should not be worn)
- o Black, white or brown socks or hose
- o Only white undershirts or camisoles without emblems or insignias may be worn under the uniform blouse or shirt
- o No hats, caps, scarves, headbands or bandannas inside the building
- o Plain black, khaki or white cardigan style jackets or sweaters
- o Jackets and sweaters must have a zippered or button front. No pullovers. No emblems or insignias except the official school logo
- o No necklaces, chains or body-piercing jewelry
- o No more than two rings and one pair of earrings may be worn
- o Hair must be neat and well kept
- o No designs or patterns in the eyebrows or hair

Source: Policy JCDB

Smoking

Smoking and/or use or possession of tobacco, other smoking substances and/or tobacco products are hereby prohibited by all students in grades kindergarten (K) through twelve (12) in or on school properties during the regular school day and all school sponsored activities. For the purposes of this provision, the regular school day for students is defined as the normal hours schools are open to student for instructional purposes. The regular school day begins for students at the time of arrival on the respective school premises (school-owned property, school bus, parking lot, etc.). The school day ends for students upon departing school premises (school-owned property, school buses, parking lots, etc.). A school activity is defined as any activity (play, athletic event, recital, etc.) under the sponsorship and supervision of a school or the school system. Parental permission to smoke or use tobacco products does not exempt a student from this policy. Students violating this policy shall be subject to punishment by school officials.

Source: Policy JCDA

Alcohol Use

No student shall use or have in possession any alcoholic beverage while he/she is on the school premises, attending or participating in school activities, or on the way to school or a school activity. Any student violating this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action by the local school principal.

Source: Policy JCDAB

Drug Use

It shall be the policy of the board to discover and deter the illegal sale and use of narcotics, hallucinogens, and other destructive substances by or to students, teachers, and employees of the school system and to cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies of the municipal, state, and federal governments for that purpose. The possession or use of drugs not properly prescribed for personal medication shall be a violation of law and punishable by fine and/or imprisonment. Students shall be expected to obey the same laws on school grounds as off. Students possessing or using drugs prohibited by law on the school premises shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials and may be subject to suspension or expulsion pending investigation, hearing, and administrative review by school officials. Special education students in violation of this policy may be placed in an Interim Educational Alternative setting for no more than forty-five (45) days. After the forty-five (45) day time period, placement is subject to the student's individualized educational program.

Source: Policy JCDAC

Possession of Firearm on School Property

Possession of a firearm on School Board property and at school-sponsored events shall result in the student being expelled from the Bessemer City Schools for a minimum of one (1) calendar year. Special Education students in violation of this policy may be placed in an interim educational alternative setting no more than forty-five (45) days. After the forty-five (45) day time period, placement is subject to the student's individualized educational program.

Source: Policy JDEC

Improper Use of Computers and Internet

The Technology Usage Policy describes the acceptable use of computer equipment within the school district. Students may be disciplined for violating this policy.

Students Leaving School Campus

A student is not permitted to leave the school campus during regular school hours except in accordance with the provisions as follows:

- ✓ A student's parent or guardian should come in person to check his/her child out of school.
- ✓ A student may not be checked out of school by anyone whose name does not appear on the Permission to Check-Out Child form and may be subject to identification check.

- ✓ In emergency situations, the school principal or designee may permit a student to leave the school campus based upon a telephone request from the student's parent or guardian. In such instances, the principal or designee shall attempt to re-contact the student's parent by telephone to confirm the request. Any student violating this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action by the local school principal.

Source: Policy JBDA

Student Rights and Responsibilities

The board possesses the responsibility to offer an education which shall be provided in an orderly, healthy atmosphere, both physical and emotional, and in which treatment of students is both firm and fair in all matters pertaining to school life.

Freedom of speech is a constitutional right guaranteed to all citizens. The school board shall make every effort to provide for the free expression of ideas by students unless this interferes with the educational process. No student shall have the right to interfere with the educational process of other students.

All students shall be free to express their points of view in an orderly manner in keeping with democratic ideals.

All students shall have the freedom to exercise the right of legal protest through proper channels, providing that such protest does not interfere with the educational program of the system or result in harm to other individuals.

All students shall have the responsibility to grant the same rights and responsibilities to each other and to develop tolerance for the viewpoints and opinions of others and to recognize the right of other individuals to form and hold different points of view.

Source: Policy JC

Student Demonstrations and Strikes

To insure the orderly process of education and business affairs connected with the schools and the safety of persons and property, the board directs that the procedures below be followed in case of any type of disruptive demonstration on school property or within school buildings. This policy is not intended to discourage or prohibit the peaceful expression of opinions or ideas concerning the school system. However, since the board is required by law to provide proper school facilities to maintain an appropriate program of instruction, and is further required to bar any disruption of the schools or interference with normal operations, the following steps will be taken in the event of any disruption of the normal operation of the schools:

1. The disruption shall immediately be brought to the attention of the superintendent or representative by the principal of the school. The superintendent shall have the authority to alert the police authorities.
2. Students participating in a disruptive demonstration shall be directed by the building principal or representative to go to their regular classroom assignment. At the same time, the principal or representative will arrange for a meeting between the administration and the individual leaders of the group, and if feasible, discuss in a rational, orderly manner the problem, which has caused the disorder.

3. Non-student demonstrators and other unauthorized persons will be directed by the building principal or representative to remove themselves from school property forthwith.
4. In the event steps 2 and/or 3 fail to stop the demonstration, the superintendent or representative will ask the police to remove the demonstrators and any individuals failing to comply with directives in three.
5. When necessary for their safety, students and staff may be directed to leave the building and school property.
6. At no time, while any demonstration is in process, is the superintendent or any school or board personnel to enter into negotiations on the issues with the protestors, either orally or in written form.
7. As soon as normal educational and business processes can be resumed, the superintendent shall be charged with establishing communications with the leaders of the protesting group in order to resolve their requests or to refer them to the board in an orderly manner.
8. Students and/or employees participating in a disruptive demonstration on school grounds may be subject to suspension, expulsion or other disciplinary action.

Source: Policy JCEC

Searches by School Officials

School Property

Desks, lockers, filing cabinets, bookshelves, computers, computer servers, and other equipment and furnishings within the school building, which have been provided by the school district, are the property of the school district. Student use of such equipment and furnishings is considered under joint control of the student and school officials. Consequently, students have extremely limited expectations of privacy in their usage, and school officials may search such equipment and furnishings without an individualized suspicion of wrongdoing.

Individuals

School officials, including only school principals or approved designees of principals, may search students and their personal belongings if there is reasonable cause to believe that the student is carrying articles that may endanger other individuals in the school or that such articles possessed are contrary to law or the rules and regulations of the school district. When practical a student search shall be done in relative privacy by a school official of the same sex with a professional staff member of the same sex present. In all cases, when the search produces evidence of a violation of law or school rules, the principal or his/her designated representative shall make every attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian concerning the search.

Automobiles

Automobiles on school property are considered under joint control of the driver of the automobile and the school district. School officials may search vehicles while they are on school property, when there is reasonable cause to believe that the vehicles contain articles that may endanger other individuals or that are contrary to law or rules and regulations of the school district.

By Law Enforcement Officials

School officials are encouraged to develop cooperative relationships with law enforcement officials in their effort to enforce the law. In the absence of the existence of a warrant controlling the search, school officials will conduct or direct all searches within the school facility and law enforcement officials will be permitted only to observe the search.

Testing for Drug Use by Students

The testing by urinalysis for drug use by students is considered a search. The use of random drug testing is limited to the testing of student athletes, and the consequences of a positive test result will be educational rather than punitive. Withdrawal from participation in athletics as a consequence serves an educational and safety purpose and is not considered punitive.

Source: Policy JCAB

Interrogation by Public Officials

When law enforcement officers make it known that they wish to talk to a student while the student is under the supervision of the school, the student will be called to the office of the principal, and in the presence of the officers, the school principal or his/her designated representative shall attempt to notify by telephone the student's parent or guardian of the situation. The student will then be informed that he/she may opt for one of the following choices:

1. The student may converse by phone with his/her parent or guardian and as a result the student may decide whether to speak with the officers.
2. The student may decline to talk with the officers until his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) is (are) present.
3. The student may talk with the officers either in or outside the presence of a school official.

In situations where the law enforcement officers present an arrest warrant for a student, the school principal or his/her designated representative shall make every effort to notify the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student in question prior to the student's removal from the school premises; provided, however, that school officials shall not impede the law enforcement officers in the service of the warrant.

Source: Policy JCAC

In School Suspension

In-school suspension is a structured disciplinary action in which a student is isolated or removed from regular classroom and extracurricular activities but is not dismissed from the school setting nor counted absent during the period of in-school suspension. The principal or designee has the authority to assign students to the in-school suspension program for a reasonable and specified period of time not to exceed three (3) days. The principals and their staffs should determine the scope of in-school suspension in their respective schools. The parent or guardian must be notified by the procedure outlined in the out-of-school suspension policy filed JDD. In addition, the local school principal shall ensure that the following safeguards are met:

1. The student must be supervised by a member of the professional staff or properly trained adult during in-school suspension.

2. The confinement area assigned to the student should be adequate and conducive to completing school assignments.
3. The student shall be responsible for completing all class assignments, homework, examinations, etc. that are applicable to other students in his/her class (es), except that, students on in-school suspension shall not be permitted to complete assignments that require class attendance (oral reports, recitations, etc.) and shall be graded accordingly.
4. The days a student is absent from class (es) cannot be counted as part of the twenty (20) class sessions of the excessive absence policy. **Source: Policy JDDA**

Out of School Suspension

The board recognizes its authority to maintain good order and discipline within the schools of the school system. Therefore, the board gives the school principal the authority to suspend a student. The principal shall advise the superintendent of all student suspensions. The principal shall make an immediate effort (same day) to contact the student's parents or guardians about the suspension. No suspended student shall be allowed to leave the school premises during the school day until the student's parent, guardian, or proper school authorities assume responsibility for him/her. When a student's parent, guardian, or other designated individual(s) cannot be notified, the student must remain on the school premises until the end of the school day. At the end of the school day, the student will return home via normal transportation methods.

Authority

The school principal or designee has the authority to suspend students from school for up to three (3) days and up to ten (10) days with the permission of the superintendent when an expulsion recommendation is to be considered.

Notification

Prior to suspension, the student will be made aware of the charges and supporting evidence, and given an opportunity to respond to them. The local school principal shall complete and provide the student with a copy of the school system's Notice of Suspension Form prior to departure from campus, with copies to the student's parent or guardians and the superintendent within forty-eight (48) hours stating the reason(s) for such action.

Immediate removal of the student from school premises is justified only when his/her presence threatens himself/ herself, endangers school property, or seriously disrupts the orderly educational process. If immediate removal is necessary, the parents or guardians must be notified by phone or personally by the attendance supervisor or other school officials. In extreme emergencies, principals are given the authority to call upon law enforcement officials to remove such students. The principal shall advise the Superintendent by phone regarding forced removals and shall follow the oral contact with a written confirmation to the superintendent.

Length

The suspension of a student shall not exceed three (3) school days except as follows:

1. Any student suspended more than three times during a school year shall be required to appear with parents or guardians before the superintendent and school principal to explain his/her situation. The superintendent or designee shall schedule the conference within five (5) school days after being notified by the school principal. If the student or parents or guardians fail to appear as ordered, expulsion proceedings may be initiated.
2. If an incident or violation, or series of incidents or violations are serious enough to warrant suspension, said suspension may not exceed ten (10) complete school days pending board action on an expulsion recommendation. Provided the board does not render a decision within the ten (10) school day period, the student shall be readmitted to school until such time that the Board renders a decision. The principal, after expulsion recommendation consideration, may readmit the student to school within the ten (10) school day period based on mutual agreement of the principal and superintendent. In such case, the principal and superintendent will have decided not to recommend expulsion.

Terms

1. While suspended a student may not attend school functions or enter school property for any reason during or after the school day except to attend a school function open to the general public on a paying basis.
2. When a student is suspended, his/her teachers must be notified immediately concerning the date and duration of the suspension. Teachers shall not give make-up work to students who are suspended from school.
3. A suspended student must comply with the full length of the suspension unless the principal approves an alternative.

Special Education Students

Whenever a student receiving services under an individualized educational program commits an offense that warrants suspension of more than five (5) cumulative days, the student's I.E.P. committee shall convene to determine if the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. If the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will be suspended the same as a student not receiving special education services, provided however that the special education student's individualized educational program cannot be interrupted for more than ten (10) days in a school year.

Consequently suspensions of special education students cannot be given for more than ten (10) days cumulatively each school year without providing necessary services. If the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, the special education student's I.E.P. committee will confer to determine the propriety of the student's I.E.P. Special education students who commit serious offenses or who are subject to repeat suspensions shall receive a functional behavioral assessment and shall have a behavior intervention plan included in the student's individualized educational program.

Readmission

When a student returns to school after the first suspension in an academic year, the readmission must be preceded by a pre or post conference with the principal or designee. The conference must include the parents or guardians, unless otherwise approved by the principal. A student returning after the required conference with the Superintendent and school principal is not required to submit to a second conference with the school principal. The student is readmitted on approval of the principal or designee and is given an admission slip to return to class.

Source: Policy JDD

Expulsion

The board may expel a student from school when in its judgment a student has engaged in a serious school rule violation or illegal conduct. The authority to expel shall be retained solely by the board. The local school principal, after conferring with the superintendent, may suspend a student pending the outcome of the procedures that may follow:

1. When an expulsion is being considered, the principal or designee will suspend pending an informal due process hearing. The hearing will be held at the respective school.
2. The principal will send a certified letter to the parent(s) or guardian(s) that will include: a narrative describing the offense, the time, date, and location of the scheduled due-process hearing. This will be a non-adversarial hearing and counsel will not be permitted to represent either party.
3. After the school-level hearing, the principal will either make a recommendation to the superintendent or designee to expel the student or return the student to school.
4. If the recommendation is to expel the student, the case will be referred to the board where a hearing will be scheduled before a hearing officer within ten school days from the date of any suspension. The student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) will be apprised in writing of their rights in an adversarial hearing and their right to be represented by counsel at the expulsion hearing, provided they notify the superintendent at least two (2) school days before the date set for the hearing that counsel will represent them. The student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) must be present at the expulsion hearing.
5. The superintendent will inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) by certified mail of the hearing officer's decision.
6. Should a student/parent/custodian or school administrator disagree with the decision of the hearing officer, a request for a review of the hearing officer's decision may be made to the Board of Education. This request must be filed in writing with the Superintendent within five (5) days of the notification of the hearing officer's decision. The Board of Education shall have sole discretion as to whether such a review will be granted. All due process criteria specified in *Policy JCAA* shall be observed in any expulsion proceeding as well as any preliminary steps prior to the hearing.

Source: Policy JDE

Due Process

Students shall be treated with fairness in all discipline matters and shall be accorded procedural due process when the discipline measures of corporal punishment, short- and long-term suspension, or expulsion are applied. Before being punished for violation of a

board policy or local school rule and regulation, the local school principal or designee shall ensure that students are accorded the following minimal due process:

The Informal Process

1. The student shall be given oral or written notices of the charge(s) against him/her.
2. The evidence supporting the charge(s) shall be explained to the student.
3. The student shall be given an opportunity to present his/her own version of the facts concerning the charge(s).

The disciplining authority (principal or teacher, etc.) may impose appropriate discipline measures immediately following the informal due process hearing stated above.

The Formal Process

When a student is facing possible long-term suspension (more than 10 school days) or expulsion, the board shall ensure that the following formal due process procedures are accorded the student:

1. The right to a hearing.
2. The right to be represented by counsel (attorney).
3. The right to cross-examine witnesses.
4. The right to a written record of the hearing.
5. The right to a written record of the Board's decision.

If the board does not render a decision within ten (10) school days, the student shall be returned to his/her regular school assignment. The board may place the student in the school system's Alternative School at its discretion.

Prior to the application of the above procedures to a special education student (except gifted), said student's I.E.P. committee shall be convened to determine if the student's behavior warranting punishment is related to the handicap. In the event it is determined that the student's behavior is not related to the handicap, the student shall be treated as any other student, except that, a special education student may not be suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) school days. More specific measures are stated in *Policies JDA, JDD, and JDE*.

Source: Policy JCAA

Student/Parent Complaints & Grievances

Board policy permits a means for students, parents, and guardians to bring their concerns, complaints, and grievances to school officials. Students, parents, and guardians are generally encouraged to first bring their concerns, complaints, and grievances to the student's teacher or principal. More information is provided in **Policy JCE**.

Bus Rules

Any student living in our zone at a distance of 2 or more miles may ride the Bessemer City Schools buses. A transportation request must be signed and returned to the school. Good conduct is a *MUST* at all times on the bus. A student may be denied transportation for

repeated misconduct. Each parent and child will be given a copy of the Bessemer City Schools Bus Code of Conduct.

Bookbags

All book bags must be **clear or mesh**. Bookbags with wheels will not be allowed at Westhills due to the lack of space in hallways. This is for the safety of our students.

Electronic Devices

Students should not bring tape recorders, video games, radios, or any type of toy, to school. Items such as these will be confiscated and held in the office until the end of the school year. This also includes cell phones and beepers.

Source: Policy JDEA

Hall Traffic

Students should remain quiet while walking in the hallways. Students should remain in line when walking with their class and refrain from disruptive behavior. Any student not with a class should have a hall pass.

Withdrawals from School

Students and their parents or guardians are encouraged to contact the school principal when it is anticipated that the student will withdraw from school.

Source: Policy JBCE and Regulation JBCE-R

Releases to Attend other Schools

Students and their parents or guardians are encouraged to contact the school principal when a release to attend another school is sought. For students receiving special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, each student's individualized educational program controls the student's placement. Other requests to attend another school are subject to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Alabama, which supervises the district's desegregation plan.

Source: Policy JB CDG

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the Board to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. No student of the School District shall be subjected to sexual harassment.

Source: Policy JCDC

Student Records Confidentiality

It is our procedure to fully protect all rights of parents and students as required under the Public Law 93-380.

Source: Policy JEB

HINTS FOR SUCCESS

- Go to class and be on time.
- Take a notebook to every class.
- Listen and concentrate in class.
- Ask questions about anything that is not clear.
- Take good notes in class.
- Listen for possible test questions.
- Participate actively in class.
- Complete all homework assignments on time.
- Have a “Study Buddy” in each subject.
- KEEP A GOOD ATTITUDE ABOUT SCHOOL!

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Students take positive action by agreeing to:

- ❖ Be Respectful,
- ❖ Be Responsible; and
- ❖ Be Resourceful.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITY

Teachers will teach and model expected classroom behavior to students. Students who follow classroom rules will be rewarded with positive notes, phone calls, class treats and good conduct parties.

Students who choose to break school rules will be given appropriate consequences.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITY

Parents must assume the responsibility to:

- Have students arrive on time with all needed supplies.
- Teach children to respect rights and property of others.
- Cooperate with teachers, meet with teachers to hear both sides of the problem.

BASIC SCHOOL RULES

- We will show respect for ourselves and others.
- We will keep hands, feet and other object to ourselves.
- We will follow directions the first time given.
- We will use our inside voices within the building.
- We will walk to the right side in the hallways.
- We will not prevent the teacher from teaching or other students from learning.

Alabama State Department of Education – Use of Digital Device during Secure Test

Student Policy

The possession of a digital device (including but not limited to cell phones, MP3 players, cameras, or other telecommunication devices capable of capturing or relaying information) is strictly prohibited during the administration of a secure test. If a student is observed in possession of a digital device during the administration of a secure test, the device will be confiscated.

If a student is observed using a digital device during the administration of a secure test, testing for the student will cease, the device will be confiscated and is subject to search, the student will be dismissed from testing, and the student's test will be invalidated.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the official policy of the Bessemer City Board of Education that no person shall on the grounds of race, color, disability, sex, religion, creed, national origin, or age be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment.

Inquiries or complaints regarding compliance with federal regulations may be directed to:

Section 504 Coordinator
Director of Instruction
1621 Fifth Avenue North
Bessemer, Alabama 35020
Telephone: (205) 432-3037

Title IX & Title VI-B Coordinator
Director of Special Education
1621 Fifth Avenue North
Bessemer, Alabama 35020
Telephone: (205) 432-3002

Complaints or concerns related to sexual harassment may be directed to:

Director of Human Resources
1621 Fifth Avenue North
Bessemer, Alabama 35020
Telephone: (205) 432-3009

Student's Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent/Guardian

Please Return this Page to Your Child's Teacher

PARENTAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

I hereby acknowledge that I have accessed the Student/Parent Handbook for Westhills Elementary and that I have had an opportunity to read and study its contents.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____
Parent/Guardian

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____
Parent/Guardian

Student's Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Student's Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Student's Name: _____ **Grade:** _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____