

Blackman Middle School

Student Handbook and Standards of Behavior

- STUDENTS WILL RESPECT THEMSELVES – Disrespectful language and actions will not be tolerated.
- STUDENTS WILL RESPECT PERSONS – Violence or horseplay at any level will not be tolerated.
- STUDENTS WILL RESPECT PROPERTY – Theft or vandalism at any level will not be tolerated.
- STUDENTS WILL USE APPROPRIATE VOICE LEVEL IN ALL AREAS OF SCHOOL.
- STUDENTS WILL BE RESPONSIBLE – Students will be at the right place, at the right time, doing the right thing.

WHY STANDARD BEHAVIOR

As we implement academic standards, we must have standards of behavior to not inhibit the academic pursuits of our students. We cannot tolerate the theft of education caused by behavioral disruptions. Standards of behavior are as important to a person's employability as are academic standards.

We solicit the assistance of all middle school parents and students to assist us to raise the standards of behavior at Blackman Middle School. This movement toward civility and tolerance in our school will not be accomplished without everyone's assistance and cooperation. We ask for your support and understanding as we hold everyone at Blackman Middle to higher expectations academically and behaviorally.

ARRIVING TO CAMPUS

The doors will be unlocked at 7:15 a.m.

- I. Bus students must enter the front door and report to their designated area and remain there until dismissal at 7:50 a.m.
- II. Walkers and car riders arriving before 7:50 a.m. must report to their designated area. Those arriving after 8:00 a.m. must report to the main/annex office for late check in.
- III. Breakfast will stop being served at 7:50 a.m. unless notified of a late bus arrival.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

- I. Bus students will be dismissed to load at the front of the school. All bus riders must exit through the front door and load onto their correct bus number.
- II. Walkers must leave campus through the nearest door immediately after dismissal.
- III. All 7th and 8th grade car riders are to leave the building through the doors nearest the main cafeteria. 6th grade car riders will be picked up in the back of the annex, UNLESS they have an older sibling, in which case they will report to the main building pick up location.
- IV. EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE FOR STUDENTS TO BE PICKED UP BY 3:15 P.M.

CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION/EARLY DISMISSAL

Any time a student goes home in a manner different from his or her regularly assigned way, the student or parent must submit a written or emailed request, signed by the parents/legal guardian and approved by an administrator. All notes should be submitted to the student's homeroom teacher, who will submit changes to the front office for verification. Students will receive transportation changes back to them before the end of the day and must present them to gain access to a different bus. The school will not permit students to be checked out or make transportation changes after 2:45 p.m. School buses will not make special trips, changes in routes, or additional stops for students. Parents or guardians who are checking out students early MUST present a valid photo ID and the person picking up the student must be on the student's registration card approved pick up list.

ILLNESS

If you become ill at school, ask your teacher for a pass to see the nurse or to the front office. Students are not to leave campus due to illness without being released by the nurse or front office. Students are not allowed to use personal devices to make arrangements to leave school for any reasons. Students who violate that rule will be subject to discipline per the BMS electronic device policy.

LOCKERS

Lockers are issued at the beginning of the school year. Locks may be rented for \$5, or you may provide your own combination lock, key locks are discouraged. Your combination is to be given to your homeroom teacher and a parent/guardian should know the combination. Student locks that are unable to be opened, will be cut off at no cost to the school. Lockers are to be kept clean and organized. A \$5 charge will be made for any lock not returned at the end of the year. Sharing lockers is not permitted and any damage to the locker will be the responsibility of the student who was issued the locker.

LIBRARY

Blackman's library, with over 9,000 volumes, online catalog, and multimedia center, offers opportunities for research, a quiet place to read, and curriculum support and enrichment for all reading levels. Students are expected to obey all library rules. Lost books are the responsibility of the student. All fines must be reconciled by the end of the school year.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER (SRO)

Blackman Middle School participates in the School Resource Officer program. A deputy sheriff with the Rutherford County Sheriff's Department is assigned full-time to the school. This officer has three primary duties:

1. Law Enforcement
2. Teaching
3. Advising/Consulting

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Student will be recognized at Blackman Middle School in a variety of ways. These include, but are not limited to:

- Principals List: To be eligible a student must have no grade below an A at the end of a grading period.
- Honor Roll: To be eligible a student must have no grade below a B at the end of a grading period.
- Perfect Attendance: To be eligible a student must have no excused or unexcused absences.
- Student of the Nine Weeks: To be eligible a student must show excellent conduct, excellent effort and work ethic in all academic areas, and display high character, school pride, and a positive attitude.
- Junior BETA Club: The Blackman Middle School Junior BETA Club constitution states that "BETA members must be of worthy Character, good mentality, creditable achievement and commendable attitude..." Scholarship criteria for membership in the Junior BETA club is based on the first two grading periods and may be achieved by making "Honor Roll" and/or "Principal's List" for the first two grading periods. Students may also transfer membership from one school to another, provided that proof of membership is available.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Every student must be aware of his or her proper role when the regular teacher is unable to be present. Substitute teachers are to be considered honored guests in our school, and our aim is to have them consider us a well-mannered and cooperative student body. The student's responsibilities are to see that every courtesy and assistance is offered to substitute teachers in order that their duties in school will be pleasant and happy for them, as well as profitable for the students.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

The BMS dress code has been devised with the idea of promoting a positive learning atmosphere and wholesome attitude for each student and the school as a whole. Any dress or hairstyle that is considered contrary to good hygiene, distracting or disruptive in appearance, detrimental to the educational environment or to the public image of the school will not be permitted. The administration has the right to determine if attire or appearance is inappropriate for school. Students should follow these guidelines:

1. Student dress will not promote activities, acts or other attributes associated with gang activities.
2. Any dress considered too revealing will not be allowed (no undergarments should be visible). See through outfits, bare midriffs, open backs, low-cut tops, tube tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps or mesh shirts are not permitted. NO SKIN should be visible between shirts and pants while sitting or extending arms overhead.
3. Shorts and skirts MUST be as long as or longer than the tip of the longest finger when the students' arms are by the side of the body, including holes in jeans. Biking shorts, spandex or boxer shorts (when worn as regular shorts) are not permitted. Leggings are only allowed if covered by another garment that meets dress code standard.
4. Clothing, accessories, or any item that advertises substances which are illegal for teenagers (drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, etc.) or which otherwise inappropriate (profanity, sex, obscenities, violence, gang related, etc.) are not to be worn or brought to school. Hats, scarves, hair picks, stocking caps, hair curlers, and other head coverings may not be worn at school.
5. Clothing must be size appropriate. Sagging is not allowed. All belts, buttons, and fasteners must be fastened at all times.

When student attire is out dress code, the principal, assistant principal, or administrative designee will issue school appropriate attire that is in compliance with the school dress code. Students will not be allowed to call home to arrange for a change of clothes.

MISCELLANEOUS/PERSONAL ITEMS

Certain items should be left at home. These include but are not limited to dice, cards, laser pointers, cameras, gaming devices, lighters, fireworks, or any other item that may cause a distraction or disruption to the school day. Using these items during the school day in a manner that causes a disruption will result in confiscation and disciplinary action being taken. Personal items are the responsibility of the student and the responsibility of finding lost personal items will fall on the student.

CELL PHONE/BYOD POLICY

Rutherford County Schools is committed to ensuring students are provided an environment which maximizes the integration and use of technology by students and staff as part of their daily educational experience. BYOD allows students additional opportunities to adapt, manage, and participate in a technological world, and helps fulfill the mission statement of our system of empowering today's students to grasp tomorrow's opportunities.

Rutherford County is allowing all 6th – 12th grade students to bring their own technology devices to their school campus to be used for educational experiences and activities. All students and staff are expected to complete the RCS Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) prior to participating in any online activities with either their own device or with school-purchased technology.

Important Information for Students and Parents

Students are not required to bring their own devices to school. However, they are still required to complete an AUP agreement to use school technology.

All students must connect to RCS Wi-Fi by choosing the RCS-Secure network from their device's Wi-Fi settings. You will use the same username and password you use when logging in to a school based computer. Students who have devices with other data plans (AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, T-Mobile, etc.) are still required to utilize the RCS-Secure Wi-Fi network. Student filtering is a requirement of all schools regardless of the device.

The teacher in the classroom has the final say on procedures in the classroom. If a teacher asks you not to use your device at a particular time, then you must follow those directions.

Personal devices must remain in silent mode at all times except when it is being used for instructional purposes and permission has been granted by the instructing teacher.

Individual schools will have various zones where personal devices are and are not allowed. Users are required to follow these procedures on where a device can and cannot be used. **Green Zones:** Open use of device. **Blue Zones:** Devices are permitted for specific instructional use. **Yellow Zones:** Devices are on silent and out of sight. **Red Zones:** Prohibited. As stated in board policy 6.312: "Unauthorized use or improper storage of a device will result in confiscation of the device and appropriate disciplinary action." Possession of a personal device under the RCS policy is a privilege which may be forfeited by a student who fails to abide by all policies and procedures. Refer to the attached BYOD User Guidelines document for further guidance.

The device may not be used to record, transmit, or post photographic images or video of a person, or persons on campus during school activities including district provided transportation unless assigned by the teacher and allowed by the RCS Acceptable Use, Media Release, and Internet Safety Procedures.

Violation of Cell Phone/BYOD Policy

Any offense will immediately result in confiscation of device. Devices will be collected by the student from the front office at the end of the day. The following additional actions will be taken:

- 1st offense: Confiscation and a warning
- 2nd offense: Confiscation and detention
- 3rd offense: Confiscation and Friday School
- 4th offense: Confiscation and 1 day of ISS
- Any student who uses an electronic device for audio or video recording of inappropriate behavior or without permission will be suspended a minimum of 5 days Out of School Suspension.
- Repeated inappropriate use of electronic devices may result in the student losing the ability to bring the device to school.

Students should ensure devices are charged prior to bringing them to school each day.

The focus of classroom time is instruction in the content area. Teachers will not be able to assist students with their devices during this instructional time.

District firewalls and filters are in place to lessen the risk of outside threats.

Personal Responsibility

As with any personal item you bring from home, there are risks involved when you bring your own device to school. RCS is not responsible for theft or damage done to the device while at school. It is important that students and parents record the device's serial number in the event it comes up missing. A school administrator should be contacted in the event theft occurs so they are aware of the situation. Students are required to follow the guidelines of the AUP on their personal devices just as they do on school-owned devices. Any disciplinary infractions that occur from using technology tools should be referred to a campus administrator.

CAFETERIA POLICY

1. BMS is on the Federal Hot Lunch program and provides nutritious breakfasts and lunches.
2. During the lunch period each class is escorted to or from the cafeteria in an orderly manner, as to not disrupt the classes in session.
3. All tables and floor areas are to be kept clean of food particles, napkins, cups, etc. Cafeteria cleanliness is everyone's responsibility, so we will ask everyone to help clean tables and pick up trash.
4. It is a violation of school and federal law for students to use another student's name or number to purchase meals.
5. Outside food and beverages from restaurants are not allowed to be eaten in the cafeteria. Any outside food brought in will have to be eaten in the front office holding areas.

6. Cafeteria monitors and administration are present during school lunch hours. These individuals are responsible for keeping an orderly environment. Any student not following the cafeteria rules of conduct can be issued any of, but not limited to, the following course of disciplinary action:
 - a. Silent lunch
 - b. Assigned seating
 - c. Forfeiture of electronic device usage
 - d. Lunch period detention

DAMAGE TO SCHOOL PROPERTY/TEXTBOOKS

Parents are held responsible by law for any damage or loss of school property caused by their child. Parents will be notified of any damage caused by their child. Parents are responsible to pay for damaged or lost textbooks.

WEATHER/CRISIS DRILLS

State law requires practicing weather and crisis related drills during the course of a school year. BMS is equipped with an emergency alarm system and a student accountability resource to ensure the safety of all our students. Setting of a false alarm is against the law. Any student caught setting off a false alarm will be subject to legal action and school based actions from administration, not limited to long term suspension. Teachers will familiarize students with the procedures to follow during an emergency drill. Fire evacuation and drill codes are posted in each classroom.

Students are expected to:

- Take drills seriously
- Stay silent
- Listen for instructions

During any of the drills or actual scenarios, no students will be allowed to check out until the SRO and administration call the drill complete or deem the crisis to be over.

VISITORS TO CAMPUS

- I. All visitors must enter the building through the front doors by the main office. All other doors will remain locked.
- II. Visitors must sign in and remain in the lobby until front office staff or administration receive the appropriate information to release the visitor to another location in the building.
- III. Visitors must present a form of government ID with photo in order to receive a visitor's badge. Badges must be worn and be visible at all times.
- IV. BMS is a closed campus. Friends, relatives, Former students, etc. may not visit classes during the school day, except when approved by the school administration.
- V. Students are instructed and not permitted to open any outside door during the school day to non-county employees.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Conferences with parents and teachers are a vital part to our student's success. All teachers have certain responsibilities and classes that require their attendance, as well as having a daily duty-free lunch and planning period. According to the Rutherford Education Association contract, all parent requested conferences must be scheduled 48 hours in advance via written note or email. All scheduled meetings will need to be ended prior to the beginning of the teachers next scheduled class or responsibility.

Regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 3:15-4:15.

Please notify your students teachers when you plan to attend.

Rutherford County plans yearly conferences in the 1st and 2nd semesters. Notifications of these dates will be sent home with students for parents to schedule.

SCHOOL WIDE DISCIPLINE POLICY

To provide an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, it is necessary to maintain reasonable discipline. The staff feels that the students need an opportunity to accept responsibility for their own behavior. Those students who fail to accept these responsibilities will be held accountable. Students are expected to show self-discipline always. Each student is expected to behave in an orderly and courteous manner. The reputation of the school depends upon the ability of students to exhibit traits of good citizenship. Dishonesty, profanity, disorderly conduct, disrespect for authority, and disregard for school property and behavior unbecoming of Blackman Middle School, will not be tolerated. All teachers and staff members have the authority and responsibility to enforce the discipline policies by the school and system when violations occur.

Blackman Middle School ensures that every student is afforded “due process” when dealing with discipline infractions and subsequent infraction dispositions. No referral will be processed without a conference being held between the student and administrator. All suspensions will be processed in accordance with Tennessee Code annotated 49-11309. Rule violations in school are handled in different ways. Administrators, teachers, and mini-schools are responsible for tracking and communicating rules infractions via the students shared behavior log, through administrative referral, or through the student information system iNow, or phone calls and emails.

Zero Tolerance offenses will result in expulsion from school.

Zero Tolerance offenses include but are not limited to:

Possession of weapons or dangerous instrument

Possession/distribution/under the influence of drugs

Possession of firearms

Assault

Vandalism of School Property

Electronic threats

Other offenses that may occur in school will be disciplined in the following methods, but not limited to:

In School Suspension/ISS – Students will spend the day in isolation, away from peers, monitored by the ISS teacher. School work is collected and completed by the student during their time in ISS. Students are expected to work and follow the classroom rules in ISS. Failure to do so will result in the student being sent home to carry out the rest of their suspension.

Out of School Suspension - Parents/Guardians will be notified to come to school to pick up their student. A work request will be sent around to gather the student’s assignments for the duration of the suspension. Out of school suspension is considered an unexcused absence. While suspended, students may not participate in any school sponsored activity or be allowed on campus.

Detention – Held every Wednesday from 7:00 a.m. until 7:50 a.m. Each grade level is responsible for assigning and monitoring their detention. Students will be met at the main cafeteria entrance and escorted to their detention locations. Students are expected to work quietly during this time. Students who fail to come to detention will be re-assigned detention for the following week, or serve the missed detention during their lunch period.

Lunch Detention – Students assigned lunch detention will serve this during their lunch period in the ISS room.

Friday School – Friday school will be held from 3:15 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. BMS Administration will monitor students during this time. Students should come prepared to work silently for the duration. Parents will pick up students from the front of the main building.

Remand to Smyrna West Alternative School – Students who are remanded to SWA School will be given contact information and intake dates to enroll. Once a student has been enrolled and completes the SWA program, they will return to BMS. Students and parents are required to meet with administration on the first day back to BMS to review the BMS re-acclimation plan.

COMMON DISCIPLINE ISSUES AND CONSEQUENCES

- Fighting will not be tolerated. Students involved in a fight on campus will receive a minimum of 3 days OSS for the first offense, 5 days OSS for the second offense, and remanded if a third offense occurs. Depending on severity and details from parties involved, administration will have final say on disposition.
- Use of tobacco products, smokeless tobacco, and e-cigs/vape pens are strictly prohibited on campus. Students violating this policy will receive a minimum of 3 days ISS on the first offense, minimum 3 days OSS on subsequent offenses.
- Horseplay, hitting, kicking, and slapping will not be tolerated on campus. Students are expected to keep their hands and feet to themselves. Violations of these rules will result in ISS or OSS, depending on severity of the case.
- Harassment of students will not be tolerated on school property. Administration will conduct an investigation and determine appropriate discipline actions to take, but not limited to multiple days of ISS or OSS.

Please familiarize yourself with the RCS Student Handbook and Code of Behavior and Discipline to see various types of infractions and dispositions that can occur during a school year.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are encouraged to establish good attendance habits. Regular attendance is an important factor in achieving success at school. Parents or guardians will be called when students are absent. A note from a parent or guardian is required for each absence. After 5 unexcused absences, the student will be reported to the county truancy office. Court action against parents or guardians may result.

The only excused absences are:

- Student doctor/dentist appointments
- Death in the immediate family (father, mother, brother, sister, aunts, uncles, or grandparents)
- Personal illness
- Required court appearance
- Religious observances

Procedure to follow after an absence:

1. Note from home should be given to the first period teacher or placed in the absent note boxes in the hallways. The note should contain the following:
 - a. Student name
 - b. Date of absence
 - c. Reason for absence
 - d. Parent signature
 - e. Phone number where parent can be reached
2. Notes will be collected by the attendance secretary who will excuse or not excuse the notes submitted.

If the procedure is not completed within 5 days, the absence will automatically be unexcused.

The student is responsible for making up all missed assignments within 5 days of returning to school.

TRUANCY INTERVENTION PLAN

Once a student has accumulated 5 unexcused absences, Blackman Middle School will immediately mail a letter to the parent/guardian or legal custodian. Notification will be considered sufficient 2 school days from the postmark of the Notification Letter, and any further unexcused absences after this 2-school day period will subject the student to the Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan below:

Tier 1: Students with 5 or more unexcused absences

- 5-day unexcused letter will be sent home
- Conference with student and parent/guardian.
- Attendance contract discussed/created signed by student, parent/guardian and principal/designee. Contract will have a suggested end date.
- Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings will be held to discuss the student's progress. The meetings may occur in person or by phone and MUST be documented.
- Violation of contract or failure to comply with Tier 1 intervention will result in student being placed in Tier II.
- Student and parent/guardian informed of future consequences that may occur in Tier II and III.

Tier 2: If a student accumulates additional unexcused absences after completion of the Tier I contract.

- Student is referred to a Guidance Counselor who will conduct an initialized assessment of the student and reasons the student has been absent.
- Guidance Counselor will establish strategies and intervention to assist the student with attendance. This may include: phone calls, meeting, home visits, paired with Advisory teacher to mentor, additional documentation.
- Guidance Counselor/Administration may refer the student to counseling, community-based services, or other individuals who may assist with student's attendance.
- Advisory teacher will continue to follow up with a parent/guardian and document this contract.

Tier 3: If a student accumulates additional unexcused absences following Tier II interventions

- Guidance Counselor will evaluate the student's attendance progress, contact parent/guardian, contact Administration, and determine which action listed below is most appropriate in each case.
 - Conduct an attendance hearing with the school's internal truancy board to review Tier I and Tier II strategies and implementation.
 - Continue with appropriate interventions and implement recommended changes
 - Small group intervention class through the Counseling Department.
- If Tier III interventions are unsuccessful, it may result in referring the student to the Rutherford County Juvenile Court for truancy.

BALLGAMES & ASSEMBLIES

Students are expected to enter the gym/auditorium in an orderly fashion, sit properly, and be courteous and respectful. The appearance of someone on stage or at the microphone is the automatic signal for silence. Whistling and booing are in poor taste and will not be tolerated. Students will be dismissed with their teachers to return to their regular classes following the assembly. Misbehavior at a school event, on or off campus, will result in disciplinary actions being taken.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

When a student withdraws from school, he or she must do so through the guidance department. This should be done on the student's last full day of attendance at BMS. All records must be cleared, textbooks returned, and all debts cleared before transcripts and records will be released to the next school of record.

REPORT CARDS & PROGRESS REPORTS

When progress reports and report cards are sent home, it is the expectation of the school that those reports are signed and returned to the homeroom teacher so that we can ensure parents and guardians are kept up to date on their child's grades. The use of iNow is also highly encouraged by parents in order to track their child's grades, attendance, and discipline updates.

RCS Grading Scale

93-100	A
85-92	B
75-84	C
70-74	D
70-below	F

MEDICATION

Students are not allowed to bring prescription medications to school or carry them on their person. All prescription medication must be signed in with the school nurse. Students who use asthma inhalers or students who take diabetic medications will be allowed to carry their medication during the school day. If a student is required to take the medication at school, the parent or guardian must obtain and complete a Self-Administration of Medication form from the nurses' office. The parent or guardian must bring the medication to the nurses' office in the original bottle or packaging from the pharmacy. Medications will be kept secure in the nurses' office and administration of the medications should take place at the appropriate times, under the direction of the school nurse or trained personnel.

ELECTIVES

Most students will receive a combination of the following electives during the school year:

Band – upon request, all year long

PE – most students will receive PE once a year, students will be expected to dress out and participate

STEM (Science/Technology/Engineering/Math) – students who are selected to participate in STEM will go for one semester.

Technology Education – one nine weeks

Coding – partnered with STEM, one nine weeks

Keyboarding – one nine weeks

Music – one nine weeks

Art – one nine weeks

Teen Living/Career Explorations – one nine weeks, 8th graders participate in career explorations

Health – one nine weeks

Computer Literacy/ACT Prep – one nine weeks, 8th graders participate in ACT prep.

After Band/STEM students are scheduled, iNow will randomly schedule all other student's electives. We do not take requests to change electives, and we do try to make sure students get different electives. Due to the high numbers of students and limited course offerings, there will almost always be years where students will repeat an elective.

FIELD TRIPS

All school rules apply on field trips. Permission slips and money for field trips must be turned in by the assigned deadline. All money is non-refundable.

COMPUTER USE POLICY

All students and parents are required to sign the Rutherford County technology permission form before receiving student log in information.

TEXTBOOKS

Parents and students are required to sign the Rutherford County textbook agreement form. It is the responsibility of each student to take care of their textbooks. Replacement costs of damaged or lost textbooks will be the responsibility of the student and parents or guardians.

CHEATING

Any student thought to be found cheating on an assignment or test will be issued a grade of zero and parents will be contacted. From there, it will be up to the discretion of the administration and teacher to allow for a retake.

BMS CLUB INFORMATION – check school website for contact/club information

Archery Club

BETA Club

Builders Club

Choir/Select Choir

Drama Club

Kindness Club

FCA

Science Olympiad

Student Council

Yearbook

Robotics

THANK YOU FOR MAKING BLACKMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL THE BEST IT CAN BE

Principal – Dr. Amy Connifey-Marlin

8th Grade Assistant Principal – James Festervand, ED. S

7th Grade Assistant Principal – Jessica Jackson

6th Grade Assistant Principal – Seth Burt

PUBLIC INFORMATION

“The Rutherford County Board of Education does not discriminate in any program, activity, or employment on the basis of handicap, sex, race, or national origin as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504, or the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.”

Dr. Andrea Anthony, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources

Rutherford County Schools

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