

# HMS STUDENT HANDBOOK

2018-2019

## PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

### Hephzibah Middle Parents

I want to welcome you to Hephzibah Middle School. We are looking forward to the start of a new school year and new beginnings. The staff at HMS is eagerly anticipating greeting our returning students and welcoming all of our newest Rebels! We look forward to a very positive and productive year together. We are truly excited about the success stories that will be written this school year for our students in and out of the classroom.

Through collaboration, teamwork, and building positive relationships between home and school, we will work towards maximizing the potential that lies within each student and helping them experience academic success, as well as developing productive young men and women.

Building relationships and creating a climate of high expectations will be the cornerstone to our success. Everyone will play a role in that. We want and value your involvement and support in your child's education. Your active participation and support is key to the success of your student at Hephzibah Middle. We encourage you to contact us if/when the need arises, and to *stay in the know* about your child's studies, assignments, assessments, and school activities, as well as other events and happenings. Please take advantage of the various options available to conveniently access communication with your child's teacher as well as visiting the school website.

Again, we welcome you to Hephzibah Middle and look forward to a working together to ensure a special year. As always, we are here for you and your child. Thank you in advance for your cooperation, involvement, and support!

**GO REBELS!!**

Chris L. Neal  
Principal

SCHOOL COLORS – Black and Red

SCHOOL MASCOT – Rebel

**PRINCIPAL**

Mr. Chris Neal

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

Mr. Will Smith

**ADMINISTRATIVE INTERN/INTERNATIONAL BACCALAURETTE MYP  
COORDINATOR**

Ms. Lisa Byrd

**RCSS VISION**

Building a world-class school system through education, collaboration, and innovation.

**HMS MISSION STATEMENT**

Hephzibah Middle School seeks to educate students to be compassionate, inquisitive, and informed citizens who support and respect the value of cultural perspectives throughout the world.

We endeavor to work with parents, community, and partner schools to develop curriculum and assessments that hold students to a rigorous standard of achievement that strengthens students' knowledge, their cultural and societal insight as well as their ability to succeed.

## BELIEF STATEMENTS

- All students can learn and have a right to a quality education.
- Education is a shared responsibility that unites the students, home, school, and community in the decision making and problem solving process while creating a mutual bond of respect and trust.
- The community serves as a means to support a safe learning environment for children as well as offering resources that will enhance students' awareness of real life applications.
- Students learn best in an atmosphere where continuous communication and support exist among parents, students, teachers and community.
- Education prepares everyone for the challenges of today and tomorrow and is a continuous learning process.
- Education should include programs that meet the needs of all areas of exceptionalities.
- Goals for achievable education outcomes should be clear and explicit.
- School personnel should be provided the opportunity to attend professional learning activities without cost and trained in the areas of technology and subject specific content that enhances their professional growth.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In 1861, the minutes of the Hephzibah Baptist Association specified that a “seminary of learning” be erected in Brothersville for both boys and girls. A structure with two wings and two stories was begun immediately. It was located on the present site of Hephzibah Elementary School. The school opened in the spring of 1861 with thirty-four students. This building was used until 1925, when a new structure made of white stucco was completed for Hephzibah students at a cost of sixty thousand dollars.

In 1964, Hephzibah Elementary School was built to accommodate white children in grades one through eight. Floyd Graham Elementary School housed black children in grades one through eight. A new Hephzibah High School was built one mile east of the city of Hephzibah in 1969. In 1970, the entire school system integrated, and Floyd Graham became the school for all students in grades one through three, Hephzibah Elementary housed grades four through seven, and the old high school became Hephzibah Junior High.

During the following years many changes took place as grades were divided among the four schools. With each change, new interest in the education of Hephzibah’s youth was pursued.

The new Hephzibah Middle School was completed in the spring of 1982. This was the first facility in Richmond County designed for the middle school concept. During the 1999-2000 school year, nine new classrooms, a new roof, additional storage areas and a new gym floor were all part of a renovation package for facility upgrades. In the winter of 2016, HMS filed an application to become an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program school with Hephzibah High School.

Hephzibah Middle School is organized very much like several schools within a school. Each grade level is separate with teams made up of five or six members. Each grade is organized with an interdisciplinary approach and a common planning time.

## REPORT CARD PERIODS

### **NINE-WEEK PERIOD**

August 6 – October 11  
October 12 – December 20  
January 7 – March 13  
March 14 – May 24

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

September 6  
November 15  
February 7  
April 25

### **REPORT CARD DAY**

October 18  
January 10  
March 21  
May 30

# INFORMATION RELATING TO INSTRUCTION

## INSTRUCTION IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

- An effective program is broad in scope; provides for a wide range of rate, timing, and potential for learning through a balanced program of experiences; and places emphasis on the development of skills and concepts and the assimilation of facts that establish the basis for understanding.
- The middle school program shall provide meaningful learning experiences in:
  - Language Arts
  - Mathematics
  - Social Studies
  - Science
  - Health Education
  - Physical Education
  - Connections
- The middle grades program shall be organized to allow for flexible use of instructional time and space.
  - o a variety of exploratory experiences a broad offering of intramural activities.
  - o opportunities to facilitate transition from the elementary school to the high school.
  - o teaming concepts.
  - o use of all school resources in solving individual student problems.

## CONNECTIONS

All students at Hephzibah Middle School will take courses in Connections. These classes are P.E.

- Technology Education
- Study Skills
- Music/Band/ Chorus
- Art
- Spanish

All students will participate in connection subjects for a period of nine weeks. To meet state standards for physical education and the requirements of the middle school incentive grant, band and chorus students will alternate between physical education and connections classes.

Following is a brief description of each connections subject.

### Technology Education

Technology Education introduces the students to various types of technologies through the use of computer-based learning activities and hands-on projects. Technology Education reinforces what students learn in their core classes by integrating language arts, math, science and social studies. Students will work with a partner throughout this nine-week class to complete

computer activities and projects. Computer activities consist of computer based research and virtual activities. Projects consist of hands-on experimentation and evaluation. Students also master related vocabulary and complete other assignments. The technology subjects for the sixth grade include mechanisms and precision measurements. The seventh grade includes pneumatics/hydraulics and rocketry. The eighth grade includes electronics and building construction. Additionally, this class participates in career exploration activities.

## Physical Education

Physical education is required by Georgia State School Standards for all boys and girls in Georgia schools. If the family physician advises against taking part in physical education, it is necessary that a written excuse from the physician be presented to the school's office and to the physical education teacher.

The following guidelines apply to physical education:

- All students are required to dress appropriately for physical education activities.
- During cold weather, students should have on hand a change of warm clothing for participation in outdoor activities. A warm-up or jogging suit is recommended.
- All physical education clothing should be marked with the student's name.
- All injuries must be reported to the teacher at once.
- All lost and found articles are to be turned in to the teacher.
- Securing personal items is the responsibility of each student. Lockers are available for student use each day during physical education.
- Students are responsible for the purchase and upkeep of a lock. Once a student purchases a lock, he/she should not share the locker nor lock combination with others. Students are responsible for seeing that locks are properly secured before leaving physical education class.
- The school is not responsible for any lost or stolen personal articles or equipment.
- If a student wears glasses, the student should provide adequate protection. No insurance for broken glasses is available.

## HOMEWORK

In grades K-8, homework will be assigned consistently Monday through Thursday and at the teacher's discretion on the weekends. The following reflects the amount of homework that should be assigned:

Grades 4-6	30-60 total minutes
Grades 7-8	30-90 total minutes

The time limits will vary among students and are approximations. Students are accountable for homework in three ways:

- It should be done on time. (Not accepted late if the student was present when assigned and when due.) ☐ It should be neatly and completely done in the manner assigned by the teacher. ☐ It should be made up if the student is absent.

## GRADING SYSTEM

A system of numerical grades is used in the middle school. Numerical grades can be converted to letter grades according to the following scale:

A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89
C	75 – 79
D	70 – 74
F	Below 70

Grades that are not recorded numerically are noted as one of the following:

E	Excellent
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
I	Incomplete

## GRADING CRITERIA

Please review the teacher's syllabus for specific grading criteria for the class.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

(Mid-Nine Weeks)

The mid nine-weeks progress report is designed to give parents general feedback on their child's progress at a point in the grading period when additional assistance can be provided if needed. Progress reports will be sent home on the dates noted under the earlier report card section.

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each nine-week period. They should be signed and returned to the child's homeroom teacher.

## REQUIRED TESTING

Grade 6	School Ability Test, Georgia Milestones
Grade 7	Georgia Milestones
Grade 8	Career Interest Inventory, Georgia Milestones



## MAKE UP WORK

A student who is absent from classes for legal reasons or suspension is responsible for all work missed. The student's responsibility is to keep up so that he/she may be tested at any time. Don't wait for the teacher to approach you for make up work. **THIS IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.** Make up work is given only to those students who have legal absences and bring a written excuse from the parent/guardian on the day returning to school following the legal absence.

Giving make up work/tests during the regular class periods cannot be justified. The student is to arrange with the teacher an agreeable time for the make up and report to the teacher at the designated time and place. If the student fails to report, no further opportunity to take the test is justified and a zero may be given. All make up work should be completed within five school days after returning to school. Teacher approval is required if more time to complete the work is needed.

## CLASSROOM SUPPLIES

Supplies and textbooks should be brought to class each day. Students are required to have class materials such as pencils, paper, books, pens, etc., and other items a teacher may require for a specific instructional purpose when they go to class.

## TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are on loan to students during the school year. Textbooks are to be kept clean and handled carefully. Fines will be charged for damaged or lost textbooks. Students are responsible for textbooks at all times whether left in classrooms or other areas within the school. When textbooks are turned in at the end of the year, the same book issued by number must be returned to the teacher in order to get credit. When a book is lost or destroyed, the student must pay for it before the teacher can issue a new textbook or before school records can be released. Please write your name on the inside front cover of all textbooks issued to you. There are no "loaner" books available. Textbooks should be covered at all times. Georgia law states that students who damage, lose, or deface, through willful intent or neglect, textbooks, library books, and/or media materials must replace these items at replacement cost. Replacement cost is the amount it will take to replace the materials. Please see the "Charges for Lost Textbooks" at the end of this handbook for book costs.

## PARENT CONFERENCES

The parent is a recognized and needed member of the educational team at HMS. Teachers have dedicated planning times during the day. It is during this time that conferences are held. All conferences at HMS are team conferences. That means parents have the opportunity to sit with all of their child's academic teachers. Parents, teachers, counselors, and/or administrators may request parent conferences. Periodic conferences are encouraged. The team leader, through the school's main office, will make arrangements for parent/teacher conferences.

## PROMOTION INFORMATION

Following is the middle school promotion information for the 2018-2019 school year as adopted by the Richmond County Board of Education. A student shall be promoted when, in the professional judgment of the teacher(s) and the principal and other professional school staff, he/she has successfully met the identified instructional standards based on the Georgia Performance Standards (K-8), and local curriculum.

To meet promotion requirements, students in grades 6-8 must:

- Obtain a passing grade in mathematics and language arts.
- Obtain a passing grade in either social studies or science.
- Obtain a passing average for four of the eight connections grading periods.

AND

No eighth grade student shall be promoted to the ninth grade if the student does not meet Grade Level Criteria on the Georgia Milestones test in Math or Reading/ELA.

## STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

The Student Support Team (SST) is a process of examining a student's needs through interdisciplinary teaming. Each team is composed of an administrator, classroom teacher, requesting teacher, special education teacher and a counselor. Auxiliary personnel may include the school psychologist, any special education resource person, school social worker, or central office personnel. Parental involvement is a critical part of the SST process.

Any student, parent, teacher or administrator may make requests for services from a Student Support Team. Typical responses to requests may identify needs for behavior improvement techniques, learning styles assessment, developmental or achievement evaluation, curriculum modifications or the need for better home-school communication and coordination. Any student who experiences difficulty in his/her instructional day is eligible for SST services.

The SST is not a special education service. However, referrals for such services are made when considered appropriate. The SST is based on a multi-stage process. The first step in the process is "awareness" of a problem. In this stage, the parent, teacher or student requests service of the team. Discussion of the concern(s) and collection of information takes place. The second stage is assessment. Both informal (work samples) and formal (standardized testing/observation) assessment takes place as deemed necessary. The third stage of the process is planning. An educational plan is developed for the student that includes pertinent background information, assessment data, and team recommendations. In the next stage, the team provides continuous support to the student, parent and teacher. The final phase is the follow-up and evaluation. The team monitors the student's progress by constant contact with the parent, teacher and student.

## GIFTED PROGRAM

Richmond County provides programs for all qualifying students in grades K-12 who exhibit superior performance, advanced learning needs and demonstrate higher-level motivation and creativity. The identification process uses multiple criteria as mandated by the Georgia State Department of Education.

Students may qualify on mental abilities and achievement or on three (3) of four (4) components, which include mental abilities, academic achievement, creativity and motivation or mental abilities alone for grades K-2.

An automatic referral process requires all schools to screen intelligence and achievement test scores on their students twice annually for referral purposes. Parents, peers, teachers, principals, or counselors may refer students. Referrals are solicited in May for August testing and in November for testing in January. Parents of students referred are notified of test dates two or more weeks in advance by Gifted Program personnel.

Students entering the system who had prior placement in a gifted program will be placed at once if they meet Georgia State Department of Education eligibility. Gifted Program personnel will evaluate those who do not have the required eligibility documentation.

Written parental consent must be on file before students are evaluated. Parents receive a written report of evaluation results and are offered an opportunity to discuss the results with program personnel.

Written parental consent for placement must be on file in the Gifted Program office before a student is allowed to participate. Students in grades K-8 are enrolled in a five-hour per week resource program that provides thematic units of study. Parents receive a progress report three times per year. Students are provided transportation to a Gifted Program resource center for one day per week. A facilitator certified in gifted education works with students and their teachers to develop a plan for completion of a project in each student's area of interest. Students, general education teacher, gifted program facilitator, and parents sign a contract. Gifted endorsement is received on the student's transcript.

Parents are invited to an annual review to evaluate the student's progress in the program and are provided the curriculum focus for the coming year.

Continuation in the program will be dependent upon maintenance of an overall 3.5 GPA in academic classes, satisfactory performance in both regular and gifted classes, motivation and behavior, attendance, attitude and completion of all assigned tasks. Students who meet these conditions will automatically continue in the program. Students who do not meet these terms at any time during the school year will be allowed a six weeks probationary period. If satisfactory improvement is not shown, the student will be removed from the program. Parents will be notified by letter at the beginning and end of the probationary period. Students who leave the program will be reassessed and must meet current criteria for reentry.

## INFORMATION RELATING TO ATTENDANCE

### ABSENCES

Students who are absent from school are required to bring an excuse for the absence their first day back at school. An absence is either excused or unexcused. Absences which are excused shall be governed in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia and the rules and regulations of the State Department of Education and local policy. Excused absences shall include personal illness of student, serious illness or death in the student's immediate family reasonably necessitating absence, special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith, mandate or order of governmental agency, and school-related functions previously approved by the principal or other appropriate school official.

Parents may keep their child out for other reasons, but such absences shall be unexcused. Class work missed due to an unexcused absence (except suspension) cannot be made up. Oversleeping and/or missing the bus are unexcused. Students' homes are called by their respective homeroom teachers to determine causes of absences. It is the student's responsibility to obtain all work assignments missed and to make arrangements to make up tests that have been missed. This work should be completed within five school days.

### ATTENDANCE

To achieve the best in school, regular attendance is required. Students accumulating 5 or more unexcused absences will be referred to the Richmond County Juvenile Court. Students are expected to be present and punctual for all classes throughout the year. Students achieving perfect attendance are recognized during the annual honors' program.

## TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

Students are encouraged to be at school and in class on time each day. When a student is tardy to school, he/she must sign in at the Front Office desk and receive a tardy slip.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Students are responsible for keeping the school informed of changes in address and/or other information that is pertinent to parent or home contact. Such information can be vital in case of an emergency. The information should be submitted to the student's homeroom teacher.

## SCHOOL ZONE

All students attending Hephzibah Middle School must reside within the appropriate school zone.

## SIGNING OUT EARLY

Students who need to be excused early from school must bring a written note from the parent/guardian. This note must indicate the student's homeroom teacher's name, date, time to be dismissed, parent/guardian's telephone number, and the name of the individual picking up the child if not the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian must come to the office before the student leaves, sign out the student, and record the time leaving. All students returning to school must sign in, record the time returning, and obtain a pass from the secretary to return to class. No students will be dismissed between 2:00-2:20.

## WITHDRAWAL

Should it become necessary for a student to withdraw from school, the parent/guardian must notify the Guidance Department. This initial notification may be in the form of a written statement from the parent/guardian requesting the student be withdrawn. The request should state the date of the student's last day of attendance. On the student's last day in school, withdrawal clearance will be issued. A withdrawal form will be issued to the student to present to each teacher for completion and clearance. Textbooks and other materials must be turned in to the appropriate teacher. The student must also be cleared by the media center and the lunchroom. All books and other school property must be returned and any fines paid before records will be cleared and forwarded.

## Preparation

Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come;  
You have to get up and make them.

-Madame C.J. Walker

# INFORMATION RELATING TO DISCIPLINE

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE

All student misconduct at school, on the bus, or at school-sponsored activities will be dealt with in accordance with rules prescribed by the Uniform Code of Student Conduct and Discipline from the Richmond County Board of Education.

## GENERAL BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

Instruction should occur in an environment that is conducive to learning. Effective instruction requires good order and discipline that may be described as the absence of distractions, frictions, and disturbances that interfere with the effective functioning of the student, class, and school. Students will not be allowed to disrupt the learning process.

- Come to school prepared. Always bring paper, pencil, and books.
- Walk on the right hand side of the hall and move quietly and in an orderly manner.
- Leave items such as electronic games, cameras, radios, CD players, cell phones, and pagers at home. Such items will be taken by the teacher and turned over to an administrator or the public safety officer.
- Arrive at school and class on time.
- Phone use will be allowed only when a student is sick.
- Students must have a written pass when leaving the classroom.
- Students will not be allowed to loiter in the halls and restrooms before, during or after school.
- The selling of any item by students is prohibited.
- Bottled and canned drinks should not be brought to school.
- Students will not be allowed to eat and/or drink in any area of the school except the commons area.
- Skateboards and wheelies are not allowed at school.
- Public displays of affection are in poor taste and will not be tolerated on the school premises.
- The use of profanity will result in In School or at home suspension.
- Defacing school property (including restrooms) will result in out of school suspension.
- **Personnel electronic devices/phones are subject to classroom rules for appropriate use. Unless required for a classroom assignment, they should be stowed out of sight, and never used for texting, receiving texts or for photography/videography.**

## DETENTION

Violation of school rules or acts of misconduct may cause a student to receive detention. Detention means that a student will, as punishment, be “detained” after school for some specific period of time. The purpose of having detention is twofold: (1) To punish a student for acts of misconduct or violation of school rules and (2) to provide sufficient punishment so as to deter a student from committing the same act(s) again. Students who continue to create discipline problems will not be given detention but rather will be subject to In School Suspension and/or at home suspension.

Students are expected to adhere to the following detention guidelines:

- Team detention is held from 2:30-3:30 Monday and Wednesday.
- Students must serve detention on the day(s) assigned.
- Students must make arrangements to be picked up at 3:30.
- Students must bring books and other materials to receive credit.

## IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION

The purpose of the In School Suspension (ISS) Program is to provide an alternative to a student being suspended from school to home. ISS is suspension. The student assigned to ISS will be removed from regular classes and school activities. He/She will be placed in a special, isolated classroom where he/she will not be in contact with other students and faculty. The program is a strictly controlled environment monitored by a certified teacher. The program is designed in such a way that the teacher works with the student to insure assignments are complete and rules are followed. Failure to complete assignments and/or follow ISS rules will result in suspension from school. The student is responsible for completion of all work assigned while in ISS.

## BUS CONDUCT AND REGULATIONS

Just as students are under the supervision of teachers while in the classroom, bus students are under the supervision of bus drivers while en-route to and from school. An administrator will investigate reported acts of misconduct on the bus. For the first offense of misconduct, a student will receive a warning; upon the second offense, a letter indicating that the student has been placed on bus probation will be sent to the parents; and in the event of a third offense, the student will be suspended from riding the bus. Continued offenses could result in suspension from riding the bus for the remainder of the school year. If upon the first offense it is determined that the offense is serious enough, suspension will result immediately.

- To insure the safety of students who ride buses, it is absolutely essential that good conduct be maintained.
- Each student should be seated.
- Student conduct should not divert the driver's attention from operating the bus safely.
- Failure to cooperate with the driver, bus monitor, or school officials will automatically give cause for bus suspension.
- The driver will report all incidents of disruptive behavior to the principal.
- Unless prior approval has been secured from the principal, no middle school student will be allowed to get on or off the bus at the high school at any time.
- Unless a student has prior approval from the parent and the principal, the student must ride his/her assigned bus.

To ride a bus and not attend school is a violation of the State Education Commission Regulations, thereby, an offense. Students who get off a bus before their arrival at school and are absent from class will be considered cutting school.

## LEAVING CAMPUS

No student will be permitted to leave campus for any reason without the permission of the principal. Leaving campus without permission will result in suspension from school.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND/OR BULLYING

Sexual harassment and/or bullying will not be tolerated at HMS. Sexual harassment and bullying interferes with a student's ability to learn, is unacceptable and is illegal. Punishment for sexual harassment and bullying may include counseling, detention, In School Suspension, and/or out of school suspension.

## VANDALISM

Willfully defacing, damaging or destroying school property will result in suspension and parent/student restitution of damages.

## DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

Hephzibah Middle School will follow the Richmond County Board of Education's dress code policy. The following guidelines will be in effect for the 2018-2019 school year:

- Skirts, shorts, and dresses may be no shorter than the width of a dollar bill from the bend in the back of the knee.
- **Bedroom slippers, slides, shower shoes, flip-flops, and thong style shoes are not permissible.**
- Caps and other head coverings (including bandannas and hoodies) are not to be worn in the building during the school day.
- Sweat bands are not to be worn around the neck.
- Mini-skirts, short shorts, biker shorts, athletic shorts, sweat pants, wind suits and cut-off shorts are not acceptable.
- The torso should not be exposed.
- See through garments are prohibited.
- Pants and shorts with holes that show skin are not permissible above one's fingertips when one's arm are at rest.
- Tank tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti strap tops, and halter-tops are prohibited.
- Leggings or leotard type pants without pockets are not to be worn as an over garment.

All students shall maintain an acceptable standard of dress. If any student comes to school wearing inappropriate attire, so deemed by the discretion of the administrators and/or teachers, the student shall be referred to the office for disciplinary action. Students who consistently violate the dress code guidelines will be dealt with according to outlined policies in the Uniform Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

# INFORMATION RELATING TO STUDENT ACTIVITIES

## ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are held periodically during the school year. All school-sponsored programs are under the direction and supervision of the teachers and the principal. Students are expected to enter assemblies in a quiet, orderly manner and to sit in assigned areas. Wild applause, whistling, and/or booing are not acceptable or approved expressions for assembly programs. Students who behave inappropriately in assembly programs will be removed from the assembly area.

## CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Hephzibah Middle School offers a variety of student organizations and clubs designed to allow students to discover, improve, and enhance their interests and capabilities. Students may select one or more of these based on individual interest. Club sponsors for the 2018-2019 school year outlined on our school website.

## INTRAMURAL PROGRAM

All students are encouraged to participate in the intramural program held during the regularly scheduled PE classes. Intramurals consist of various types of sports and games to meet the interests of our students.

## INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORTS

HMS offers interscholastic sports for all students. These sports are softball, football, basketball, cheerleading, track, golf and baseball. To be eligible, the student must have passed five subjects the previous semester and not be older than 15 prior to May 1, 2016.

## PHYSICALS

Students trying out for or participating in athletics (including cheerleading and wrestling) are required to have an annual physical. The Richmond County Athletic Director makes arrangements for our prospective athletes to receive complete physicals that are scheduled through the school Athletic Director (Coach Jones).

## PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

For more information on the HMS PTO, please visit our school website.

## SCHOOL COUNCIL

The HMS School Council serves in an advisory capacity. The meetings are held in the media center and are open to the public.



## HONORS PROGRAMS

The sixth seventh, and eighth grade students will be recognized in May, 2019. More information will be announced.

## SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

All school-sponsored activities are under the direct supervision of the teachers and principal. The conduct of persons attending such events must be orderly and above reproach.

- After school activities (dances, etc.) are held from 2:30 – 4:00 PM.
- Activities are for HMS students only.
- Students are not permitted to leave the activity early unless a parent comes inside to get them. □
- All students should be picked up promptly (within 15 minutes) after the end of the activity.

# INFORMATION RELATING TO STUDENT SERVICES

## BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

Everyone enjoys eating breakfast and lunch in a pleasant environment. In order to create this environment, the following guidelines apply:

Students should:

- maintain order while in the serving lines.
- maintain appropriate behavior during the breakfast and lunch periods.
- dispose of all food and debris before leaving the commons area.
- remain in the assigned areas during the breakfast and lunch periods.
- 

No food or drink is to be taken out of the commons area. Students must go through the serving line to purchase food items. All lunches, whether purchased at school or brought from home, must be eaten in the commons area. Items from fast food restaurants are not to be delivered to school for student consumption at lunchtime. Any commercially prepared meals must be removed from the original wrappings, if they are to be eaten in the commons area.

Breakfast and lunch may be purchased daily or on a weekly basis. Breakfast and lunch prices are subject to change according to federal regulations. Charges are allowed for one meal only. The charge must be cleared before another charge can be made.



## GUIDANCE SERVICES

The Hephzibah Middle School counselors are available to all students. Often, problems concerning school and one's personal life can appear irresolvable. Many times these problems can be dealt with through counseling. Working together with teachers and administrators, the counselors encourage students' academic and personal growth. The guidance counselors can be reached at 592-4534. The following services are provided:

- Individual counseling
- Classroom guidance
- Group counseling
- Academic advisement and programming
- Career exploration
- Liaison between school, family and community
- Consultant and resource person
- Orientation

## MEDIA CENTER

The media center is open daily during the entire school day for use by students and faculty. Students must have a pass to enter the media center. Selections may be made by browsing or by referring to the information access system. Students should ask for assistance when unable to locate books. Students may check out most books for a period of two (2) weeks. Most reference books may not be checked out; however, some encyclopedias and other reference books may be checked out overnight. Students are not to have more than two (2) books checked out at any one time.

Books and other materials from the media center are valuable and should be regarded as such. Lost or damaged materials must be paid for by the borrower at full replacement cost.

Current magazines and newspapers are available to read in the media center. Back issues of magazines and audio-visual material may be used for reports. These items may not be taken from the media center. The media center has facilities and materials for preparing learning aids. When requested to do so by a teacher, students may videotape plays or programs, prepare slide-tape presentations, work on posters, etc. The media center exists for the purpose of enriching the user's life. If used properly by all students, it will serve this function.

## MEDICATION

If it is necessary for the student to take any type of medication during school hours, it must be sent in the original prescription bottle with the dose amount and time clearly indicated. The medication must be given to the nurse for storage in the clinic. The nurse will dispense it at the appropriate time. Students must provide their own aspirin or Tylenol with a note from the parent. The medications and note will be kept on file in the clinic. A permission slip for dispensing medication must be renewed each school year. Medication cannot be sent home on the bus. Please contact the school nurse if you have questions about your child's medication needs while at school.

## ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

Students becoming ill at school will be given a pass to the clinic. The school nurse will take the steps deemed necessary under the circumstances. Students are reminded that they should not hang out in the halls or restrooms if they become ill. They are to obtain a pass and go immediately to the clinic.

## SCHOOL INSURANCE

School insurance is available for all students. Parents have the option to accept or reject the purchase of the coverage. Students participating in interschool middle school athletics must have school insurance. We strongly urge all students involved in any school club or activity to purchase school insurance.

## HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

All students enrolled in a Georgia school must have, on file in the office, a Georgia Certificate of Immunization and an Eye, Ear, and Dental screening. This can be obtained from a private physician or from the Health Department. No stamped signatures will be accepted.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements will be made during the HMS Morning Show and during the last five minutes of the day each afternoon.

### ACCIDENTS

All accidents that occur in the school building, on the school property, or at any school sponsored activity must be reported to the school office immediately.

### APPOINTMENTS

Appointments with doctors or dentists should be made after school hours. If this is not possible, they should be made in order to miss the least amount of school as possible. Any student who is excused from school for any appointment is expected to make up missed class work for that day or he/she will receive a zero for the work missed. Verification of the appointment is required.

### ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

Weather permitting, all students shall remain outside (in the covered area) before school begins. During inclement weather, students will be allowed inside the building in the gym. Students who walk or ride to school with parents are to proceed to the covered area via the right side of the school. A teacher must supervise any student desiring to enter the school early.

### DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

Students are dismissed after the afternoon announcements that begin at 2:20 P.M. All students who ride buses exit out the front of the school. Students who walk or ride in private vehicles exit from the rear of the building. Students who participate in after-school activities or who have been assigned to detention will exit from the front of the building. In the event that

your child is physically incapable of exiting from the rear of the school or you desire to have him/her exit from the front door, please contact the principal. All parents and students are asked to take extreme caution upon dismissal as we are moving a large number of students to a very small area in a very short span of time.

## VISITORS

State and Richmond County laws prohibit unauthorized visitors on campus. Prior approval by an administrator is necessary for anyone to have a visitor on campus. Persons wishing to visit the school must register in the front office and obtain a “visitor’s badge.” Parents are welcome to visit their student’s classes if they made prior arrangements with an administrator.

## BOOK BAGS

Student book bags are allowed in school. It is the responsibility of the student to keep up with it and the contents inside.

## MESSAGES TO STUDENTS

Due to the number of students at Hephzibah Middle School, messages will not be delivered to students. Let your student know how they are getting home before they arrive at school. This is an inconvenience and causes disruptions during the instructional time. In the event of an emergency, parents should report to the office to sign their student out of school.

## STUDENT PHONE USE

Students will only be allowed to use the phone if they are sick and need to call home for someone to pick them up. Forgetting homework, going home with a friend, staying after school, etc., are not valid reasons for using the school phone. Teachers will not allow students to leave the classroom to use the phone unless they are ill. Teachers may allow supervised students to use Team Office phones.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are expected to bring to school only items of personal property necessary for participation in class and extracurricular activities. Items that are considered potentially dangerous or disruptive to school procedures will be confiscated. Student theft will be dealt with by the administration. Students are encouraged not to bring valuables and large sums of money to school. Student phones are the responsibility of the student and Richmond County School System is not responsible for the loss personal technology. Devices should be personalized to reflect ownership by using an engraver, permanent marker, paint pen, etc. Students should not buy or sell personal property at school.

## PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY

Students and parents must sign and abide by the “RCSS Technology Agreement for Bringing Personal Technology” as found at the end of this handbook. Failure to adhere to the aforementioned agreement can result in discipline for not following school rules.

## LOST AND FOUND

The media center is the area designated for lost and found articles. Anyone who finds a lost or misplaced article should take it to the media center. Students looking for a lost item should check in the media center.

## FIRE CODE RESTRICTIONS

Lighting matches, lighters, pulling fire alarms or tampering with fire extinguishers in the building is prohibited. Violations of this rule will result in severe disciplinary actions such as alternative school placement or expulsion. Fire alarms and drills are for everyone's safety. They are NOT A JOKE!

## FIRE DRILLS AND EVACUATIONS

Fire drills and evacuations are held in accordance with the suggestions of the Augusta-Richmond County Fire Department and in cooperation with the state organization of fire prevention. The fire drills are a precautionary measure for safety. Students will leave the building in the manner designated for each classroom. Fire drill and evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. All teachers and students should know the procedures for leaving each room and the regulations that provide for the safety of everyone. These regulations include:

- Students are to walk to the designated exit to leave the building.
- The teacher is to lead the class out to a designated point at least 100 feet from the building.
- The last student leaving the classroom should close the door.
- Personal items such as keys and handbags should be taken when leaving the building.
- In case of a drill or evacuation during lunch, students will leave through the exit designated by the teacher.

## TORNADO DRILL PROCEDURES

Upon notification from the office of a tornado watch, teachers will review with their students the designated safe locations in the school and the proper safe body position. Teachers and students in portables will move immediately to safe areas inside the building. Upon notification from the office of a tornado warning, all persons on the school campus will move to designated safe locations.

## RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Richmond County Board of Education, in compliance with the Privacy Act concerning personnel files, will release as directory information without the consent of the employee or student the following information:

- Name of the employee or student.
- Address of same.
- How long employed or where enrolled.
- The date and place of birth.
- The height and weight. ☐ The grade level of the student.

Any employee and/or student or parent who objects to the release of the directory information may file an objection in writing to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Richmond County Board of Education, 864 Broad Street, Augusta, Georgia, 30901, clearly stating what directory information they do not wish to have released. If a student or parent wishes to file an objection, an indication of the student's current school of enrollment must be made.

Upon written consent of the employee or student, specific information not listed above may be released provided the signed consent form is on file in the employee or student's personnel file.

In accordance with the Privacy Act, certain governmental institutions have access to student and/or employee's personnel file without prior consent for disclosure. The Richmond County Board of Education will notify any employee or student of the release of any information to any agency for which prior consent is not required.

## HEPHZIBAH MIDDLE SCHOOL

### QUICK FACTS AND INFORMATION

SCHOOL NAME:	Hephzibah Middle School
PRINCIPAL:	Mr. Chris Neal
ADDRESS:	2427 Mims Road, Hephzibah, Georgia, 30815
PHONE:	(706) 592-4534
STUDENT HOURS:	7:30 AM - 2:30 PM
TEACHER HOURS:	7:00 AM - 3:15 PM
HOURS OF OPERATION:	7:00 AM - 4:00 PM
SCHOOL NUTRITION:	Lunch prices: Free to Students Breakfast prices: Free to Students)
ACCREDITATION:	State Department of Education Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
ASSOCIATIONS:	National Middle School Association Georgia Middle School Association

### Who should I call if I have a problem with or questions about?

Bus Route:	(1) HMS Guidance (592-4534, extension 2100) (2) RCBE Transportation Department (796-4777)
Bus Discipline:	(1) School Office (592-4534, extension 2100)
School Zones:	(1) HMS Guidance (592-4534, extension 2100) (2) RCBE Transportation Department (796-4777)
School Discipline:	(1) School Office (592-4534, extension 2100)
Academics/Homework:	(1) Team Leader (592-4534, extension 2100) (2) School Office (592-4534, extension 2100)
Student Support Team:	(1) Assistant Principal (592-4534, extension 2100)
Sports/Cheerleading:	(1) Coach Jones A.D (592-4534, extension 2100)
PTO:	(1) PTO President (592-4534, extension 2100)
Medication:	(1) Nurse (592-4534, extension 2130) (2) HMS Secretary (592-4534, extension 2100)
School Insurance:	(1) Mrs. Coburn (592-4534, extension 2104)
Report Card:	(1) Homeroom Teacher (592-4534, extension 2100) (2) Guidance Department (592-4534, extension 2100) (3) Principal (592-4534, extension 2100)