AMERICAN WAY MIDDLE
BELIEVE! ACHIEVE! SUCCEED!

2025-2026

STUDENT HANDBOOK

AMERICAN WAY MIDDLE SCHOOL

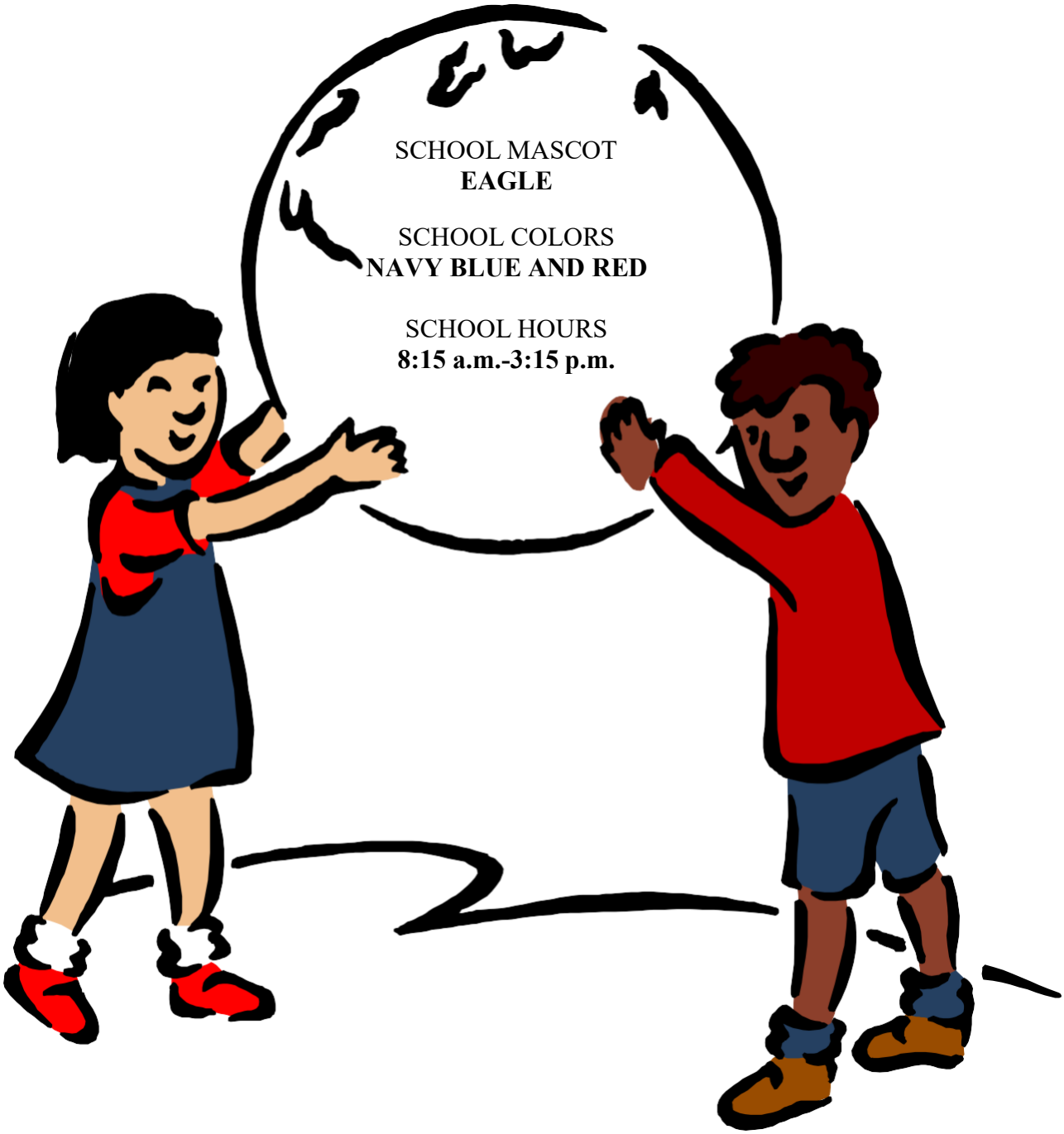
Memphis-Shelby County Schools

Larissa Jackson, Principal
Carmen Heidelberg, Assistant Principal
Towan Henning, Assistant Principal
Rochelle Sanders, Title I PLC Coach

DaJuana Johnson, Instructional Facilitator
Anthony Stone, Dean of Students

3805 American Way
Memphis, Tennessee 38118
Phone: 901-416-1250
Fax: 901-416-1251

AMERICAN WAY MIDDLE
BELIEVE! ACHIEVE! SUCCEED!



MISSION

At American Way Middle we **BELIEVE** in ourselves and each other, work hard to **ACHIEVE** our goals, and grow every day to **SUCCEED** in school and in life.

VISION

American Way Middle School's vision is to cultivate literate, tech savvy, self-motivated learners who think critically, collaborate respectfully, and lead with integrity in a diverse and ever-changing world.

STUDENT AFFIRMATION

This is **OUR** school, American Way Middle School, where united **WE** Believe, Achieve, & Succeed.

MOTTO

"Believe, Achieve, Succeed"

WEBSITE:

https://schools.scsk12.org/americanway-ms

Scan me!

"Students Today, Leaders Tomorrow, Learners for a Lifetime"

We are dedicated to making learning fun as well as meaningful with plenty of connections to living. We must make school a place where students want to escape to, rather than from.

This year we will continue to implement the TN State Standards as a guide to developing a coherent, systemic school improvement initiative. Our TN Standards require students to implement the use of critical thinking and problem- solving skills to more complex text and skill sets. At American Way Middle, we will also be implementing RTI2-B (Response to Intervention and Instruction for Behavior). This program promotes positive initiatives that will encourage good behavior. In addition, we will continue to implement school-wide SEL (Social Emotional Learning) as a part of our district-wide initiative to promote mental health and wellness.

We want to assure you that we will do our best to help your child experience academic, social, and emotional growth. We are pleased that you have entrusted your child in our care here at American Way Middle. We are ready and willing to assist you in any way possible to have more complete understanding of the curriculum and requirements as established by the Memphis-Shelby County Schools District. Therefore, we encourage you to be involved and an active partner in the educating of your child. With your cooperation, this should be an excellent school year.

Expectations for Students

These are general expectations. Details will be discussed further in the handbook.

1. Students will attend school daily and always be on time.
2. Students will bring school supplies to class each day.
3. **Students' cell phones will be collected each morning upon arrival at school and stored in the Main Office for all students. Cell phones will be returned to students at the end of day.**
4. Students will NOT be issued lockers. Each student may carry a **CLEAR backpack** only. Please refrain from bringing large sums of money or other personal items (including electronic devices such as iPods, MP3 players, etc), which could cause disruption in the classroom. The school IS NOT responsible for stolen/lost items brought to school. In the event a student brings something inappropriate to school, the principal will hold the object until the parent comes in to pick it up.
5. Students will maintain proper conduct at all times.
6. Students cannot leave school at any time without permission from the office and a parent or guardian present (PowerSchool contacts only).
7. Students will show school pride by obeying schoolwide expectations and respecting the rights and property of others.
8. Students will be fully informed of the schoolwide expectations and consequences by their teachers.
9. Students/parents will be responsible for restitution if they damage or destroy school property including laptops, iPads, calculators, etc.

10. Students will refrain from aggressive behavior on the bus and on the school property.
11. Students that are unsupervised after dismissal will be off campus NO LATER than 3:30 P.M.
12. Students participating in extracurricular activities will be picked up immediately following their practice/game.
13. Students are not to bring candy, gum, potato chips, or other junk food unless these items are a part of a regular sack lunch. All food must be eaten or discarded before leaving the cafeteria.

School Hours

School hours are 8:15-3:15. Teachers are not expected to be at school before 8:00. Breakfast students will enter at 7:45 at the gym entrance. **STUDENTS MUST BE IN THEIR ROOMS BY 8:15 OR THEY WILL BE MARKED TARDY.** Students reporting to school after 8:30am must be accompanied and signed in by a parent or guardian who is listed as a contact in PowerSchool.

Arrangements must be made **BEFORE** a student comes to school for the afternoon pickup. We do not want to continually interrupt classes with instructions for how students are to get home. Dismissal will begin at 3:05 p.m. in the following order: Outside duty teachers' classes, Bus Riders, Walkers, Car Riders, and Extracurricular Activities. All students should leave the campus at dismissal time ***or no later than 3:30. NO CHECKOUTS WILL BE PERMITTED AFTER 2:30. NO EXCEPTIONS.***

Arrival on Campus

Students arriving on campus before 7:45am must remain outside the building until an administrator or assigned teacher open the doors for student entrance and they will report to the gym. Students may not walk the halls before homeroom begins. Supervision is offered only in designated areas at 7:45 a.m. Once a student has arrived, he/she may not leave campus unless normal checkout procedures are followed. Students are not allowed to leave campus to go the American Way Community Center for any reason.

Crosswalks/Parking and Traffic

Students are expected to cross streets only at designated crossings. When walking to or from campus, please set the proper example of safety for your children by only using designated crossings. ***DO NOT ALLOW STUDENTS TO CROSS THE STREETS IN UNPROTECTED SITUATIONS***. It is extremely hazardous for students to cross at any point except the designated school crossing areas.

Car riders' arrival and departure will **only** be in the "west lot." Please cooperate with us on ensuring the success of this transportation plan. We understand that sometimes many of you are in a hurry and want to avoid the line that the front lot presents. However, it is the safest and most

reliable means for loading and unloading our students. Car riders are asked to stand patiently and look for their car. This will help to speed up departures.

Please observe the following when picking up or dropping off your children:

West Entrance/Exit
The entrance is for student drop-off and pick-up.
Pull to the curb as far forward as possible before allowing your child to get in or out of your car.

In the morning between 7:45am and 8:15am all students should enter through the doors by the cafeteria.

Front Entrance/Exit
This entrance is for late drop off and walkers only during dismissal.

East Entrance/Exit
This entrance is for bus riders only during dismissal.

Front Parking Lot
This lot is for **faculty only**. **Do not** enter parking areas to pick-up or drop-off students.

Proper Attire (School Uniform)

The Memphis-Shelby County Schools Policy on School Dress Code (#6021)

The standards for Memphis-Shelby County Schools dress reflect "common sense" and a concern for each child's comfort, safety, cleanliness, and sense of modesty. There is a strong relationship between neat, appropriate attire and a positive learning environment. Apparel or appearance which tends to draw attention to an individual rather than to a learning situation must be avoided. To that end, Memphis-Shelby County Schools establishes a basic dress code to ensure appropriate and modest dress.

Your child represents your family and American Way Middle School. We realize that you work hard to teach your child to have pride and respect for him or herself. We want to extend that concept at American Way. We believe neat, appropriate dress influences student behavior. Clothing which is in good taste is always acceptable, although it will be the school's prerogative to make final judgment.

American Way Middle's Executive Leadership Team has adopted the following uniform guidelines. Please make sure your child adheres to uniform guidelines below to avoid disciplinary action.

1. Students are expected to come to school neat and clean (bodies, clothes and hair).

2. The American Way Middle Leadership Team has approved for students to be allowed to wear white, red, or navy blue polo shirts. Small logos or symbols (the size of a quarter) are permitted.

3. American Way Middle School t-shirts can be worn on any day as long as there is no additional handwriting or graffiti. School t-shirts should not be torn and/or tie-knotted along the sides and must be worn with uniform pants.

4. Appropriate **solid white or black undershirts** only should be worn. There should be no color around the neck or sleeve. Vulgar or suggestive writing is not allowed. Alcohol or tobacco advertising will not be permitted. Halter tops, tank tops, tops with string ties, exposed stomachs, plunging necklines and "see-through" tops are not acceptable. Net shirts are too casual for school.

5. White or black undershirts/tanks must be worn **underneath** the uniform shirt. **Not** on top!

6. Students cannot wear or bring hoodies to school. Students can wear blue, white or red sweatshirts without logos over their uniform shirts or American Way logo sweatshirts. **Absolutely no hoodies or shirts/sweatshirts with hoods should be worn in the school building.** This policy applies on out of uniform days as well. (New for 2023-2024)

7. Sleeveless tops are not acceptable.

8. **Pants must be solid black, khaki, or navy blue.** Slacks are acceptable. This applies to both girls and boys. Students may wear walking shorts or Bermuda shorts (Jams) during hot weather as long as they are the appropriate length or color. Short shorts or "hot pants" are not permitted. Stretch pants, leggings/jeggings, "bike" shorts, "low rider" shorts or pants, or tight knit slacks or pants are not appropriate. Pants or shorts should cover underwear. Denim (of any color) jeans, tight fitting, or baggy, sagging pants are not acceptable. All pants must have belt loops in order for students to wear a belt with uniform pants. Joggers are NOT allowed.

9. Skirts must be solid black, khaki, or navy blue and **MUST** be knee length. No Exceptions!

10. Comfortable shoes should be worn at all times with buckles or strings properly fastened. Strapless clogs or high heels are not acceptable as they often cause safety problems. **No "Flip-Flops" or house shoes** are allowed, again because of safety problems. Tennis shoes are required for physical education.

11. Appropriate undergarments must be worn. **Only solid white or black undershirts/tanks are permitted for girls and boys.**

12. **Only black, brown, navy blue, white belts can be worn by both girls and boys. Belts must be buckled at all times. Belts with large belt buckles are not acceptable.**

13. **Students are allowed to carry small purses/handbags during the school day.**

14. No grills can be worn in a student's mouth at school.

15. Hair should be cut and combed neatly. **No rollers, clips, hairnets, bonnets, do-rags, head scarves, or shower caps are permitted.** Hats are for outside wear and are to be removed when entering the building, unless there is a medical reason. If a student comes to school wearing inappropriate clothing, the parent may be called to bring appropriate attire, with the child waiting in the school office until the change of clothing arrives.

16. **No slits/cuts in eyebrows. This is considered a gang-affiliated display.**

17. Jackets must be a solid color (no stripes, patterns, or prints) and can have a small symbol/logo (quarter size). Jackets must be a solid black, navy, white, gray, brown, or khaki to be worn in the school during the school day.

18. On Out of Uniform days, students are permitted to have small rips or tears in their distressed jeans. NO LARGE RIPS OR TEARS ALLOWED. Again, no flip flops, slides, house shoes, or any shoe without a strap are allowed for safety purposes.

Dress Code Violations Consequences

1st violation	Parent Conference via school/home communication & Warning
2nd violation	Refer to Counselor and/or Outside Agency (as needed)
3rd violation	1 day of Supervised Study
4th violation (+)	See Grade Level Administrator

Although students are not required to follow the uniform policy during the after school hour events or at activities away from the school, the administration will monitor attire and reserves the right to turn away students who are not dressed appropriately; this includes casual, formal or semi-formal attire. Our students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to the event and to use good judgment.

In addition to the uniform policy stated above, American Way Middle School does not allow students to wear chains hanging from belts and pockets or dog collars with studs or spikes. Hairstyles or facial piercings that are distracting to the learning environment will not be permitted.

American Way Middle School's Dress Code will be enforced.

Attendance

If you care…..Get them here!

Attendance is important. We will be recognizing students and classes having good attendance with special events, certificates, and other incentives. Start **NOW** with perfect attendance. Each year we have disappointed children who did not receive certificates for perfect attendance because of tardiness. **Tardiness and early checkouts count against perfect attendance.** Children on late buses will not be marked tardy. Children who ***miss*** their bus and get to school late ***will*** be marked tardy. A tardy is excused **ONLY** if the child is coming from the doctor's office or has been ill. A ten or fifteen minute illness is extremely rare. The number of tardies and absences are recorded on the child's permanent school record without any difference being made in excused and unexcused absences or tardies. Let's strive to keep that record respectable!

Children are to be ***in their rooms when the tardy bell rings at 8:20!*** Some students are tardy on a regular basis. Not only is that a violation of the school district's attendance policy, but students miss valuable instructional time when they are late as teaching and learning begin when the 8:20 bell rings. **It is imperative that the parents of transfer students be aware that continued tardies to school will jeopardize their child's transfer. Transfers will be revoked for students who do not arrive on a timely basis.** If a child is tardy five times, a Tardy Notice will be sent home. If a child is tardy five more times, a Home Suspension will be issued.

Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. should report to the office for admittance to class. Any student coming to school at this time must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. **No notes or phone calls will be accepted. The parent or legal guardian must sign the student in on the Raptor system.**

Attendance Incentives will be implemented every 20 days for those students with **NO** absences or tardies. Notices will be sent home in a timely manner with a description of incentives and dates. Attendance Incentives will not be modified or adjusted for any student for any reason. **Homeroom teachers' records will be the official document for rewarding students.**

Absences and Excuses

Each day a child is absent, a note MUST be brought to the teacher giving the reason for the absence. State law recognizes **ONLY** five reasons as excused absences – personal illness, validated court appearance of pupil that is NOT the result of the student's misconduct, recognized religious holiday, death or serious illness in the immediate family. Being away at an approved school activity is not considered an absence. Baby-sitting or family vacations are not excused.

Memphis-Shelby County Board of Education (Policy #6014) implemented a new attendance policy affecting primary and secondary school students. **This policy requires the following:**

* A written statement within 2 school days of the student's return to school shall be required from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Notes must be date specific. If a note is not submitted within 2 school days of the student's return to school, the absence will be considered unexcused.

*** After a student has been absent for 10 school days, total, parent hand-written notes WILL NOT be accepted. Subsequent absences beyond the ten (10) days will require an official doctor's note or legal court summons.**

* Students with an **excused** absence shall have the opportunity to make-up work missed. It is the student's responsibility to make up assignments and tests within a reasonable time after returning to school.

* Students with an **unexcused** absence, one day of makeup time shall be allowed for each day of unexcused absence. A student with an unexcused absence must submit a written request to the teacher to makeup the work and must participate in an appropriate intervention (e.g. student or parent conference with the teacher, or other appropriate intervention determined by the teacher).

Truancy

Students that are habitually absent and tardy will be reported to the District's Truancy Office.

Unauthorized absence from school is considered truancy and shall be treated as such. This includes absences from any class, study hall, or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled and remedial programs. Administration can make the decision to require the student's attendance at remedial instruction occurring outside the regular school day.

If a student receives five (5) or more absences during the school year without adequate excuse, the Superintendent shall notify the parents that the student is required to attend school. If within 3 days of receiving the notice, the parent has failed to comply, the Superintendent shall notify the District Attorney General and/or local law enforcement of this fact and legal action may be taken against the parent as provided by T.C.A. § 49-6-3007.

Students with **10 consecutive unexcused absences will be dropped** from American Way Middle School.

Changing Classes/Restroom Breaks

Students will change classes & take restroom breaks as a group accompanied by their teacher. Students will transition in an orderly fashion and always staying to the right side of the hallway.

They are expected to do this in a non-disruptive manner. Running, scuffling, playing, and loud talking will not be tolerated.

Hall Passes

Students are **NOT** permitted in the hall during class periods unless they are accompanied by a teacher or have a hall pass in their possession. Only one student is permitted at a time with a hall pass. Hall passes will not be issued to a student during the first ten minutes of class and the last ten minutes of class.

Electronic Devices

Some things are best left at home. They may be a source of disruption to instruction, may cause a disturbance among students, or need extra security because of the value of the item. **Cell phones will be collected every morning and will be returned to all students during 6th period.** iPods, radios, game cards, electronic games, and cameras are best left at home. Someone on the faculty will confiscate items if they are visible and/or being utilized by student(s). **Confiscated or lost items are NOT the responsibility of the school or district. Stolen items are also NOT the responsibility of the school or district.** The following consequences will occur for confiscated electronic devices:

1st offense- Item will be confiscated for 24 hours. Parent may pick-up device after 24 hours and **ONLY** between the after school hours of **4:15-4:45 pm. If the parent decides to pick-up the device before the 24 hour period expires, the student will receive a 1 day home suspension.**

2nd offense- Item will be confiscated for 24 hours AND Parent must have a mandatory conference with an administrator before picking up the device.

3rd offense- 2 days of ISS will be issued AND confiscated device will be returned to parent once ALL days of detention have been served.

4th offense- a 3 day Home suspension will be issued AND confiscated device will be returned to parent once the suspension has been cleared.

5th offense- a 5 day home suspension will be issued AND confiscated device will be returned to parent once the suspension has been cleared.

CELL PHONE RECORDINGS ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED AT AMERICAN WAY MIDDLE SCHOOL ON CAMPUS AND ON THE BUSSES! If you are found in violation, you and everyone involved will face administrative consequences, up to and including suspension.

Discipline

Good discipline within a school is necessary to insure a proper learning environment. It is the responsibility of parents, the Board of Education, the administrative staff, and school personnel to take the measures necessary to provide the proper atmosphere for the instruction of students. Developing citizenship is one of the major functions of education. Principals, teachers, and teachers' assistants are charged with the responsibility of using any board policies or procedures necessary to provide an atmosphere for learning.

One of the most important lessons that education teaches is discipline. While discipline does not appear as a subject, it underlies the whole educational structure. Discipline is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency. It is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of each student to operate as a responsible citizen. Memphis-Shelby County Schools establishes the policies governing student conduct. These policies are upheld by the administration and faculty of American Way Middle School.

The following types of behavior will result in consequences that range from conferences, in-school suspensions, home suspension, Board suspension or even expulsion, dependent upon the severity and/or continuation of Code of Conduct violations:

- Fighting, disruption, or interference with curricular or extracurricular activities.
- Damage or destruction of school or personal property.
- Assault on school employees, students, or other persons.
- Possession of weapons (real or look alike).
- Possession or use of narcotics, real/look alike, alcoholic beverages and other dangerous drugs.
- Stealing of school or private property.
- Violation of Attendance Rules and Regulations.
- Being insubordinate or showing disrespect toward a school employee, student, or guest of the school.
- Inappropriate display of affection while on school premises, while in the custody and control of the school, or in the course of a school related activity.
- Engaging in any act, which bully's/intimidates, threatens, degrades or disgraces a fellow student, visitor, administrator, or member of the school staff by gestures written or verbal means.
- Using any form of profanity, written or verbal.
- Skipping or cutting class, this is defined as not being in the assigned place at the appropriate time.

- **Possession of weapons (real or look alike) and alcohol or other drugs is strictly prohibited. Possession of such prohibited items or substances on a school campus or at any school-sponsored activity shall result in an immediate Expulsion and police involvement. (Note TCA 39-17-1309; TCA 49-6-4201; the School Security Act of 1981; TCA XVII, the Gun-Free School Zone Act of the Federal Crime Control Act of 1990).**

- **Gang Prevention, Intervention, and Enforcement (#6030)**
  The policy prohibits gang-related activities at school, school activities, and school sponsored events. Any of these activities are subject to disciplinary action including expulsion. The policy also mandates gang prevention counseling prior to returning to school for students disciplined for gang-related activity. Finally, the policy states that the district will seek to form partnerships with law enforcement personnel and community organizations to eliminate gang activity in communities and in schools**.**

Memphis-Shelby County Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap/disability, or sex (including pregnant or parenting status) in its programs and activities. No student shall be denied equal access to, or participation in, any school sponsored class, activity, or honors program on the basis of the above.

Students and their parents/guardians who believe they have been discriminated against have the right to seek corrective action. Reports of such incidents must be submitted in writing to the ***PRINCIPAL.*** If necessary corrective action has not been taken, the route of appeal is (in writing) to the Director of the Division of Pupil Services.

Harassment Intimidation, or Bullying of Students

Student harassment will not be tolerated. Conduct aimed at defining a student in a sexual manner and conduct impugning the character of a student based on allegations of sexual promiscuity will not be tolerated. Tennessee law defines "harassment, intimidation or bullying" as acts that substantially interfere with a student's educational benefits, educational opportunities, educational performance, that take place: 1) on school grounds, 2) at any school-sponsored activity, 3) on school-provided transportation, 4) at any official school bus stop, or 5) at any location from which electronic communications (Instagram-IG, Facebook, Snapchat, or any social media) are sent and/or received, and that has the effect of:

1. Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
2. Knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property; or
3. Creating a hostile educational environment.

The Memphis-Shelby County Board of Education has adopted the "Safe School Tips" program which allows any parent, student, teacher, or employee to report information about illegal or inappropriate activities, including but not limited to bullying, theft, distribution or sale of drugs, possession of weapons, etc.

Zero Tolerance (Policy #6022)

The Board of Commissioners is responsible for using reasonable steps to promote a positive learning environment by ensuring the protection of the rights of each student to benefit from their educational experiences. If a student breaks a zero tolerance rule, this action will result in immediate expulsion/suspension for 180 days. The following are State Zero Tolerance Offenses-

- Aggravated assault resulting in serious bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, school resource officer, or any other school employee
- Unlawful possession, sale, or evidence of use of drugs/narcotics at school or at a school-sponsored activity
- Unauthorized possession of a firearm on school property or at a school sponsored activity
- Threats of school personnel

For zero tolerance offenses, notification will be made to law enforcement. The Superintendent can only make any modification of this penalty.

School-wide Expectations

The school rules were developed by the discipline committee to provide an environment conducive to learning. It is our responsibility to provide an environment that is safe, secure, and orderly. The following rules have been established to ensure this particular goal. The following rules will be consistently enforced throughout the school.

1. Keep your hands, feet, all other objects, hurtful comments and/or social media posts to yourself.
2. Follow instructions the first time given.
3. Be prepared by being on time and having your materials.
4. Keep to the right and always walk quietly in the building.
5. Be respectful to yourself, others, and the school.
6. Be in the right place at the right time.

Correcting Misconduct

Student misconduct most often is the result of inappropriate behavior. In such cases all that is necessary is for the child to understand why the behavior was inappropriate and what to do when similar situations are encountered in the future. In some situations, however, it is necessary for a student to receive punishment to reinforce the lesson they have been taught. We will be following a procedure of increasing consequences as students continue to exhibit unacceptable behavior. We will strive to make the punishment fit the problem, depending on the seriousness and frequency of the misconduct. Actions taken by school staff will range from notes and phone calls to parents, cafeteria duty; detention, in-school suspension, reset room, office referral and suspension. Teachers can make telephone calls to parents from his or her room. Teachers will be calling parents as soon as it is necessary.

Bus Rules

Memphis -Shelby County Schools will be providing bus transportation for our students. It is a matter of life and death that students conduct themselves in an orderly fashion both at the bus stops and on the buses. Students will be required to sign a list of bus rules. If a student violates those rules, the parent will be notified. If a student continues to violate the bus rules, ***the student may lose the privilege of riding the bus.***

The bus driver is considered a member of the faculty and the driver's instructions are to be followed without hesitation. The driver has the authority to assign seats on the bus as necessary.

Fighting

Fighting will not be tolerated for any reason. American Way Middle School recognizes and rewards "Days of Peace," which means everyone will work together to create an atmosphere where no fights or verbal put-downs will be tolerated.

We want our students to choose to solve problems intelligently, instead of choosing to fight. Students can also fill out a "Write NOT Fight" form which is located on the front office counter, counselor's office, or the teacher can give the student one. The form should be placed in the appropriate grade counselor's box for a conference with the students. If the counselors cannot resolve the issue, the form will be given to an administrator.

The students at AWMS have many options. We must exercise every option to work out our differences and solve all problems nonviolently. At times it is difficult to tell the difference between "playing" and fighting. Many fights start as playing. With all the violence on television and the martial arts (karate, etc.), we have what children call " play fighting." All too often, such play causes someone to get hurt; tempers flare and a real fight results. If a student engages in a fight, it is not considered self-defense. Self-defense is defined per the District as "a student only becomes physically involved in an effort to escape or remove themselves/others from the conflict. Their intent is not to engage but to disengage." (SCS Policy 6022).

If two or more people are involved in a fight, all will be given a Home Suspension ***regardless of who starts the fight*** or ***the school officer may transport the child to Juvenile Court.***

In-School Suspension

It is the mission of In-School Suspension (ISS) at American Way Middle to improve the school's environment by implementing a behavior modification program, to improve student conduct.

The goals of the program are to:

1. Provide an alternative to home suspension as a means of disciplinary action for inappropriate student behavior.

2. Allow for uninterrupted instruction to students in a safe, rigidly structured environment.

3. Curtail absenteeism that results from suspensions.

4. Modify inappropriate behavior and return the student to their regular classroom environment.

Students can only be referred to ISS by the Principal and the Assistant Principals. ISS begins at 8:30 and ends at 3:05. **The student may not participate in, or attend, any school activities including assemblies, field trips, or award programs while assigned to ISS.** Students assigned to ISS will do community service in the cafeteria during lunch time i.e. wiping down tables, sweeping the floor and taking out the trash.

Suspensions

The principal or assistant principals may issue a Suspension when it is deemed necessary. Reasonable effort shall be made to contact the parent/guardian immediately regarding any suspension. If a situation is serious, or if there have been previous suspensions, the child might not be allowed to return for one or more days. Out-of-school suspensions vary from zero (0) to ten (10) days. **Ten (10) suspensions can NOT be appealed**. Expulsions may vary in length from eleven (11) days to the remainder of the school year or one calendar year for state mandated expulsions. American Way Middle school will address each incident according to the Shelby County School Student Code of Conduct.

All out of school suspensions can be cleared after 8:45 am. Parents/legal guardians must bring students to school to clear suspension unless prior clearance has been approved by the administrator. If a student athlete is suspended for any reason, the student cannot participate in any practices or athletic events until the suspension has been fulfilled and cleared by an administrator.

Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions

Out of School Suspensions and Expulsions required by Board Policy (#6022) are issued to:

1. A pupil having in his possession at school ***any instrument that could be used as a weapon.*** (Metal hair picks have been used as weapons, therefore, will not be allowed). Look-alike guns and knives are also included in this policy. Following Memphis-Shelby County Schools' procedures, we are required to call the Memphis Police Department to pick up any weapon. ***The police officer may transport the child to Juvenile Court.***

2. A pupil involved in a school break-in or causing malicious damage to school property. Vandalism is also included.

3. A pupil accused of ***any*** insubordination such as striking or using abusive or disrespectful language to all school employees including teachers' assistants, custodial, or cafeteria personnel. Disobedience to an adult's direction will be considered insubordination.

4. Threats toward school personnel and/or other students will be taken very seriously and may result in an out-of-school suspension or expulsion if bodily injury has occurred.

5. A pupil whose parent or guardian fails to answer a Home Suspension within three days.

6. A pupil involved in illegal possession or use of controlled substances or prescription drugs. Memphis Police Department is to be called and the child may be transported to Juvenile Court. Procedures are set forth on page 12 of this handbook for the proper way of handling prescription medications.

8. Possession of alcohol, tobacco, or smoking paraphernalia will be dealt with severely.

Parent Communication

Week at a Glance Newsletters will be uploaded weekly to Class Dojo by each team to inform parents of weekly homework, classwork, projects, tests, etc. You can access your child's daily grades and attendance through parent access on PowerSchool.

School Website (https://schools.scsk12.org/americanway-ms**)** can be accessed daily for school updates, teacher links to pertinent information and classroom updates, Title I mandates, and helpful websites.

Please refer to the Shelby County School calendar (next page) to be reminded of pertinent dates for the school year.

2024-25 Student Calendar

2024
First Semester-87 days

AUGUST
- 5 — First Day for Students | 1st 9 Weeks Begins

SEPTEMBER
- 2 — Labor Day (Students Out)
- 5 — Parent-Teacher Conferences (4-7 p.m.)

OCTOBER
- 4 — 1st 9 Weeks Ends
- 7-11 — Fall Break (Students Out)
- 14 — Students Return | 2nd 9 Weeks Begins

NOVEMBER
- 5 — Election Day (Students Out)
- 11 — Veterans Day (Students Out)
- 25-29 — Thanksgiving Break (Students Out)

DECEMBER
- 18-20 — 1st Semester Exams
- 20 — 1st Semester Ends | 2nd 9 Weeks Ends
- 23-31 — Winter Break (Students Out)

2025
Second Semester-92 days

JANUARY
- 1-3 — Winter Break, cont. (Students Out)
- 6 — Students Return | 3rd 9 Weeks Begins
- 20 — Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Students Out)

FEBRUARY
- 13 — Parent-Teacher Conferences (4-7 p.m.)
- 17 — Presidents Day (Students Out)

MARCH
- 7 — End of 3rd 9 Weeks
- 10-14 — Spring Break | (Students Out)
- 17 — Students Return | 4th 9 Weeks Begins

APRIL
- 18 — Spring Break II | Good Friday (Students Out)

MAY
- 21-23 — 2nd Semester Exams
- 23 — Last Day of School | 4th 9 Weeks Ends

JUNE

JULY 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

AUGUST 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

SEPTEMBER 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

OCTOBER 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

DECEMBER 2024				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

JANUARY 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

MARCH 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

APRIL 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

MAY 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

JUNE 2025				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

LEGEND: 1st Day of School Students | Students Out (Full Day) | Parent Conferences | Start of Quarter | End of Quarter | Semester Exams

Parent Data - Information

Parents, it is very important that you keep your telephone information current to receive calls from School Messenger and/or text messages. We need home, work and/or cell numbers, and email addresses so we can get in touch with you in case of an emergency or illness. If you change jobs and telephone numbers, please let the office know. If your emergency friend's information changes, please notify us of this change as well.

Parent Conferences

We always welcome parents! Children of interested parents are a joy to teach! BUT - a well-planned lesson or smooth opening routines can be destroyed for the entire class by a well meaning parent who "just drops by for a visit" or who escorts a child to the classroom. Parents will not be allowed to escort students to class. **PLEASE call ahead and schedule a conference with your child's grade level counselor. This applies to before and after school drop-in conferences as well. Hopefully, conferences can be conducted during planning periods on Mondays, Tuesdays, or Wednesdays.** Any parent who asks to see a teacher, but has not

scheduled a conference will be asked to come back later after a conference has been scheduled. Your cooperation in following this procedure to protect class time from interruptions is appreciated. Please do not ask us to steal time away from your child's learning. If a parent brings something to school for their child, the office will see that the item is delivered.

In addition, we invite and urge parents to consult with their teachers or the principal for help with problems. Please send a note or call the school to arrange for a conference time. Teachers are happy to arrange meetings during their planning period on Mondays, Tuesdays, or Wednesdays. ***Teachers cannot be interrupted during class time for conferences.*** However, parents and family are welcome to visit and observe after checking through the office.

Parent Complaints

The following information about how to bring a complaint to the school is intended to provide parents and students an opportunity to resolve questions or problems that may arise.

- All student matters should be discussed first with the appropriate classroom teacher.
- If the teacher‘s decision is not satisfactory, the complainant may request a conference with the principal.
- Please remember to schedule an appointment with the principal so that we can serve you in a timely manner.

School Leadership Council

American Way Middle School participates in Instructional Leadership Teaming. The governing body is comprised of 3 students, 3 parent representatives, teacher leads, PLC coach, instructional coaches, assistant principals, counselors, and the principal.
The Goals of the Leadership Team are:

- To focus on school improvement
- To develop ownership in the school
- To help parents feel their contributions are worthwhile by involving them in significant decisions about school improvement.
- To involve the broader community, particularly business/corporate, in supporting the schools.
- To improve the marketing of the school‘s program by increasing the number of persons who are knowledgeable about the school.
- To demonstrate that participatory decision making can work effectively
- To improve the quality of decisions made with regard to school improvement issues.

Report Cards (Policy #6306)

PROGRESS REPORTS are issued to the students at the mid-nine week grading period. Report cards are issued to the students at the end of each nine weeks.

Grading System

Excellent	A	90-100
Good	B	89-80
Average	C	79-70
Below Average	D	69-60
Failure	F	59 & Below

Conduct

E- Excellent	S- Satisfactory
N- Needs Improvement	U- Unsatisfactory

Homework

Homework is a key component of learning. Just as an athlete must practice to reach excellence, so must we practice academic concepts to master and maintain our excellence. Teachers will be sending homework assignments home. We expect parents to go over the assignments with your child each night. Homework is an important continuation of classroom learning.

Academic Recognition

HONOR ROLL

The Honor Roll is determined from the student report card and is set by the Board of Education Policy.

Principal's List

Academic Subjects:	All As
Conduct	E or S

Distinguished Honor Roll

All A's & B's	No grade below 80
Conduct	E or S

Honor Roll

All A's, B's, & 1 C	Only 1 grade between 79-70
Conduct	E or S

Citizenship Honors

Conduct	All Es

Perfect Attendance

Perfect Attendance Certificates will be awarded to students who have maintained Perfect Attendance - that is NO absences, tardies, OR early checkouts. Perfect Attendance Certificates will be awarded at the end of each nine weeks and at the end of the year.

Awards Programs

Awards Programs are held each nine weeks grading period to honor all students with academic success. Awards Programs are usually held the week following the issuance of Report Cards. See American Way Middle's monthly calendar for specific dates and times.

Promotion Guidelines

In order to be promoted to the next grade level, students must earn a minimum of D (70%) average in all subjects. A focused intervention program will address each student's specific area (s) of deficiency. Intervention strategies may include instructional programs/software, tutorial session, extended school day, and/or summer school.

Make-up Work

MAKE-UP: Teachers will allow students to make up all missed work and classroom tests as a result of an **excused or unexcused** absence (suspensions included). All work for both excused and unexcused absences should be made up as soon as possible, but **no later than** one week after the student returns to school.

Textbooks

Most student textbooks are now consumable workbooks, meaning students can write in those books to complete in class practice, assignments, and assessments. All students will need to keep up with their consumable textbooks because they will only be provided with one copy. Textbooks that are not consumables will be used in the classroom only. All students will have access to textbooks and consumable workbooks online using their school issued devices.

Cafeteria

Lunch is available to all students free of charge this school year. Students are not allowed to bring **candy, gum, potato chips, or other "junk" food** to school. The one exception to this rule is that a student who brings a lunch from home may include potato chips, Fritos, etc. as part of the lunch. Snack food may **NOT** be taken out of the cafeteria**. Please talk to your child about manners and behavior in the cafeteria**. Students are expected to act like young ladies and young gentlemen while in the cafeteria. We expect students to use their company manners at all times. The administration and teachers will monitor and supervise the cafeteria during lunch. Students are to follow their directions ***without question and without hesitation.*** If the cafeteria gets too loud during lunch, talking will be prohibited in the cafeteria until order is well established. **"Silent lunch"** may last several seconds or for the entire lunch period, depending on how cooperative and responsibly students respond. Students who break cafeteria rules will be sent to a time-out table. However, students involved in a food fight will be immediately sent to an administrator and will be dealt with according the MSCS Code of Conduct. In order to maintain a safe and pleasant atmosphere during the lunch period, these guidelines will be followed:

- Teacher will escort all students to the cafeteria.
- Upon entering the cafeteria, students will go directly to their assigned lunch line and remain quiet until seated at their assigned table.
- Students will remain seated at their assigned table throughout the entire lunch period.
- Students may not return to the lunch line after making their initial purchase and going to their seat.
- Quiet talking is permitted while sitting at the tables during the lunch period. No talking is permitted while in line.
- Students are to clean the tables and the areas around the tables before leaving the cafeteria.
- At the end of the lunch period, students will wait to be dismissed by the cafeteria monitors.

- Students will proceed quietly through the hall obeying all rules.

Children are NOT allowed to bring glass bottles in their lunches from home. There is a real danger from broken glass. Canned drinks or drink cartons are permissible.

For the safety of our students and due to various food allergies, parents are **NOT ALLOWED** to bring outside food (i.e. Mcdonald's. pizza, cupcakes, etc) for any students other than their own child.

Breakfast

All students perform better on a full stomach. Eating a good breakfast is very important. Cafeteria workers will begin serving at 7:45. ***Breakfast will NOT be available if the student arrives at the school after 8:15 unless on a late bus.*** Students are to finish breakfast and be ready for class when the 8:15 a.m. bell rings. **Breakfast is available to all students free of charge.**

Phone Use

Students will only be allowed to use the phone if they are sick. ***Students will not be allowed to use the phone to call for forgotten homework, permission slips, or supplies.***

Teachers will not be called to the phone to talk to parents during instructional time. A voice message can be left for the teacher to call you during the planning time.

Assemblies

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly and courteous manner during each program. Applause should be generous when appropriate. Whistling, stamping of feet, shouting aloud, booing, and constantly talking will not be tolerated.

Field Trips

Field trips are to add to the curriculum and are not for entertainment. We utilize transportation approved by Memphis-Shelby County Schools and do not ask parents to drive their personal vehicles. All field trips will be fully chaperoned by AWMS faculty & staff. Students attending any field trip sponsored by the school must submit a signed permission slip before participating in the activity. All money for field trips **MUST** be paid **BY 9:00 am** by the stated due date and is **NON-REFUNDABLE.** ***Telephone calls for field trip permission will not be accepted. School rules are expected to be followed on field trips.***

Miscellaneous

Flowers, balloons and other gifts should not be delivered to school for students. Birthday cakes and celebrations are not allowed during the school day.

Withdrawals

If a student moves out of American Way's district and must withdraw from school, please call or come by the school a few days prior to the withdrawal date. This will give ample time to complete necessary paperwork and to turn in the device assigned to the child.

Telephone/Address Changes

Please notify the school immediately if there is a change in your address, telephone number, or person to contact in an emergency. It is important that our records be kept up to date in case your child becomes ill or injured.

Emergency Dismissal

Parents and students should have a plan in case of early dismissal due to inclement weather. The school will only dismiss students to parents, guardians, or emergency contact persons listed on data form sheet. All students who ride the school bus or walk must have contacted parent, guardian, or an emergency contact person before being allowed to ride the bus or walk home. Those students who have not contacted anyone will not be dismissed from school.

Please listen for alerts from the local media regarding school closing on days when threatening weather exists!

Fire / Tornado Drills

Fire and tornado drills are practiced throughout the school year. Some will be announced and some may be unannounced. These drills are necessary for the safety of the students, staff and faculty. When the alarm is sounded students are to follow directions and procedures for the plan posted in each classroom. Everyone should know the specific directions for reaching a point of safety from those areas of the school building in which he/she may be. During the drills students and other personnel are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner.

Searches

Lockers and other storage areas, containers, and packages brought into school by students or visitors are subject to search by authorized personnel.

Weapons

Parents, felony state law prescribes a maximum penalty of six (6) years imprisonment and a fine not to exceed $3,000 for carrying weapons on school property.

Visitors

Parents and other visitors are welcome to visit our school. All visitors must report to the office. Visitors must wear a visitor badge or nametag issued by the office. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with approval of the principal. Such visits are not permitted if their duration or frequency interferes with the delivery of instruction or disrupts the normal school environment. Visits should be prearranged with the teacher.

Parents and parent designees, who come to school to sign students out and remove them from school, must report to the office. Students will not be released to parents from the classroom, only from the office. If parents are dropping off any item that students may have left at home, we ask that you bring these items to the office. The Office Staff will arrange for the students to pick up these items so they will not miss instructional times.

Medicine

Sometimes it is necessary for students to take ***prescription*** medicine while at school. Aspirin, Tylenol, cough drops and other nonprescription items will **NOT** be given to children during school hours. Medicine **MUST** be brought immediately to the office by the parent, not the student. Medicine is to be in the original prescription container clearly marked with the child's name, prescription number, medication name/dosage, administration route, date and refill, licensed prescriber's name, and pharmacy address and phone number. Parents must fill out a medical form for the child to be issued prescribed medicines, including asthma inhalers during the day.

If under exceptional circumstances a student is required to receive medication during school hours, written instructions signed by the parent or legal guardian must include: student's name, name of medication, purpose of medication, time to be administered, dosage, possible side effects, and termination date for administering the medication, name and phone number of student's physician. The signed instruction form will be kept on file at the school. The student is responsible for coming to the office at the appropriate time, and taking the medicine in the office. Should a dose need to be given it should be arranged to be administered between 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. ***Please note that medicine that is to be taken three times daily does not need to be administered at school. It can be given before and after school and at bedtime.*** Approved possessions of a student's own prescription medication during the school day are limited to life threatening conditions. (e.g., asthma medications and epi-pens for severe allergic reactions) Selling and/or giving away one's prescription medication will be treated the same if the drug (s) being given away or sold were a controlled substance such as marijuana. Prescription medications are only appropriate for the person to whom the doctor issued the prescription.

Lice, Ringworm, and Pink-eye [1]

Lice occur in the best and cleanest of families. Lice occur in the best and cleanest of schools. If we find a child with lice, the child will be sent home until the child has been treated with a lice shampoo and there are not any nits (eggs) in sight. When a child is sent home with lice, the child must come to the office before returning to class. If lice are nits are found, the child will be sent home again. While lice are not life threatening, we must be aggressive in dealing with the problem. Notices will be sent home with the rest of the children in the class along with information from the Health Department to alert other families to be on the lookout for possible problems. We will follow the procedures established by the school nurse concerning ringworm and pinkeye.

COLLECTION OF MONEY AT SCHOOL

All money collected from students must be receipted (unless an exception is made by the administration, as in the case of picture money). Students will receive receipts for money paid immediately and should keep up with the receipt in case an event or fieldtrip is cancelled. Money for fieldtrips will not be accepted on the same day as the trip.

Memphis- Shelby County Schools Provides

Race, Color, Religion, Sex, National Origin -Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in 111 programs and activities. The primary focus is services to students.

GRADE LEVEL SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Lillie Pinkston- 6th grade – pinkstonlc@scsk12.org

Marquis Healey – 7th grade – healeyma@scsk12.org

Sonja Thomas – 8th grade – jacksonthomassa@scsk12.org

Homeroom Teacher: _____

Please initial each statement, sign below and return this page to school.

_____ I understand the benefits, and responsibilities outlined in the American Way Middle School Student and Parent Handbook.

_____ I understand that I am responsible for the computers/devices & textbooks issued to my child.

_____ I understand my child may be photographed for promoting American Way Middle School through academics and arts and for safety reasons. Photos will be uploaded to PowerSchool.

_____ I have reviewed all Title I Documents on the school's website (Family Engagement Plan, School Compact, Parent's Right to Know, etc.).

_____ I understand that my child **CANNOT** have a cellphone or any other personal electronic devices on them during the school day. They **MUST** be turned in to an administrator upon entering the building. The phone will be returned at the end of the school day.

_____ I understand that my child will have to go through random metal detection points and searches.

_____ I acknowledge that American Way Middle School has adopted the Fight-Free Philosophy. Also, I understand that if my child chooses to fight, he or she will be disciplined according to SCS Board Policy.

_____ I understand that my child,_____, will be held accountable for the behavior and consequences outlined in the Student/Parent Handbook at school and at all school-sponsored or related activities regardless of time or location.

_____ If required by Memphis-Shelby County Schools and according to CDC guidelines, students may be required to wear face masks/coverings over the mouth and nose during the school day.

Student's Signature:_____Date: _____

Parent's Signature:_____Date: _____