



Austin Middle School

2715 Danville Road, S.W.
Decatur, Alabama 35603
(256) 552-4622

PRINCIPAL

Mrs. Anita Clarke

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Mrs. Ann J. Johnson

2019-2020 **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

The Decatur City Board of education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age in its programs and activities, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For questions or comments regarding Title IX and section 504 policies and issues please contact:

The Decatur City Schools Board of Education
302 4th Avenue, Northeast
Decatur, Alabama 35601
256.552.3000

Austin Middle School

Vision Statement

At Austin Middle School, our students will be respectful, impassioned, life-long learners.

Mission Statement

The mission of Austin Middle School is to empower our students to be responsible, impassioned, life-long learners by creating engaging and relevant learning opportunities, building meaningful relationships and setting high expectations.

Introduction

The Administration, Faculty, and Staff at Austin Middle School (AMS) would like to welcome you. Everyone here at AMS is committed to making an impact as we strive to provide the best learning environment possible. Here at Austin Middle School everyone is expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner consistent with the accepted norms of values, attitudes, and beliefs of the Decatur City School System. **Respect** should be a pervasive theme guiding all interactions and relationships. Students should treat their peers and the staff **politely, courteously, and respectfully in a spirit of friendliness and cooperation.**

Parents of students enrolled at Austin Middle School are expected to be the **models** of conduct for their children setting consistently high standards for academic excellence and personal growth. A courteous and cooperative relationship with the educational community will maximize the academic, moral, and behavioral development of your child.

Everyone at AMS wants our students to experience success. More importantly we want to prepare our students for College and Career Readiness. In order to accomplish this, every student must meet and accept his or her obligations and responsibilities. This handbook is an attempt to provide valuable information to all students as to what is expected of them. Further information can be obtained from the Decatur City Schools Code Handbook. We hope this handbook will help you understand the expectations set forth as you attend AMS. Welcome to Austin Middle School and have a wonderful year!

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY/ NON-DISCRIMINATION/ ANTI-HARASSMENT STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Decatur City Schools Board of Education and Austin Middle School that no student will be discriminated against, harassed, denied a benefit, or excluded from participation in any of the school system's education programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For questions or comments regarding Title IX and Section 504 policies and issues please contact:

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ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically-related matter and/or any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help another student commit an act of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, the acts described in the **Decatur City Schools Code of Conduct and Austin Middle School Honor Code** when performed in any type of academic or academically-related matter, exercise, or activity.

The penalty for academic misconduct (Class 2.21 – Honor Code Violation) will include assignment to In-School Suspension, and/or CAS, a “Zero” for the exercise or activity. The student could also lose privileges for field trips and other school-related activities.

The impact of academic misconduct or any act of dishonesty is far greater than any punishment one may receive. The damage to one's goodwill and reputation for being honest and trustworthy sometimes can never be repaired.

ACCIDENTS/ILLNESS/INJURIES

All accidents, illness, and injuries **must** be reported **immediately** to the student's teacher, nurse, or administration.

ARRIVAL

Traffic flow into both the front and rear of the building is of utmost importance in the morning before school begins (see Traffic Rules handout). Bicycles may be ridden to the school grounds but must be walked once on the property. Bicycles should be locked individually to the racks located in the back of the building. Skateboards, mopeds, roller blades, scooters, and motorcycles are not permitted on campus. The school cannot assume responsibility for damage, lost, or stolen bicycles. In case of theft, the police should be contacted.

Entering the School Building

The school begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Students may enter the building at 7:15 a.m. to either go to breakfast or to the auditorium. Between 7:55-8:20 students are to go to morning holding; 6th grade students are to report to the Auditorium and 7th graders to the gym. Breakfast begins at 7:30 a.m. Those students who are eating breakfast should report to the cafeteria **BEFORE** going to morning holding. Only students with written permission from a teacher are permitted in classroom hallways before 8:20 a.m. **Students who arrive after 8:20 a.m. should report to first period.** Students who arrive at school after 8:30 a.m. will be considered tardy and must sign in at the office. Students who are not in their first period by 8:30 a.m. will be tardy to first period. By 3:45 p.m. students should clear the building. Students are not allowed in the building after 3:45 p.m. unless approved by a faculty or staff member.

- Alarms have been installed on the back doors and on the AED panel near the front office. The back doors are not to be opened for any reason. Opening a backdoor or opening the AED panel without just cause will be considered a Class II offense- 2.01 defiance. (from high school handbook)
 - Students are not to loiter outside of the school, behind the school, or in the parking lot.
- Students are not to be in the teachers' parking lot before or after school for any reason.
- Students are to come into the school building upon arrival at school.
- All students must be in their classrooms with their homebase teachers no later than 8:29 a.m.

ATTENDANCE

Philosophical Basis:

School administrators are required under state law to enforce compulsory school attendance laws. Regular attendance by students facilitates the development of the skills and knowledge to function in a modern democratic society.

Excused Absences

A student shall be excused for absences from school for the following reasons:

1. Illness.
2. Legal requirements.
3. Emergencies approved by the principal.
4. Special circumstances with prior approval by the principal and if the student is academically in good standing.

Unexcused Absences

Absence for reasons other than those listed above as “excused” shall be considered as unexcused.

- When a student receives an unexcused absence, the teacher is under no obligation to permit the student to make up missed assignments.
- Any student enrolled in grades 1-8 is required to return with a doctor’s note explaining each absence after the student's tenth absence or the parent must schedule a conference with the principal or designee within two school days after the student returns to explain each absence. Excuses are placed in the metal box outside the cafeteria.
- Failure to do so will result in future absences being unexcused. A student who is unexcused will not be allowed to make up missed work and will receive a grade of “Zero” on missed work for the unexcused absence.

It is the belief of the Decatur City Board of Education that regular school attendance is important to all students and to the school system. It is further believed that course content and grading procedures should be structured so that regular attendance is necessary in order to successfully complete course requirements.

Alabama’s Compulsory Attendance Law

Section 16-28-3, Code of Alabama, 1975.

“Every child between the ages of 6 and 17 shall be required to attend a public school, private school, church school or be instructed by a competent private tutor for the entire length of the school term in every scholastic year...”

Section 16-28-12, Code of Alabama, 1975.

Requires that any parent/guardian who enrolls a student in school be responsible for the student’s regular attendance and proper conduct.

Section 12-15-111, Code of Alabama, 1975.

Provides that a parent may be fined \$500.00 and receive up to one year of hard labor if convicted of parental neglect; contributing to the delinquency of a minor; or if the child is found to be a child in need of supervision. They may also be required to pay restitution to the Board of Education.

Section 16-28-16 (b), Code of Alabama, 1975.

Each child who is enrolled in a public school shall be subject to the attendance and truancy provisions except that any parent or parents, guardian or guardians who voluntarily enrolls their child in public school, who feel that it is in the best interest of that child shall have the right to withdraw the child at any time prior to the current minimum compulsory attendance age.

On the student’s fifth (5th) unexcused absence and/or tenth (10th) unexcused tardy and/or absences due to check out, the parent, guardian, or person having control of the child shall attend a conference with the principal or his/her designee and/or participate in the Early Warning Program provided by the juvenile court. Attendance at one of these conferences shall be mandatory except where prior arrangements have been made or an emergency exists. Failure to appear at the school conference and/or to appear at the Early Warning Program shall result in the filing of a complaint/petition against the parent under (Code of Alabama 1975), s16-28-12 (c) (failure to cooperate), or s12-15-13 (contributing to truancy) or a truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.

On the student’s **seventh (7th) unexcused absence**, a complaint/petition against the child and/or parent/guardian will be filed in Juvenile Court. Code of Alabama 12-15-111, 12-15-102(4)(a) and 16-28-12

Students Returning to school after being absent:

Please refer to the Decatur City Schools Code of Student Conduct Handbook for information on student absence. Students will be given credit for a full day if they check in before 12:00 a.m. or check out after 12:00 p.m. Parents or guardians must send a note of explanation to the school the day the student returns to school. If the student fails to bring a written excuse by the **THIRD day (two days to turn in)**, the absence will be marked unexcused regardless of the reason and the student will be subject to disciplinary action and counted as truant. The student will not be allowed to make up missed work and will receive a grade of "Zero" on missed work for the unexcused absence. All student absences shall be designated as either excused or unexcused. Upon returning to school, the student must present the absence excuse to the silver absence box outside the cafeteria.

BOOK BAGS

Students may use their book bags throughout the school day but they must not leave it unattended. Students ARE allowed to have rolling book bags. When students go to PE, they must lock their personal items in their PE locker.

BUS Transportation Expectations

DCS bus rules and regulations have been adopted to govern student behavior on the bus. Questions regarding bus discipline should be directed to the administrator of the school in which the student is enrolled. Bus discipline rules, bus disciplinary action, and the Code of Student Conduct apply to all students while they are on the way to and from the bus stop, while at the bus stop, and while on the schoolbus. Students in violation of the bus rules are subject to disciplinary action and may lose the privilege of riding on the bus. The DCS Bus Rules goes as follows:

1. Students will obey the driver and all other school board employees willingly and promptly at all times. The driver is in full charge of the bus and students.
2. Students will behave in an appropriate and orderly manner.
3. Students must ride the bus on which they have been assigned.
4. Students may be assigned seats.
5. Students will remain seated facing forward with feet on the floor and legs out of the aisle.
6. Students will keep their feet on the floor at all times while riding the bus. Students cannot put feet on seats or back of seats.
7. Students will not stand or move from their assigned seat while the bus is in motion.
8. Students will not throw trash or litter.
9. Students will not open windows without permission. Students will not throw any items on the bus or out of the window.
10. Students will not extend head, hands, arms or any part of the body out of the window.
11. Food, drinks, gum or candy will not be consumed on the bus at any time. No glass containers will be allowed on the bus.
12. There will be no loud talking, singing or laughing on the bus. There will be no yelling or raising of voice on the bus.

CAFETERIA

Breakfast and lunch may be purchased in the cafeteria; no fast foods will be permitted to be brought into the school and carbonated beverages are not allowed. Breakfast is served from 7:30 a.m.-8:20 a.m. Students will eat lunch with their class during a set lunch schedule. Students are responsible for cleaning up after eating. Disposable products should be placed in trash cans. No food or drinks may be taken from the cafeteria. Clear beverages in a clear bottle may be carried from class to class.

No more than three charges will be allowed before paying. Pay PAMS.com is available through the DCS Website to pay online. Parents also can view their student's account online at no charge.

The Decatur City School District takes part in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Nutritious meals are served each school day. AMS has been given community Eligibility Provision (CEP) status; therefore, all students will be eligible for free breakfast and lunch. See applications on our school website.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The office should be notified immediately of any address change or phone number change. A proof of address (mortgage/lease agreement or utility bill) should be turned in to the main office upon address change.

CHECK-INS/CHECK OUT

A parent or guardian must come to the Main Office at Austin Middle School to sign a student out for a valid need ~ picture ID is required before a child is released to them. Students must check in through the office if they arrive after 8:30 a.m. Student who do not check in through the office and go directly to class will be counted as absent for the day unless the office is notified. Students are allowed only four tardies to school. After the fourth tardy, students will be reprimanded for excessive tardies. Students will only be allowed to leave the building with a parent/guardian or those who are listed in INOW. Notes or telephone calls shall not be accepted for purposes of check-out of a student. Parents must contact the office when extenuating circumstances occur. Parents should be present before students leave class and should not expect to check out students after 3:15 p.m., unless there is an emergency. All emergency must be approved by the administration. Students leaving campus without following proper procedures will be considered truant and are subject to disciplinary action. *Checkouts are all unexcused until an appropriate note is returned.* Students with three or more unexcused tardies to class will be issued a discipline notice.

Tardy to School or Class Procedures:

3 tardies to school- detention

4 tardies to school- 2 days of detention

5 tardies to school- now considered defiance and will be handled as such.

Late arrivals to school and early dismissals from school/class are strongly discouraged because a student must be in class to achieve academic success. Every effort should be made to have the student in every class. Parents are encouraged to make dental, medical, and other appointments for their children after school hours or during the summer vacation and holiday periods. Tardies will be deemed excused or unexcused by an administrator.

CONFERENCES

In an effort to promote communication between home and school, parents are encouraged to have periodic conferences with their child's teacher. If there is a need for a conference please schedule with the individual teacher or the guidance counselor at (256-552-4622).

DISCIPLINE

Students will be held accountable for their actions regarding personal behavior. Each student will face the consequences of poor decisions and benefit from the positive results of good decisions. The goal is that the consequences lead to student improvement and help him or her make better choices and decisions.

Austin Middle School will protect the learning environment and the rights of its students by eliminating from school those whose conduct defies efforts toward correction and persistently take

an unreasonable amount of time and effort teachers and administrators should devote to those in pursuit of their education.

Refer to the **Decatur City Schools Code of Student Conduct** for specific information about discipline.

Violation of any policy described in the *Austin Middle School Student Handbook* not covered by the **Decatur City Schools Code of Student Conduct** will be considered as a Class 2.24 or Class 3.29 offense as described by the **Decatur City Schools Code of Student Conduct**.

Disciplinary measures used at Austin Middle School include: Before School Detention (D-Hall), In School Suspension (ISS), CAS and Long Term CAS. When assigned to any of these, students will be given a copy of rules and procedures for the discipline assigned and parents will be contacted.

DRESS CODE

The policy of the Decatur City Schools Board of Education is that good grooming and personal appearance are essential elements in the teaching and learning processes. It is expected that students will dress in such a manner that will ensure their health and safety while at school. The dress and personal appearance will not be disruptive or interfere with the legitimate interests and welfare of the students. Austin Middle School reserves the right and responsibility to counsel students regarding their manner of dress and grooming.

The following are acceptable:

- Shoelaces must be tied and Velcro flaps should be secured in the manner designed for safety purposes or sandals must be worn. House shoes are not allowed.
- Shorts, dresses and skirts will be allowed only if they are decent (not form fitting) and at fingertips or below. There will be no “design slits” in shirts or dresses.
- Girls may wear sleeveless shirts/blouses. However, the straps should be at least three fingers in width.
- All clothing must be worn in the manner that it was intended or designed.
- Only prescription glasses may be worn.
- Shredded jeans are permissible only if there is no flesh showing. No skin or undergarment should be showing regardless of the student’s position and there are no gaping holes even if tights are worn. There should be no skin showing above the knee.

The following are unacceptable:

- Clothing shall have no holes, cuts, slits, or slashes above the knees.
- Hats, caps, scarves, dew rags, bandanas, toboggans, or other headwear are not allowed inside buildings unless for medical or religious reasons.
- Sagging pants and clothing. Principal and her designees will make final determinations of what constitutes sagging. Belts are required if pants have belt loops.
- Spandex material, Lycra shorts, biker shorts, cutoffs (unhemmed).
- Halters, mesh tops, midriff tops, tube tops, sundresses, spaghetti strap dresses, or spaghetti-strap tops.
- Body glitter, glitter costume, or stick on adornments such as gemstones, stars, tattoos, facial, body, or tongue piercings (earrings are an exception). Jewelry, ornaments, or accessories that may be used as a weapon and/or distract from the educational process (for example, but not limited to sharp objects; pins, chains, picks, large belt buckles, etc.)
- The wearing of obscene, secret society, or gang apparel is not allowed.
- Clothing with pictures, writing, and/or symbols promoting the use, sale, or celebration of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products, guns, or having sexual, violent, or profane implications

- is not allowed.
- Rubber bands or any other object around the wrists or ankle(s).
- Writing on self.

The dress policy applies at all times, from arrival onto campus until the student leaves the campus. Activity sponsors may, with the approval of the principal, establish different dress and grooming rules for participation in a specified activity or organization. The principal and/or his designees have the authority to determine inappropriate dress.

Any student violating the dress policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

- First, second, third dress code offenses- Students will be required to change and violations documented by the teacher.
- Fourth dress code offense- Student will be sent to the office for disciplinary action for defiance.
- Any absence or tardy for violation of the dress code will be coded unexcused.

The same standards of personal appearance emphasizing modesty, neatness, and safety must be met for all extracurricular and social activities. It is the responsibility and obligation of Austin Middle School to determine the appropriateness of student dress for these activities. Students may be asked to leave the activity and disciplined for inappropriate dress.

ELEVATOR

The school elevator is not for routine student use; it is only accessible to physically impaired students. Students with a temporary impairment should check with the office personnel for permission and must receive a written pass to utilize the elevator.

EMERGENCY NOTICE OF CLOSING OF SCHOOL

In case of inclement weather or other causes should necessitate the closing of school, you will be informed via SchooCast and/or TV stations. This information will be carried by broadcasts as soon as possible.

- TV Stations: WAAY WAFF WHNT WMJN
- Electronic Notifications: by email, text message, Facebook, Twitter or SchoolCast recorded messages
- Parents can sign up with electronic notification by using the DCS website. Please click E-news sign up on the upper left corner. Complete the form and indicate the means in which you would like to be contacted in case of school closings, weather alerts, etc.

FIELD TRIPS

Any school trips require a signed permission slip from the parents of the students involved. Also, each student must have on file in the office a completed Notarized Medical Release Form. Disciplinary patterns may prohibit permission to participate in field trips. However, a notification of field trip requirements will be provided to the parents prior to the field trips. Students are expected to be dressed appropriately (see Decatur City Schools Code of Student Conduct). Other rules may apply to specific field trips. DCS Transportation Rules and Regulations apply.

FIRE SIGNAL INSTRUCTIONS

When the fire signal is heard, the building must be evacuated immediately. Teachers shall instruct each class on the following procedure periodically. Fire alarms have been installed. Students are forbidden to touch them unless a fire is seen or reported. Pulling a false alarm could result in a recommendation to the Superintendent for expulsion, and charges may be filed with the Juvenile Court.

Points to remember:

1. When the alarm sounds (a long siren with strobe lights), all students should immediately listen for directions from the teacher.
2. Move quietly in single file out of the nearest fire exit- DO NOT RUN.
3. Travel a safe distance from the building and wait. DO NOT LEAVE GROUP.
4. Roll call will be taken.
5. Any student temporarily out of class on a pass should take the nearest fire exit and go quickly around the building outside to the ground from which he/she came.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS

- Students will sit in chairs properly with all chair legs on the floor.
- Students may **not chew gum**, eat candy, or snacks in the school building.
- Students are not allowed to bring baseball cards or collector cards to the school without permission from the office.
- Students are not allowed to sell any items at school. Students SHOULD NOT bring large amounts of money to school FOR ANY REASON.
- Students shall not bring to school knives, chains, lighters or other objects that may be considered dangerous.
- Students shall not bring electronic signaling devices (pagers) to school.
- Students may not remain in the school building after 3:45 p.m. except for special activities or with special permission.
- Student should not touch or open the defibrillator cabinet mounted on the walls.
- Students are not permitted to make long distance phone calls on any school phone.
- Students who have a problem with a fellow student should report the incident to the teacher, counselor, assistant principal, or principal. As fighting is a serious threat to the safety and welfare of the students, it is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action and/or juvenile court referral.
- Willfully defacing and destroying public property is unlawful.
- Harassment, extorting money, and other acts are also unlawful.
- As citizens, we are all responsible for the safety, welfare, or rights of others and should immediately report such acts to the teacher, the assistant principal, or the principal.
- Smoking, vaping, the use of alcohol, and the use of unprescribed drugs and/or possession thereof could result in immediate suspension and possible expulsion as these acts pose a serious threat to the safety and welfare of students.
- Students are permitted to bring clear bottles with clear fluid to drink during the day.
- Students who refuse to follow through with discipline may be suspended and required to take the punishment upon re-entering school.
- Students can access online the Decatur City Schools Code of Conduct and must adhere to all the policies therein.
- Students who make a verbal or written threat to do bodily harm to another student or Decatur Board of Education employee may be assigned to CAS with a possible recommendation to the Board of Education that they be expelled from the school system.
- Students cannot participate or attend extracurricular activities while assigned to ISS, CAS, CAE or Home Suspension.

GUEST/SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Austin Middle School is fortunate to have a guest teacher substitute when regular teachers are absent. A guest/substitute teacher deserves the highest degree of courtesy, cooperation, and respect at all times. Students must understand that the guest/substitute teacher does not personally know each student as the regular teacher would and does not specifically know the typical class

procedures and rules. Students are expected to always follow all instructions and directions of the guest/substitute teacher. A student should expect severe disciplinary consequences when being uncooperative or disrespectful to a guest/substitute teacher.

GUIDANCE

Guidance counselors are available to help students. Counselors work with students, parents, teachers, and administrators to help all students achieve success.

GYM REGULATIONS

Alabama School Law requires each student to participate in the regular physical education program unless excused by a doctor or other competent authority. Absences of one week or more require a doctor's excuse. If a student is unable to attend physical education because of health reasons, a doctor's excuse must be presented to the office. That student may be assigned a study area for the duration of the excuse.

Each student must dress properly for physical education class. Each student will dress out in proper gym clothes each day unless excused by a doctor. Students must wear shirts at all times. Students are encouraged to purchase a gym suit.

A gym locker and a combination padlock will be assigned to each student. Students are asked not to share their combination with anyone. Gym suits and shoes should be locked in the locker when not in use. During your physical education period each day, your regular school clothing and other personal belongings should be in your gym locker. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or mislaid articles, but it will make every effort to protect student property. If the lock is lost, it must be paid for by the student.

HALLWAY/WALKWAY/STAIRWAY PROTOCOL

Movement through the hallways, walkways, and stairways must be consistent. Move quickly; at no time are you permitted to run. Out of courtesy and as a rule, stay to the **right side** when moving down a hallway, walkway, or stairway. Only two (2) students may walk side-by-side. There is not enough space for more than four (4) people to fit across a hallway, walkway, or stairway.

Running, loud talking, or yelling in a hallway, on a walkway, or in a stairwell is considered as inappropriate school behavior and the student will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Hallways, walkways, and stairways cannot be blocked by groups. A student that is not in class during instructional time must have a written hall pass signed by the teacher. Classes are never to be disturbed. Written permission from the principal is required if it is necessary to contact someone who is in class.

HANDS- OFF POLICY

Students are to respect others and their property at all times. This means keeping your "hands off" others and their property.

HOMEWORK POLICY

The faculty of Austin Middle School believes that homework, properly utilized, is an important component of the learning process. Assignments missed as a result of an absence from school should be completed as soon as possible so that future academic progress is not impeded. Students should refer to the Decatur City School Code of Conduct for policy.

1. Homework should be related to worthwhile educational objectives.
2. Homework should be evaluated by the teacher.
3. Homework should not be given during standardized testing days, or school breaks of four days or longer (Thanksgiving, Winter Holiday and Spring Holidays.)

4. Teachers should attempt to coordinate homework assignments by grade levels or teams so that the total quantity of homework for students for a single night is reasonable.
5. Homework should be made up *within three days* of the student's return to school, except in the case of an extended absence. In the case of an extended absence, the student will have up to two weeks to make up homework.
6. Unexcused absences may result in a grade of zero for missed assignments.
7. Because teachers are professionals who are familiar with the learning styles and individual needs of their students, they should be allowed flexibility in the application of this policy to special circumstances related to their own teaching.
8. **Students must follow the make-up work policy in the Decatur City Schools Code of Student Conduct.**

LEAVING CAMPUS

Once students arrive on AMS campus, they ARE NOT to leave campus FOR ANY REASON unless they checkout through the school office. Students are not permitted to leave campus before and/or after school and then return to AMS campus to wait for class or for a ride.

LIBRARY BOOK POLICY

A student who checks out a book from the library is responsible for that book. A student is responsible for any book that is lost or damaged while checked out in his/her name. To say a book was stolen does not relieve a student of his/her responsibility.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles should be placed in office. Each student should write his/her name on all items brought to school for identification purposes.

LOCKERS

Lockers will NOT be issued for the 2019-20 school year.

MEDICATION

Any prescription or non-prescription medication consumed by a student at Austin Middle School or on a school sponsored field trip must be administered by the school nurse or a trained medication assistant from the school staff. **All medication, prescription or non-prescription, may only be administered by the school staff when a State of Alabama Prescriber/Parent Authorization medication form (PPA) is completed and signed by a physician and is on file with the nurse for each academic school year.** The form is available in the Main Office or from the school nurse. All medication must be signed in by an adult with the school nurse, including self-carry medications. No medications will be accepted at Austin Middle School or allowed on field trips unless these guidelines are followed.

Any student who possesses medication and/or gives away, sells, or attempts to give away or sell medication (prescription or non-prescription) will be subject to disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

Criteria for selection:

- Students must have a 90 average in the four academic areas: Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies.
- Students must attend AMS for one complete semester before being considered.
- Seventh Graders are eligible. Sixth grades will be considered in the spring for the upcoming school year. Any seventh grader who meets the criteria for second semester will also be considered in the spring of the upcoming school year.

- Students can have only one Class I discipline referral.
- Students must have no Class II or Class III discipline referrals.
- Students are not allowed code 13 for conduct on their report card.
- Students can have either one 6 or one 9 per semester on the report card conduct codes.
- Students are voted into the National Junior Honor Society by a majority vote of the five-member faculty council.

○ Note: Please view the report card codes listed under Report Card Conduct Codes.

PARENTS

All parents are encouraged to read with their children the Decatur City Schools Code of Student's Conduct.

Decatur City Schools is pleased to offer parents and guardians exclusive access to their students' academic information including attendance and grades using INOW, our student information system. When you go to the DCS website you will see an icon for CHALKABLE that will allow you to access grades. Our Parent Portal provides a layer of security to access the information. To access INOW you will need a username and password that is provided to you from the Guidance Counselors. If you have not already been provided with this information, please contact Austin Middle School for more information. Parents should go to <http://parentportal.dcs.edu> to check your student's grades electronically.

PASSES

Students must have a pass any time that they are in the hallway. A pass is necessary for a student to get a drink of water or to go to the restroom, to go to the library, to go to the nurses station, or to go to any other part of the building without a teacher.

REPORT CARD CONDUCT CODES AND MARKING SYSTEM:

Conduct Codes:

1. Cooperative attitude
2. Conscientious worker
3. Outstanding student
4. Efforts are improving
5. Accommodations made
6. Inconsistent effort
7. Comes to class unprepared/does not dress out for PE
8. Tests or assignments missing
9. Inadequate participation/inattentive
10. Excessive absences/tardies
11. Disturbs learning situation/excessive talking
12. Uncooperative/disrespectful
13. Excessive school-related absences
14. Call school to schedule a conference

Marking System:

A+	= 97-100	C+	= 77-79	F	= 0-59
A	= 93-96	C	= 73-76	S	= Satisfactory
A-	= 90-92	C-	= 70-72	U	= Unsatisfactory
B+	= 85-89	D+	= 67-69		
B	= 83-86	D	= 63-66		
B-	= 80-82	D-	= 60-62		

REPORT CARDS

Reporting student progress to parents is an extremely important responsibility for teachers. Students will receive report cards at the end of each nine-week period. In addition, teachers may schedule individual parent conferences. Progress reports will be sent home each 4¹/₂ weeks. Parents may also request a login to INOW to view your child's grades during each grading period. Refer to the School Calendar for the dates.

SAFE SCHOOLS HOTLINES

Students who feel threatened or harassed; know about other students using or selling drugs at school; or know, observe, or hear about any act that may place the safety or welfare of any person in jeopardy can **confidentially** and **anonymously** report these situations at the following telephone numbers:

Safe Schools Decatur Tip Line	256-227-8514	
State of Alabama Safe Schools Hotline	1-888-SAV-KIDS	1-888-728-5437

SAFETY AND SECURITY VIDEO RESOURCES

Austin Middle School has video resources which monitor the safety and security of students, faculty, and staff. All people must be aware that their actions may be video-taped. Video is recorded twenty-four hours a day, though it may not be monitored at all times.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Parents have the primary responsibility for the health of their children. The schools shares their responsibility only by giving first aid and notifying parents of illnesses or accidents.

- Emergency procedure cards are sent home annually. These cards are to be completed by the parents and returned to the school immediately. **Parents, please ensure that these cards are updated if your contact information changes.**
- All students must have a pass with the time written on it to come to the health room.
- Unless necessary, students will not be kept in the health room for an extended period of time.
- No student is allowed to help himself/herself to first aid supplies kept in the health room.

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Special student accident insurance may be purchased at the start of the school year.

Accidents must be reported to the school so that the proper form may be given to the family for processing the claim.

It is the parent's responsibility to purchase the insurance offered.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

Students will be advised of classroom rules. The Student Code of Conduct can be found on the school website.

Any discipline problems or accumulation of problems that a teacher or team of teachers considered serious will be reported in writing to the principal's office on a discipline notice. A copy of the disciplinary notice will be given to the student, teacher, and a copy will be filed in the student's record. Students assigned to ISS or CAP will be given a copy of the disciplinary referral and the protocols for ISS or CAP.

It is the school administrators' main concern that teachers are allowed to teach and students are allowed to learn. Students who refuse to take part in an orderly learning process, or who refuse to allow others to take part, will be subject to the consequences outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

STUDENT SUGGESTIONS OR COMPLAINTS

Any suggestions or complaints should be directed to the principal or the assistant principal.

TARDY TO CLASS

A student is required to be in all classes on time. 1st period tardies to school will be handled through the office. Tardies without a pass will be handled as follows:

- 1st offense: warning
- 2nd offense: writing assignment
- 3rd offense: phone call home
- 4th+ offense: discipline referral

TELEPHONE USE

Students may not use the telephone in the main office unless they are sick. Students may not make long distance calls on any school phone. Students must show office personnel a pass from their teacher before using the phone.

CELL PHONE USE

Cell phones are not necessary due to students having their own Netbook. However, if a student brings a cell phone it must not disrupt classroom instruction. Some class lessons require the use of a cell phone for instructional purposes. There will also be designated places in the building that cell phones can be accessed. It is at the teacher's discretion as to whether cell phones should be "powered off" within their classroom. Students can utilize earbuds, but only ONE may be used at all times. Cell phones cannot be used to take pictures, post on social media, or any function that violates a person's right to privacy. If a student fails to comply, disciplinary actions will be taken by the teachers and administration and may result in loss of the phone, detention, ISS or CAS if a student is noncompliant.

Progression of Disciplinary Action (unless a student refuses to comply with expectations)

1st Instance- Violation and date/time recorded.

2nd Instance- Violation and date/time recorded; and conferences with student and/or parent.

3rd Instance- Violation and date/time recorded; disciplinary referral for the student noting 1 day of Detention hall is assigned.

4th Instance - Violation and date/time recorded. 1 day of In-School Suspension (ISS) assigned. Students phone is taken until the end of the day and put in the vault/office.

5th Instance - Violation and date/time recorded. 2 days of ISS. Students phone is taken until the end of the day and put in the vault/office.

6th Instance - Violation and date/time recorded. 3 days of ISS. Students phone is taken until the end of the day and put in the vault/office.

7th Instance - Violation and date/time recorded. 3 days at CAS. Students phone is taken until the end of the day and put in the vault/office. Student will not be allowed to have their phone at school for the remainder of the year. Instances beyond 7th violation would result in an increased number of days assigned to short term CAS.

TECHNOLOGY USE

AMS will follow the Technology Devices Acceptable User Guideline as adopted by Decatur City Schools. Each student is provided a Netbook with their parent's permission. However, if the device is lost, damaged, or destroyed, the parent is responsible for the cost to repair or replace. DCS uses two platforms called GoGuardian and Gagle to monitor students when they are on their Netbooks

at school and at home. Inappropriate websites or use of Chromebooks will result in disciplinary action.

TEXTBOOKS

Parents may request a textbook for students to check out. Each student is responsible for the loss of or damage to any books issues to him/her. If a book is lost, damaged, or destroyed, he/she will be required to pay for it.

TORNADO WARNING INSTRUCTIONS

Tornado warning will be indicated by a series of long rings on the school bell. The office will notify the classrooms in the event of a tornado warning. All students will immediately listen for instructions from the teachers. No talking will be allowed. Everyone will move to designated areas of safety. They should be seated on the floor and wait for further instructions.

The safety and welfare of our students are of primary concern to the staff at Austin Middle School. Every effort will be made toward that end. During a tornado warning, no student will be allowed to check-out until an “all clear” has been declared by the school system.

VISITORS

Visitors must push the buzzer located at the main entrance of the building. All visitors must have their Driver's License or ID to identify themselves prior to being admitted to the rest of the building. In addition, visitors must report to the school office upon entering the building and register as a visitor. You will receive a visitor name badge to wear while you are in the building. Please return this badge upon leaving the building. Any non-registered visitors is subject to arrest for trespassing. A person checking out a student must be on the INOW check out list and will be verified through the Drivers License.

WITHDRAWALS

Any student withdrawing from Austin Middle School to attend another school must obtain a withdrawal form from the guidance counselor on the morning of the last day he/she attends AMS. All staff members involved with the students must initial the form to make sure all obligations have been met. The form should then be returned to the counselor before the school day ends in order that the students receive his/her transfer slip and required document to take to his/her new school. Records will be sent to the student's new school only upon written request from the new school and appropriate withdrawal forms have been filled out through AMS Guidance Counselor.

WORTHLESS CHECK PROCEDURES

All checks accepted must be personalized and have a current address and telephone number. Write your child's name in the Memo.

Employees are not to accept unsigned, post-dated or counter checks. If possible, driver's license number should be referenced on the check.

- **NO TWO-PARTY CHECKS SHOULD BE ACCEPTED.** All checks should be made for exact amount and cannot be “cashed out” by the School Cafeteria or School Office. Checks should be deposited the day they are received.
- **AUTOMATED CHECK RECOVERY** will handle all returned checks for Decatur City Schools. A notice should be included in the school handbook given each school year. This notice should be displayed in all languages that make up the body of that school or facility.

The Austin Middle School **Student Handbook** exists to foster the success of the students and the efficient operation of Austin Middle School. The Austin Middle School **Student Handbook** represents many of the standards and guidelines for behavior. Recognizing that it is impossible to identify every situation, Austin Middle School reserves the right to review individual situations and take appropriate action.

The Austin Middle School **Student Handbook** is subject to change at any time when determined to be necessary by the administration of Austin Middle School. If changes are made to the **Austin Middle School Student Handbook**, students, parents and guardians will be notified.

Austin MIDDLE SCHOOL'S BELL SCHEDULE

1st Period	8:30-9:27
2nd Period	9:31-10:22
3rd Period	10:26-11:17
4th Period	11:21-12:45
5th Period	12:49-1:40
6th Period	1:44-2:35
7th Period	2:39-3:30

ASSESSMENT 2019 – 2020 TEST DATES (subject to change)

Austin Middle School

***Visit www.dcs.edu for more testing dates and information**

<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>6-7</u>
<u>Scantron Fall</u> <u>Scantron Spring</u>	<u>August 19-September 6</u> <u>May 3-15</u>	<u>Reading,</u> <u>Math</u> <u>Science 6th</u>
<u>Pacing Guide Assessment #1</u> <u>Pacing Guide Assessment #2</u> <u>Pacing Guide Assessment #3</u>	<u>October 10-11, 14-15</u> <u>January 8-10, 13-14</u> <u>March 12-13, 16-18</u>	<u>Reading</u> <u>Math</u>
<u>ACAP Summative</u>	<u>April 6-May 1</u>	<u>ELA,</u> <u>Math</u> <u>Science 6th & 8th</u>

DEFINITIONS:

Character -The quality and sum of a person’s moral excellence and strength. The way a person feels, thinks, and acts in the important matters of life, especially in relation to the principles of right and wrong.

Cheating -Receiving or soliciting aid, or the attempt to receive or solicit aid, from another person or other source (i.e., books, notes, study aids, computer, etc.) or giving aid, or the attempt to give aid, to any person without the consent of the teacher.

Dignity -The quality or state of being worthy, honored, or esteemed.

Diligence -Steady, earnest, and energetic application and effort.

Dishonor -Loss of honor or reputation. A cause of disgrace from the lack of honesty or integrity.

Ethical -Conforming to accepted principles and standards of moral duty, obligation, and conduct.

Falsify -Intentionally change in order to deceive.

Honor -A keen sense of ethical conduct. One's word is a guarantee of performance.

Trust -Assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something.

Integrity -Adherence to a code of moral, ethical, and human values.

Lying -The statement of an untruth, the omission of pertinent information, or falsification of official material with an intent to mislead.

Misrepresentation-Falsifying, altering, or misstating the contents or documents or other materials related to academic matters. Presenting as genuine any invented or falsified citation or material.

Moral -Virtuous conduct and character according to civilized standards of right and wrong.

Obligation -Moral duty or promise that binds or restricts one to a course of action.

Plagiarism -Using someone else's words, ideas, works, computer program, output, or data derived through experimentation or investigation without giving that person credit. This is contrary to academic integrity and to the **Honor Code**. Ignorance of plagiarism is not a defense to a charge of plagiarism.

Respect -Recognizing the worth of self and the worth of other people, their property, and opinions.

Responsibility -The quality or state of being accountable, answerable, trustworthy, reliable, and committed to following through on an obligation.

Stealing -The act of intentionally taking or appropriating the property of any individual, organization, or institution without the expressed right or permission.

Truancy -The action of staying away from school without good reason; absenteeism.