

T.W. Hunter Middle School

Student Handbook

2017 – 2018



2101 New Hope Road
Hendersonville, TN 37075
615-822-4720
twh.sumnerschools.org

Student Name _____ Grade _____

T.W. HUNTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

T.W. Hunter exists to empower the lives of students by inspiring them to...

LEARN throughout life as they embrace education to remedy social, economic, and environmental issues

GROW mentally, socially, and emotionally as they move toward an adulthood defined by integrity

SERVE locally, nationally, and globally as they seek to improve their world

LOVE without prejudice as they interact with family, friends, classmates, and humanity

COMPETE academically, athletically, and artistically as they win and lose with grace and humility

SCHOOL POLICIES

The following policies will serve as both a guide for student conduct and an outline of school-wide procedural considerations. Not all requirements for proper conduct have been included, as it is neither necessary nor practical to print all regulations that govern the behavior of ladies and gentlemen.

ATTENDANCE

Purpose: The Sumner County Board of Education has set forth the following rationale for school attendance: "Recognizing that truancy is a hindrance to education and that the progress of a student at school depends on the regularity of attendance, the Board has adopted the following rules and regulations, based on the State Compulsory Attendance Law. It is the purpose of this policy to promote good school attendance in grades kindergarten through twelve."

Definitions: For the purposes of clarification, attendance related words must be defined in order to establish common meaning. Efforts to do so should prevent miscommunication regarding this very important topic.

Present: When a student is in attendance at the school or class to which he or she is assigned. For truancy purposes, present shall mean attending for a full day of school.

Absent: When a student is not in attendance at the school or in the class to which he or she is assigned. Missing more than one half of a day or a class counts as an absence. Absences are considered either excused or unexcused.

Excused Absences: Absences tolerated by the school system under the law because the cause and benefit of the absence to the student as verified by proof outweigh the benefits that would have been achieved by attending school. For absences of a full or partial day to be considered excused, a written note from the parent, guardian, or doctor must be provided. **After an accumulation of five (5) days of excused absences and/or tardies, the parent/guardian must file more formal documentation with the principal to assure classification as an excused absence.** Reasons for excused absences include:

- Student's personal illness, medical appointment, or hospitalization verified by a licensed physician, dentist, or health agency. If the illness or hospitalization is to exceed ten (10) consecutive days, the parent or guardian should apply for homebound instruction after the first five (5) days of consecutive absences.
- Death of a family member. Death of a non-family member if approved by the principal.
- Special recognized religious holidays regularly observed by a particular faith. A parent note must be submitted to the school principal prior to the student being absent for a religious holiday.

- Required court appearances. Verification of court appearance times from appropriate authorities must be provided.
- Approved school related activities. Prior approval is required.
- Vacations/trips with prior approval by the principal. A note from the parent/guardian shall be submitted prior to any such trip. Principal will approve **no more than** one per year. Trips taken **without prior approval** will be considered unexcused.
- Other extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student. For such absences to be excused, the building principal or his or her designee must approve them.

Unexcused Absences: absences which are not verified or which do not meet valid reasons for absences. All out of school suspensions are unexcused.

Tardy: when a student arrives to school after 7:40 a.m. In such cases, the parent/guardian must accompany the student into the front office and sign in the student. **On the fifth tardy to school during a semester, a student will be issued a detention. Each first period tardy thereafter during the same semester will result in an additional detention.** For remaining classes, students are considered tardy if they are not in their seats before the bell rings.

Early Dismissal: when a student leaves school before 2:40 dismissal. In such cases, the parent/guardian must sign out the student in the front office, at which point he or she will be called from class. Parents should try to schedule doctor and dental appointments after school. If the student becomes ill during the day or must go home for emergency purposes, the student must report to the office, where an adult will call home for the student. **Unless approved by the administration, students who are absent for a full or partial day will be prohibited from participating in after-hour, school related activities on that same day.**

Reporting Procedures: the process whereby an absence is considered excused or unexcused. **Any student returning from a full or partial day absence must check in at the front office between 7:30 and 7:40, where he or she will receive either an Excused Slip or an Unexcused Slip.** Within two days of any absence from school (full or partial day), the student should bring a note from his or her parent, guardian, or doctor in order to have the absence excused. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. Parent notes should state the child's name, date(s) of absence, and reason for the absence.

Makeup Work: work missed during absences and suspensions. All such work must be made up within **three** school days after the student's return to school. Under extenuating circumstances, the due date for this work shall be adjusted at the discretion of the principal. If a suspension occurs during the last ten (10) days of any semester, the student may be permitted to take final examinations or submit such work as is necessary to complete the course of instruction for that semester.

Perfect Attendance: when a student has not been marked absent for any class, in part or in whole, during the entire school year. School approved activities are considered exceptions to this rule and do not jeopardize a student's perfect attendance status.

BOOK BAGS

In order to keep classrooms safe and aisle ways clear, students are not allowed to bring book bags, messenger bags, duffle bags, or similar items into the classroom. These items may be stored in student lockers but should not be brought into the classroom.

CELL PHONES

Students are prohibited from using and/or having cell phones on their person during the school day. More specifically, cell phones are not to be used in the building during the hours of **7:00 AM and 3:00 PM.**

Students that are afternoon car riders may use their cell phone when outside to communicate with parents for pickup purposes. Any student caught with a phone out without permission will have the phone confiscated, and a detention will be assigned. Confiscated phones may be picked up **ONLY** by a parent or guardian at the end of the school day. Principals may authorize the use of cell phones in the event of an emergency or other serious situation. In addition to having a detention assigned for every offense and requiring the parent to pick up the phone, the following “hold” policy will be observed:

- First offense – Detention and cell phone held until the end of the day
- Second offense – Detention and cell phone held for 24 hours
- Third offense – 3rd Detention (ISS) and cell phone held for 48 hours
- Subsequent offenses – additional disciplinary measures

DEBTS

If a student owes money to the school, he or she will not be allowed to attend dances or other selected school activities. Additionally, unpaid debts will result in a “hold” being placed on the student’s report card. Upon completion of the 8th grade or upon transfer to another school, T.W. Hunter will not release records to the new school until all debts have been paid. Debts include, but are not limited to, class fees, field trip fees, textbook replacement or rebinds, cafeteria charges, library fines, and picture money.

DELIVERIES

Due to the difficulty in making sure every child receives an intended delivery on special occasions, along with problems that may arise during transportation of flowers, balloons, glass containers, and similar items, the administration respectfully asks that all such deliveries be kept to a minimum. **Balloons and glass containers are not allowed on school buses.**

DISCIPLINE

T.W. Hunter employs a dual-level discipline program. Both assertive discipline and rewards will be used as needed in monitoring, regulating, and correcting student behavior. Assertive discipline is the strategy used to hold students accountable for their actions and choices. While not all-inclusive, the following rules have been set forth in order to maintain a school wide culture that is conducive to learning:

1. Leave toys, games, playing/collector cards, and electronic devices at home. All such items will be confiscated and returned only to a parent. The school will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or confiscated items. **Electronic devices, including games, cell phones, and MP3 players are not to be seen at school. If they are seen, they will be confiscated and a consequence will be issued.** If students wish to use eReaders, they must complete appropriate Technology Use forms in the library.

2. Follow the directions of faculty and staff members at all times. Rudeness and disrespect in any form will not be tolerated. Such actions include, but are not limited to, eye rolling, mumbling under one's breath, and walking away from an adult while being reprimanded.
3. Follow the directions of bus drivers and attendants. Bus drivers have the authority and responsibility to refer any student to the administration for discipline. It is a privilege to ride the bus, and students may be suspended from the bus if inappropriate behavior occurs.
4. Acknowledge and observe the hands-off policy at all times. For the safety and welfare of our students, this policy is strictly enforced. This includes, but is not limited to public displays of affection.
5. Refrain from bringing gum, candy, glass containers, and other prohibited items to school.
6. Refuse to participate in actions such as loitering (inside or outside the building), profanity of any kind, and harassment (including bullying).

Detentions: Detentions are suitable consequences for many behavior related offenses and may be issued by any adult at T.W. Hunter. Detention will be held three times per week. Students may choose to serve after school on Tuesdays or Thursdays from 2:45 - 3:30 PM or on Wednesday mornings from 6:45 - 7:30 AM. Detentions will be considered satisfied if and only if students arrive on time and are cooperative with the detention supervisor. Teachers (or other detention-issuing adults) are responsible for contacting the student's parent or guardian before scheduling a time for the detention to be served. When contact has been made, the student will receive a yellow copy of the detention to be taken home as a reminder of the agreed upon date.

Failure to serve a detention will result in an in-school isolation (ISI). Students receiving their 3rd detention during a 9-week period will automatically be assigned ISI. Each additional detention during the same time period will warrant one additional day of ISI. Finally, excessive detentions and/or ISI may result in out-of-school suspension (OSS).

Gum: In order to keep T.W. Hunter clean, gum is prohibited. Students caught with gum will receive an automatic demerit.

Hands-off Policy: With regard to student interaction, T.W. Hunter Middle School enforces a strict, hands-off policy. This policy includes, but is not limited to, hugging, kissing, hand-holding, horse playing, fighting, or any other type of touching. Consequences will be assigned to students who violate this policy.

In-School Suspension (ISS): In-school suspension is a suitable consequence for offenses deemed detrimental to the good order of the school. ISS, unlike a detention, can only be assigned by an administrator. Rules for ISS are established by the administration and will be posted in the ISS room. The number of ISS days assigned is situation specific and is determined by an administrator. An ISS assignment is considered satisfied if and only if the student serves all days assigned and is cooperative with the ISS supervisor. Failure to serve ISS in a satisfactory manner may result in additional days in ISS or even out-of-school suspension (OSS). **Students assigned ISS during a semester will not be allowed to participate in school dances, field trips, or other "outside of classroom" activities. The identification of such activities is at the discretion of the administration.**

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS): Out-of-school suspension is a suitable consequence for offenses of a more serious nature, resulting in conduct detrimental to good order or willful and persistent violation of school rules. OSS is for a period of time determined by the principal not to exceed ten (10) consecutive days. Depending upon the circumstances, a parent may be required to confer with the school for the student to be readmitted to classes. The following non-inclusive list of offenses may result in OSS:

1. Fighting among students
2. Theft
3. Tobacco possession/use
4. Vandalism
5. Violence or threatened violence
6. Willful/persistent misconduct
7. Shanking
8. Extreme disrespect
9. Bullying

Students assigned OSS during a semester will not be allowed to participate in school dances, field trips, or other “outside of classroom” activities. The identification of such activities is at the discretion of the administration.

Please refer to the *2017-2018 Important Policies for Parents and Students*, along with the Sumner County Board Policy Manual for detailed information regarding code of behavior, discipline, and discipline procedures.

DRESS CODE

The appearance of our students reflects the quality of the school and influences student conduct and performance. Students shall observe modesty, appropriateness, and neatness in clothing and personal appearance. The following is the Standardized Dress Code adopted by the Sumner County Board of Education and applies to ALL school-related activities, both during and after school hours. Consequences for dress code violations include changing clothes, going home, ISS, or other penalties authorized by the administration. Continual dress code violations warrant more severe consequences.

The following shall not be worn to school:

- Sagging pants or bottoms with writing on the backside
- Spandex (including jeggings)
- Clothes with holes in them (with or without strings covering)
- Clothing with suggestive slogans, vulgar captions, pictures of or advertisements for tobacco or alcoholic products, sexual innuendo, or gang references
- Form fitting or body conforming clothes
- Halters, fishnet shirts, tank tops, or shirts that result in bare midriffs
- Tops with revealing necklines (measure hand’s breadth with thumb just below Adam’s apple, all fingers together, and straight across the chest)
- Caps, hats, scarves, or bandanas
- Extreme hair or feather color (any color that is not natural)

- Cleated shoes or Heelies

In addition, the following shall be enforced:

- Shorts (front and back) must be no higher than 3 inches from the bend of the back of the knee, as measured from solid material; cut-off shorts are prohibited
- Skirt length or slits in skirts (front and back) must not be higher than 3 inches from the bend of the back of the knee, as measured from solid material
- Leggings must only be worn with skirts/dresses that are the standard length of no more than 3 inches from the bend of the back of the knee
- Pants length must not drag the floor
- No house shoes, pajamas, or pajama separates may be worn
- Shirts, when hands raised above head, must not reveal the stomach
- Shirts must have sleeves (fabric beyond the shoulder seam)
- No tinted glasses/sunglasses unless doctor prescribed
- No body piercing jewelry except for earrings may be worn during school and school events including but not limited to eyebrow, nose, lip, or tongue rings.
- Jewelry must not be distracting, disrupting, or unsafe
- Valuable clothes and jewelry are discouraged
- Flip flops and other minimally covering footwear are discouraged for safety reasons

GRADES AND GRADE REPORTING

Report cards are issued every nine (9) weeks and are sent home with students at the end of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd quarters. End of year report cards are mailed to the student's address of record. Parents will also receive a progress report four times per year, at the end of every 4 ½ week grading period. This progress report is not a final, quarterly grade but provides an opportunity for both parent and student to receive grade information at the midpoint of the quarterly grading period. Parents are also encouraged to stay informed of student grades continually, using teachers' online grade books and InformationNow. For purposes of reporting, the grading scale is as follows:

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

Quarter, semester, and exam grades are weighted and averaged to determine the final grade in core courses, including English, Literature, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Calculation of a student's final grade is outlined below:

Final Grade is an average of Semester 1 and Semester 2 grades

Semester 1 Grade is comprised of three weighted components:

Q1 grade (45%), Q2 grade (45%) and Mid-term Exam (10%)

Semester 2 Grade is comprised of four weighted components:

Q3 grade (35%), Q4 grade (35%), Final Exam (10%), TCAP scores (20%)

HALLWAY AND RESTROOM BEHAVIOR

Any time a student is in the hall during class time, it is his or her responsibility to have signed out of the classroom and have the appropriate hall pass. Hallways are monitored by cameras and adults to ensure the safety and compliance of all students. Additionally, students are discouraged from leaving the classroom to go to the restroom unless it is an emergency. Restroom breaks should be taken between classes and during lunch with the permission of the cafeteria monitor.

HOMEWORK

Students are expected to do homework regularly. It is vitally important that parents provide a suitable place for their children to study. Homework provides both reinforcement of learning and an opportunity to practice newly acquired skills.

IDENTIFICATION (ID) CARDS

Students will be issued a photo ID which must remain in their possession at all times on campus. In addition to being required for admission to dances and other extra-curricular events, the card will serve as the student's library card. If the complimentary card is lost, a replacement will be issued at a cost of \$5.

INTERNET AND E-READER USE

Use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the loss of those privileges. **The "Internet Use Permission Form" and "E-reader Policy" must be on file, per county mandate, granting parental permission for students to use the Internet or e-reader at school. A new form is required each year for both internet and e-reader use.**

LOST AND FOUND

All lost and found items (clothing, backpacks, etc.) should be turned in or claimed through the P.E. coaches. Lost textbooks will be returned to the teacher issuing the book. Lost library books will be returned to the library. Due to space constraints, unclaimed items will be sent periodically to a local charitable organization.

MEDICATION

Any student who needs to take medication during the day shall, upon entering the school building, leave the medication at the office to be administered at the designated time. No medication will be administered without proper documentation from the parent (non-prescription) or parent and doctor (prescription). **All medications must be brought to school in the original container and clearly labeled. A dispensing log will be kept, documenting the administration of all medication. Neither antibiotics nor prescription pain medications are administered at school.**

MESSAGES

We urge parents to communicate transportation, appointment times, and so forth before the student leaves home in the morning. Announcements are made before school, before lunch, and at dismissal. Every attempt will be made to relay the message to the student, but we cannot guarantee the delivery of messages received after 2:15.

SCHOOL HOURS AND CAR RIDER REQUIREMENTS

School hours are from 7:40 a.m. to 2:40 p.m. All walkers and car riders enter and exit the building through the main entrance at the front of the school. Bus riders enter and exit the building through the 6th grade hallway doors. For safety purposes, students are prohibited from walking to the high school, since sidewalks and crosswalks are not available.

Car Rider Arrival: It is vitally important that students exit vehicles only in the “drop zone” clearly marked by orange cones. Failure to observe this policy endangers the students who are exiting the vehicles. Please keep in mind that the car rider lane nearest the school exits to Beech High School or New Hope Road. The lane nearest the parking lot exits **ONLY** to New Hope Road. Drivers are encouraged to enter the correct lane upon their arrival to campus in order to ensure the uninterrupted flow of traffic. When traffic volume warrants, a third car rider lane can be used in the main parking lot, provided students cross only at the crosswalk identified by the front cones.

Car Rider Dismissal: Students may be picked up following the same procedures as those outlined above, including drop zone (load zone) requirements, lane selection, and crosswalks. Because successful dismissal depends on student awareness of parent arrival, the afternoon car rider line presents more of a challenge. For this reason, student names will not be called, and “waves” of vehicles will be entering and exiting the load zone by timer in two-minute intervals. **If a student is not paying attention when the parent enters the load zone and consequently misses his or her ride, the parent is expected to exit the load zone with the other traffic, loop around the campus, and wait in the dismissal line again.**

TELEPHONE USE (FRONT OFFICE)

The school telephone is for business purposes. Parents who call are to leave a message. Students will not be called from classes to receive a telephone call, and only emergency messages will be delivered during class. Students are allowed to call out using the school phones in the main office with permission.

VISITORS

All visitors must enter through the main office doors upon arrival and report to the office receptionist where they will sign the visitor log and receive a visitor badge. Visitors must remain in the front office until they are escorted to their destination. The visitor badge must be worn for the duration of the visit and must be returned to the office when signing out.

WEATHER

Inclement weather sometimes causes delayed school openings, early dismissals, or closings. Parents are advised to monitor local media for information pertaining to weather related school closings. The Sumner County alert system, SchoolCast, is one method the county will use to communicate weather related closings. Please have an after-school, early dismissal plan in place for your child.

WITHDRAWALS

When withdrawal becomes necessary, please notify the school as soon as possible and request a Student Withdrawal Form. **Parents must come to the school and sign a release to officially withdraw a student.** Textbooks and library books must be returned and financial obligations paid before records can be released.

SCHOOL RESOURCES

T.W. Hunter has a number of school resources which are intended to provide support to the students and enhance the learning environment. Students are expected to use these resources in a respectful and responsible manner, preserving their availability for future students.

BOOKSTORE

Paper, pencils, pens, folders, workbooks and other school supplies can be purchased in the library bookstore before school. Pencils are vended through a machine, and students may get change for the machine at the bookstore as well.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus riders are under the supervision of the school from the time they leave home in the morning until they return home in the afternoon. Understanding that he or she is a county-employed authority figure, students will follow the directions of the bus driver. Misbehavior within those times outlined will result in a discretionary consequence assigned by the administration. Consequences include, but are not limited to, bus write-offs, assigned seating, bus suspension, or even bus expulsion.

When necessary for a student to ride a bus other than his or her regular bus, the office will issue a pass allowing the student to ride another bus contingent upon the following provisions:

- The student will not create an overcrowding condition on the bus he or she wishes to ride
- The student has a note from his or her parent to ride a bus other than his or her own regular bus...
Alternate bus notes must include the following information: student name, address, regular bus number, alternate bus number, destination address, parent signature, and parent phone number.
- The parent request is submitted to the office before the school day begins

CAFETERIA

In the operation of all nutrition programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, no child will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, or handicap. If you believe you or any other individual has been discriminated against, write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Behavior: Student behavior in the cafeteria should be based on courtesy and cleanliness. In short, serving areas, eating areas, chairs, and tables must be kept clean and orderly. Students are not allowed to take food, drinks, paper products, or straws out of the cafeteria. Students are expected to remain seated at all times. Scuffling, breaking line, running, or throwing food or drinks will be strictly disciplined, possibly resulting in OSS. Stealing or theft of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in a minimum of 3 days OSS.

Breakfast: Breakfast will be served between 7:00 and 7:30 each morning. Students eating breakfast should sit in the first two rows adjacent to the serving area entry and are expected to follow all cafeteria rules, including cleaning their area after eating.

Charges: Lunch charges are to be paid the next school day. Unpaid charges may jeopardize the student's eligibility for school activities such as dances, field trips, and other outside-the-classroom activities.

Free/Reduced: Applications for the free and reduced program for breakfast and lunch are available in the main office. A new application must be completed and submitted each year.

Lunch: Students will have an assigned lunch period based on their teams. They may purchase lunch or bring it from home. When bringing lunch, it is important to remember that glass containers are not allowed.

Payment: Breakfast and lunch may be purchased on a meal-by-meal basis, but students are encouraged to take advantage of individual cafeteria accounts. Accounts can be loaded at school or online periodically, at which point money is credited toward the student's account. Please visit twh.summerschools.org for a link to the cafeteria site.

COUNSELORS

The counselors at T.W. Hunter are available to help students in many ways. When a student wishes to see a counselor, he or she should go to the guidance office to arrange an appointment. Sometimes a teacher may suggest that a counselor talk with a student. There may be a time during the school day when a counselor will come to the classroom to give a student an appointment time. The student should leave the class, upon the teacher's approval, and return as soon as the conference is completed.

INSURANCE

School insurance is available to all students at the beginning of the year. Parents may choose between the school day coverage and twenty-four hour coverage. Please read the policy contents carefully. This policy can be purchased and used as insurance coverage for athletes.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

Each student will be furnished a picture ID badge which will also serve as their library card. Students are responsible for all books checked out to this badge. Books are checked out for a two-week period and may be renewed once. Students will be charged five cents for every school day a book is overdue until the fine reaches the cost of the book. At this time, the student will be charged the cost of replacing the book. Outstanding library books and fines are considered debts to satisfy and may prohibit a student's participation in school dances and other functions until the book is returned and fines are paid. Extended library hours are available for students needing additional time in the media center.

LOCKERS

Lockers are issued to all students. These lockers are the property of T.W. Hunter Middle School and, as such, are subject to inspection by authorized school personnel. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Students are prohibited from sharing lockers. Students may purchase a lock from the school bookstore for \$6.00. Students are responsible for keeping up with his/her combination. Only orange-dialed locks purchased from T.W. Hunter bookstore may be used.

RELATED ARTS CLASSES

With the exception of Band and Chorus, students and parents are not allowed to choose related arts classes. In order to ensure that middle school students are exposed to a variety of educational experiences, these classes are populated based on seat availability and are offered on a limited basis because of class period constraints. Students are prohibited from changing their related arts classes.

TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are purchased and furnished by the Sumner County Board of Education. Students are expected to take care of their books and return them in good condition at the end of the school year. Students are not to mark or damage the texts in any way. Damaged or lost textbooks must be paid for by the student. In order to obtain a replacement book, payment must have been received on the original book unless arrangements have been made with an administrator. Classroom teachers are responsible for issuing and monitoring textbooks.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities, including sports, service clubs, and special interest clubs are offered as enrichment and reinforcement of traditional curricular activities. Membership and participation in these groups is considered a privilege and is dependent upon student conduct and, in some cases, achievement.

ATHLETICS

T.W. Hunter Middle School, per Board Policy, sanctions four sports for seventh and eighth graders: cheerleading, football, girls' basketball, and boys' basketball. Sixth graders, according to the Board of Education, are prohibited from participating on middle school teams. T.W. Hunter is an active member of the Tennessee Middle School Athletic Association (TMSAA).

Cheerleaders and athletes must show proof of insurance before they will be allowed to participate. This includes practicing and tryouts. All athletes must adhere to the *T.W. Hunter Middle School Athletic Policy*. Athletics are extra-curricular and have extra requirements for participation.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

Students are provided the opportunity to enjoy many school-sponsored activities during the school year. Students who have unpaid debts must satisfy those obligations before participating. Truancy issues, ISS, or OSS within a given semester will prohibit students from attending these events.