

HOWARD ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK



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Howard Elementary

Vision and Mission Statement

Howard Elementary commits to growing learners who are college and career ready through quality instruction, effective use of resources, building a collaborative culture and strong leadership.

Resource Utilization

- Howard Elementary commits to providing all students with effective teachers, current technology and a safe learning environment.
- Howard Elementary commits to providing all teachers with curriculum resources aligned with state standards and technology tools that enhance the delivery of high-quality instruction.
- Howard Elementary commits to working with community organizations to ensure that students have needed food, clothing and school materials.

Collaborative Culture

- Howard Elementary commits to ensuring that collaboration is data driven and focused on student achievement.
- Howard Elementary commits to fostering a safe and trusting environment that accepts diversity.
- Howard elementary commits to promoting opportunities for parents and other stakeholders to be involved in our students' education.

Leadership

- Howard Elementary commits to providing support structures for students to take responsibility for their own learning by setting personal goals.
- Howard Elementary commits to setting high expectations for both the staff and students.
- Howard Elementary commits to providing students with opportunities for faculty and students to act as leaders.

Quality Instruction

- Howard Elementary commits to ensuring that structures and materials are in place for results-driven instruction that is standards-based.
- Howard Elementary commits to providing differentiated instruction to ensure that all students maximize their potential.
- Howard Elementary commits to analyzing data and incorporating effective instructional strategies to help all students achieve academic success.

Philosophy

CHILD – CHILDREN COME FIRST!

Each child should be all that they are capable of becoming. This statement recognizes the fact that all children are unique and that we must continually strive to meet these differences which exist in social, emotional, physical, mental and psychological areas.

TEACHER

No teacher is capable of teaching all things equally well or of being competent in all areas of the curriculum. Therefore, each should be allowed to develop their strengths, and in so doing, help to strengthen other teachers' weaknesses. The instructional staff is aware of the effectiveness of example in demonstrating desirable character traits, work habits, attitudes and values. A major premise in the professional staff of Howard Elementary is to continually strive to become more effective in serving the individual needs of Howard's children. No other commitment can be permitted to take precedence over this one.

CURRICULUM

Each area of the curriculum is unique, just as each child is unique, and should be organized and developed with this fact in mind. Each area of the curriculum will continually be evaluated and developed so that the greatest contribution can be made to each child's individual progress. The staff is committed to continuous professional training so as to meet the changing curriculum needs.

GROUPING

Each child must learn to live as well as live to learn. This statement recognizes that no single plan or method of grouping is in itself adequate to the task, but establishes these two broad and significant bases for the arrangement of students.

RESEARCH

There is no one way to conduct a school. However, ongoing action research at the local school level should help improve all aspects of the educative process in the school.

PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

The community must provide the school with the financial and moral support necessary to have a superior school system and must provide the interest and involvement to ensure the maintenance of a superior system. To facilitate this, the school should seek to involve the community in developing policy and to keep the community informed about the school program.

**** Please don't approach your child's teacher expecting a conference during arrival and dismissal times.**

Arrival

The school doors will open at 6:50am. Students should not arrive at school before that time since teachers will not be on duty. We ask that parents not drop off their children to wait at the front doors until school opens as this practice is unsafe for your children. Upon arrival between 6:50 and 7:20am, students are to report to their designated area (Kindergarten and 1st grade – Gym / 2nd and 3rd grade – Library / 4th and 5th grade – Cafeteria). After that time students go to their rooms and may be dismissed from there to the bookstore, library, etc. Students must be in their room, in their seat and ready for class to begin at 7:30am. Otherwise, they will be considered tardy and must report to the office for a tardy slip.

In order to encourage growth and development of independence of our younger students, parents are allowed to walk kindergarten students to their room (if early) on their phase-in days. After that time, students will be expected to walk by themselves to their class. (Teachers and staff are present in the hallways.) 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students are considered to be of the appropriate developmental age to walk themselves to class after the first full day. Any variation from this needs to be approved in the office. If a student arrives after 7:30am, the student must report to the office for a tardy slip. After 11:00am, students will be counted ABSENT FOR THE DAY. Excessive tardies and/or early dismissals will be turned over to the truancy department. All parents and visitors must enter the building through the main/front door.

Dismissal Policy

In order for a student to be dismissed during school hours, a parent, guardian or an adult authorized by the parent must come to the office and sign the child out. The child will then be dismissed through the office. Please do not ask that your child be dismissed during the day except in cases of emergency. Try to make all doctor and dental appointments after school hours. If students are checked out of school before 11:00am, they will be marked ABSENT for the day.

Car riders will be dismissed at 2:30pm. Students are to be picked up in the front of the school building. The students will come out of the building to load when their name is called. Any car riders remaining after 2:45pm will be brought to the front main doors for dismissal. Please remember that all students should be picked up by 2:45pm. Walkers will be dismissed out the front doors with the crossing guard or another adult to escort them out.

Modified (Daily) Schedule 2 hour delay 9:30am – 2:30pm

Doors will open at 8:50am.

No breakfast will be served on this schedule.

Lunch schedule will remain the same.

Attendance Policy

Purpose:

Recognizing that absenteeism is a hindrance to education and that the progress of a student in school depends, to a great extent, on regular attendance, the Sumner County Board of Education adopts the policy found below as an incentive for students to maintain regular attendance records.

Policy:

A student who is absent from school will bring a note from parent/guardian stating the reason for the absence within three (3) days or the absence will automatically be considered unexcused.

For absences of a full or part day to be considered excused, a written note from the parent/guardian must be provided. After an accumulation of five days of absences excused by parent/guardian notes, the parent/guardian must provide more formal documentation for the absence to be considered excused. After the Christmas break, the total of five absences begins again. Parent/guardian will be notified through the attendance program after five excused absences.

A total of twelve (12) days absent per semester will subject a student to retention. The principal and the teacher(s) involved will hold a conference with the parent/guardian and a decision will be made according to the provisions of Board Policy IHE, Promotion and Retention.

Excused Absences:

1. Student's personal illness or hospitalization

A physician's statement will be required if a student misses three consecutive days of school. If the illness or the hospitalization is to exceed ten (10) consecutive days, the parent/guardian should apply for homebound instruction after the first five (5) days of absence.

**All notes, whether valid medical excuses or parent notes, shall be kept by the office on file for one (1) year.*

2. A death in the immediate family

A parent/guardian note must accompany the student when they return to school.

**Notes shall be kept on file for one (1) year.*

3. Special recognized religious holidays regularly observed by persons of their faith

Parent/guardian is requested to inform the school principal prior to the student being absent from school for religious holidays.

4. Required court appearances

A student may be excused from school attendance for required court appearances. Verification from appropriate authorities may be requested.

**Notes shall be kept on file for one (1) year.*

5. Approved school related activities

Students are excused from school for approved school related activities.

6. Vacations/trips must be approved by the administration prior to departure. Times to turn in make-up work will be left up to the administration. Vacations/trips taken without prior approval will be considered unexcused.

7. Other emergency extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student

Circumstances must be approved by the administration.

When a student needs to be absent for an excused reason, you may wish to have the teacher get missed work together. If this is the case, please call the school early and make arrangements for work to be sent to the office for afternoon pick-up. Teachers cannot be expected to stop teaching to gather assignments. Calling early and allowing plenty of time will enable the teacher to use planning time for getting work together and thereby protect valuable teaching time.

HOWARD DISCIPLINE PLAN

Weapons are not allowed on campus at any time. ANY student found to have a gun (toy or otherwise) or knife in their possession will be suspended!!! Lighters and matches, etc., will also result in suspension.

No tobacco products will be allowed on school property at any time. Chewing gum, profanity and loitering in the hallways are also prohibited.

Severe Clause

Severe disruptions will require immediate attention by the principal. Any punishment by the principal will take precedence over the teacher's punishment.

ZERO TOLERANCE OF THE FOLLOWING:

1. Weapons of any nature (real or toy)
2. Abuse of any controlled substance
3. Violence (real or threatened) to any faculty, staff member or student
4. Vandalism, stealing or destruction of property
5. Demonstrated lack of respect for authority
6. Disruptive behavior that interferes with teaching and/or learning
 - a. Cumulative Behaviors – First offenses will be dealt with at teacher discretion within the prescribed guidelines. These may include, but are not limited to the following: inappropriate attitude, temper outbursts, passive aggression (refusal to cooperate), lying, etc.
 - b. Second and following offenses may be treated as critical offenses
 - c. Critical offenses will require immediate consequences from the principal

Cafeteria

The school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the health program of the school. To encourage good nutrition, a healthy well-balanced meal is served at reasonable cost. Our cafeteria manager works with teachers and students to incorporate nutrition into the curriculum and to help in making wise food decisions.

Applications for free and reduced rates are available through the cafeteria manager. (There may be semesters or entire school years where breakfast/lunch is provided free of charge to all students.)

HOWARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WILL ADHERE TO THE SUMNER COUNTY SCHOOLS NUTRITION POLICY. THEREFORE, NO FAST FOOD WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE CAFETERIA.

(Parents are invited to eat occasionally with their child. Students may invite one classmate to eat with them when parents are visiting.)

Ticket Sales

Lunch money for the week will be collected on Mondays in each classroom. All lunch money is handled through the cafeteria.

Charges

A student may charge their lunch only two (2) times. **Afterwards**, the student's parent/guardian will be contacted to bring money. *Please* help us with this on your daily lunch checks. The cafeteria is left "holding the bag" for many unpaid charges each year and we need your help in order to alleviate a yearly financial loss. All charges are handled in the cafeteria. You may pay in advance for a month, semester or year if you choose.

Breakfast

Students may eat breakfast at school between 6:50-7:20am ONLY. Students are to be finished with breakfast before 7:20am in order to be in their classroom by 7:30am. If there is a two hour delay, there will be no breakfast served here at school. Our cooks will already be into the preparation of lunch for students.

Bus Information / Conduct

Students who come to school on the bus should return home on the bus unless they have a note from a parent or guardian. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Improper conduct on the bus will result in suspension from riding the bus. All students on the bus are under the authority of the bus driver and must obey their rules. The driver will report any misconduct to the principal immediately. No eating is allowed on the bus. Students are expected to stay seated, follow all rules and mind the driver. Large objects, flowers or balloons are not allowed to be sent home on the bus. **Medications are not to be sent on the bus.**

If a student who does not usually ride the bus is to ride the bus due to special circumstances, such as to go home with another student, or if a bus rider is to ride the bus to a location other than his home or usual stop, the office must be provided with a note from the student's parent/guardian. The principal will provide a signed form to the bus driver. Bus drivers will not allow students to board or leave the bus at an irregular location without permission.

Celebrations

Parents, if you send balloons to your child, please make arrangements for your child to be a car rider at dismissal. For safety reasons, school buses are not allowed to carry balloons or large arrangements. **CLASSROOMS WILL CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS ONCE A MONTH.** Contact your child's teacher at the beginning of the month of your child's birthday.

Student Information Form

The school must have on file a completed Student Information Form on each student that lists the parent/guardian name, complete address, correct home, work and cell phone numbers and the number of two persons who can be contacted in case of an emergency. Please notify the school immediately of any changes.

Dress Code

We make every effort to allow students to be comfortable in school. For your convenience and ours at school, the dress code outlined below will be used during school hours. The dress code is to promote an atmosphere conducive to instruction and safety of your child. ALL PARENTS AND VISITORS ARE TO FOLLOW THE SAME DRESS CODE AS THE STUDENTS.

The following shall NOT be worn in school:

No words or slogans on the backside

Backless shoes / flip flops

Length of shorts or skirts must be at the end of fingertips when standing up straight with arms down to the side

Biker shorts

Cut-off jeans that are frayed or pockets showing

Saggy – Sagging pants – Length of pants cannot drag the floor

Spandex or body shirts

Leggings and leotards, unless with an appropriate length top or dress – backside covered

Suggestive slogans, pictures or advertisements for tobacco or alcohol products on clothes

Caps, hats, scarves or bandanas

Strapless dresses or blouses

Spaghetti strap dresses

Bare midriff, halters or tank tops

Cleated shoes

Clothing related to gangs

Extreme hair color, make up or body piercing

Mesh may be worn with t-shirts underneath

Garments must cover the shoulders

Jewelry must not be distracting, disruptive or unsafe

In addition, any clothing that interferes with good order and discipline in school, such as clothing with sexually explicit or violence inciting slogans, may **NOT** be worn.

PENALTIES: Change or go home.

This is the Sumner County Standardized Dress Code for ALL Elementary Schools

Medication

If it becomes necessary for a student to take any kind of medication at school, the correct physician (if prescription) and/or parent/guardian signed medication form, complete with instruction and time, must be presented to the office along with the medication. All prescription medications must be in a current prescription container with instruction label attached. Non-prescription medications must be sent in an unopened container in original package. Both must have correct signed forms or medicine will not be given at school. We are no longer allowed to dispense Tylenol or any other medication without appropriate documentation.

Monies

All monies sent to school should be transported as safely as possible by the student, usually clearly marked in a sealed envelope. Put your child's name, teacher's name and what the money is to be used for on the envelope. The lunch charge policy is covered separately. Trip money must be collected prior to each planned trip along with signed parent/guardian permission notes.

Physical Education

Physical Education is a learning activity. We will be doing activities that develop large and small muscles and coordination, lead-up activities for sports. We spend a lot of time on sharing, getting along, following directions, and, in general, being a good citizen, as well as basic motor skills.

School Visitors and Volunteer Workers

All visitors to Howard Elementary must enter the main front door with covered walk and come by and sign in at the office before going to any other part of the school. You will be issued a visitor's tag through Lobby Guard to wear while in the building. Volunteer workers should also follow the same procedure as visitors.

Telephone

The office telephone is for school business and may be used by students only in case of emergency. Parent/guardian, please make any calls to school after 8:00am and before 2:00pm. This is to ensure the message will get to your child before dismissal.