

Alternative Center
At Morgan Road
Student Handbook
2021 - 2022

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Alternative Center

A Great Place for a New Beginning

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Dear Students,

It is indeed a pleasure to welcome you to the Alternative Center at Morgan Road. I understand that there are circumstances that have brought us together; however, I believe that we all have room for improvement. Please know that our goal is to make sure that you have a high-quality education. We all will work together to make sure that you are successful while you are here.

This handbook is designed to assist you with understanding the rules and regulations at the Alternative Center. It is virtually impossible to adequately cover all the rules and regulations in detail for every subject area. Nonetheless, this handbook will be a guide to success.

Sincerely,

Dr. Chauncey A. Scott
Principal

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INTRODUCTION

The policies and procedures contained in this book are the result of a concerted effort on the part of the faculty and administration. The information herein has been carefully prepared and presented. It will help you adjust to our school and become an integral part of it.

The ultimate purpose of an education is to help students become effective citizens. Hopefully, you will participate in our varied activities and find things within our school which will prepare you to live a better life. Remember, your success in this school will be directly proportioned to your efforts.

Our school welcomes you to its ranks, and we hope that you will always be conscious of its requirements. This school will be whatever you make it. Let us always have the spirit to do the things which will make it outstanding.

MOTTO

“A Great Place for a New Beginning”

SCHOOL UNIFORM COLORS

Black and White

AFFIRMATION

“Today”

Today is a brand new day

Yesterday is gone

I will make choices that will positively impact my education

I will be slow to judge and take offense

I will actively participate in all classroom activities everyday

I can succeed regardless of any circumstance that may get in my way

Yesterday is gone

I will make today and tomorrow better days!

RICHMOND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM'S VISION

The Richmond County School System will provide an equitable education for all students to prepare them for life beyond the classroom.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Alternative Center is to provide a place for new beginnings for all students through positive learning experiences.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- All students can learn and have a right to a quality education.
- Education is a shared responsibility that unites the student, 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 communities.
- 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 exceptionality.
- Goals are achievable education outcomes that should be clear and explicit.

INSTRUCTION

Each student assigned to the Alternative Center will receive Standards-Based Instruction. The curriculum is designed to be rigorous, relevant, and it should build relationships. The instructional framework model includes the opening, work period, and closing. Instruction is data driven. Students are engaged and actively involved in learning. Instruction is linked to the standards and elements.

HOMEWORK

Homework will be assigned consistently, Monday through Thursday and at each teacher's discretion on weekends. Students are accountable for homework in the following ways:

- It should be submitted on time.
- Homework should be neat and should be completed done in the manner assigned.
- Homework can be made up if the student is absent. However, it is the student's responsibility to request such homework from the teacher.

GRADING POLICY

A system of numerical grades is used for both middle and high school. Numerical grades can be converted to letter grades according to the following grading scale:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	75-79
D	70-74
F	69 and below

PROGRESS REPORTS (MID-NINE WEEKS)

The 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 indicated on the school calendar.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of the nine-week period.

MAKE-UP WORK

A student who is absent or suspended from class or school is responsible for all work missed. It is the student's responsibility to request missed assignments. Do not wait for the teacher to approach you for missed assignments. **This is your responsibility! Make-up work is due on the day the student returns to school.**

The student is to arrange with the teacher an agreeable time for the make-up work/tests and report to the teacher at the designated time and place. If the student fails to report as directed, no further opportunity to make up the work or take the tests will be offered. The student will receive a zero.

PROMOTION INFORMATION

Promotion/retention is solely decided by the student's zone school. Grades from Alternative Center are submitted to the zone school for report card purposes.

RETURN TO ZONE SCHOOL

At the end of the student's assignment at Alternative Center his/her grades and attendance will be reviewed by the principal. Students with excessive absences **will be required** to make up those absences before returning to zone schools.

HOURS OF OPERATION

School hours: Monday – Thursday 9:15 AM to 5:15 PM

Students will be allowed to enter the rear of the building at 9:00 a.m. for breakfast. All students are expected to report to first period by 9:30 a.m.

Students that arrive after 10:00 a.m. will not be admitted without a written legal excuse which may include the following:

- **Medical or dental appointments: A signed written statement from the appropriate physician shall be required to validate a tardy for a medical or dental reason.**
- **Court appearances when required by subpoena: A copy of said subpoena is to be furnished to the office to validate a tardy caused by a court appearance.**

**All students must be picked up by 5:15 p.m.
There is no supervision of students after 5:15 p.m.!**

STUDENTS' CODE OF ETHICS

1. Cooperate with administrators and staff.
2. Practice good sportsmanship at all school activities.
3. Promote courtesy.
4. Obey the operational rules of the school.
5. Respect everyone.
6. Be honest in schoolwork.
7. Adopt an appropriate attitude.
8. Keep school spirit alive and support your school.
9. Follow the Richmond County Code of Conduct Handbook.

SCHOOL RULES AND REGULATIONS

A Uniform Code of Conduct and Discipline for Students in Richmond County will be issued under a separate cover.

Parents, please read and discuss this booklet with your child.

GENERAL STATEMENTS OF GOOD BEHAVIOR

1. Do not eat or chew gum in the classroom.
2. Do not run in the hallways, classroom, lunchroom or anywhere in the school building.
3. Students are to have a pass when in the hallways.
4. Refrain from talking in the hallways.
5. Do not yell or play in the hallways, lunchroom, or assembly.
6. Report to class with paper, book, pencil, etc.
7. Disobedience or insubordination to school personnel is prohibited.
8. Do not leave trays or food items on the lunchroom tables.
9. Inappropriate public display of affection (PDA) is prohibited.
10. Use of profanity may result in ISS assignment.
11. Do not take food or beverages out of the cafeteria.
12. Do not disrupt class.
13. You must always wear appropriate school attire. (School uniform).
14. Do not deface school property. Take PRIDE in your school.
15. Do not bring contraband to school.
16. All students are expected to participate in the Morning Pledge and the Affirmation.
17. Students are not allowed in the stairwells without supervision.

ALTERNATIVE CENTER'S DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

INAPPROPRIATELY DRESSED STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ADMITTED!

Students not adhering to the policy will not be admitted! (NO EXCEPTIONS)

The following guidelines will be strictly enforced:

- Black pants only! No faded, gray or any other color except for black (no skinny leg or spandex material).
- All pants must be worn at waist level. (NO SAGGING, BAGGING, OR DRAGGING).
- Pants with holes and/or ragged edges are not permissible.
- Gym shorts cannot be worn under the pants.
- Belts (black) are to be clearly visible. No design or large belt buckles.
- Skirts, capri pants, shorts, sweatpants, wind suits and see-through garments are not permitted.
- Shoes worn by males and females must be **SOLID** black. If it has an emblem, it must be solid black or white. (NO EXCEPTIONS), black or white socks only.
- Bedroom slippers, slides, shower shoes, flip flops, crocks, sandals, high heels, and thong shoes are not permitted.
- Shirts must be solid white with a collar.
- Only white t-shirts with no writing or designs are allowed on or under the collared shirt. Nothing must show through the white-collar shirt.
- Shirts will be always tucked in, not bloused out (male and female).
- Tank tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti straps, and halter-tops are not permitted.
- Black jackets or sweatshirts with no hoods, pockets, or designs may be worn. Jackets will be turned in during intake and returned to the student at the end of the day.
- Males or females may not wear any jewelry, body piercings, makeup, fingernail polish or grilles. Females may not wear short nail tips.
- Students cannot wear extreme hair styles, colors (natural color only), or any designs in their head. This is to include a shave in parts/gashes in eyebrows.
- Caps, bandannas, ribbons, or other head coverings are not permitted.
- No Bookbags, no spiral notebooks (Only composition notebooks allowed)
- Plain facemasks with no designs

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION (PDA) – PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Students are expected to refrain from excessive displays of affection while in school.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

Any student who intentionally sell, distribute, possess, use, or is under the influence of illicit drugs, narcotics, or alcohol in or on school property; including buses, shall be (1) expelled from school and (2) reported to the appropriate law enforcement agencies for possible legal action.

TEXTBOOKS/SUPPLIES

Students are **not** required to bring textbooks to Alternative Center. Students will be issued a set of textbooks once they arrive at the Center. Students are responsible for textbooks at all times. When textbooks are lost or destroyed, the student must pay for textbooks before they are issued new textbooks or before school records can be released.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Bookbags are not permitted! Students must have a composition notebook (not spiral bound) and a pencil to enter the Alternative Center.

CELL PHONES AND ELETRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones, smart watches or electronic devices are **not** permitted at Alternative Center. If a student is in possession of a cell phone or electronic device, the device will be according to the following policy:

First Offense: The cell phone or electronic device will be kept at the school for 30 calendar days. Upon expiration of the 30 calendar days, the parent(s) of the students will have 3 school days to pick up the cell phone or electronic device with proper ownership documentation. After the expiration of the 3 school days the cell phone or electronic device will be donated to a charitable organization, recycled, or discarded without further notice to the parent or guardian.

Second Offense: After a 2nd violation of the policy by a student, any cell phone or electronic device will be taken for 60 calendar days and the parent will have 10 calendar days to pick-up the cell phone or electronic device with proper ownership documentation. Failure to pick-up after the expiration of the 3 school days, the cell phone or electronic device will then be donated to a charitable organization, recycled, or discarded without further notice to the parent or guardian.

Third Offense: After a 3rd violation of the policy, the cell phone or electronic device will be donated immediately to a charitable organization, recycled, or discarded without further notice to the parent or guardian.

FIRE CODE RESTRICTIONS

Lighting of matches, lighters, or pulling fire alarms in the building is prohibited. Violation of this rule could result in expulsion. Fire alarms and drills are for everyone's safety...they are NOT A JOKE.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Referral of a student to the assistant principal or principal for misconduct is a last resort. Once a student reaches the assistant principal's office the seriousness of the case will speak for itself. The case will be dealt with as rapidly, firmly, and as possible. In all instances, parents will be contacted.

When a student is suspended, a conference with his/her parents must be held with the assistant principal or principal before the student is permitted to return to school.

It is understood that during an out-of-school suspension the students may not attend classes, participate in school activities, or visit any school grounds or activities of the Richmond County School System.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

An absence is either lawful or unlawful. Upon returning to school after an absence, said student must submit an excuse from his/her parents. Absences that are lawful 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. Lawful excuses shall include personal illness of students, serious illness, or death in the student's immediate family necessitating absence, special and recognized religious holidays observed by student's faith, mandate or order of governmental agency, and school-related functions previously approved by the principal or appropriate official. **IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ARRANGE WITH THE TEACHER ANY MAKE-UP WORK TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN FIVE DAYS.**

All other absences shall be deemed unlawful. **TESTS AND CLASSWORK MISSED DUE TO UNLAWFUL ABSENCE CANNOT BE MADE UP.** Students with unlawful absences from class or school are subject to suspension according to county policy.

Students and parents are reminded that failure to present excuses for absences on the day the student returns to school may result in that excuse not being counted at the end of the semester. Any excuse that appears to have false information on it will not be counted as excused.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

It is the student's responsibility to be in attendance in all classes. If you miss a class for any reason, you must get prior approval from the teacher you are assigned to for that period.

TARDIES TO SCHOOL

Students who are tardy must be checked in by a parent in the main office. Students will receive a pass to class. We will follow the policy as outlined in the Richmond County Code of Conduct Manual.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

1. Go directly to your seat before the tardy bell rings and prepare for the daily class assignment(s).
2. Excuses for absences should be presented to teachers at the beginning of class periods.

3. It is the responsibility of the student to get assignments missed during his/her absence/suspension. If you know you are going to be out for an extended period of time, make arrangements with your teacher to get assignments in advance.
4. All students must have the necessary educational items and be prepared for class upon arrival.
5. Discussions concerning grades, discipline, etc. will usually not be discussed during class time.

ASSEMBLIES

At all times every student's behavior should be refined and courteous. An indication of the cultural level of the school is the conduct of its student body at an assembly program. Whether guests are present or not, each student is personally responsible for the impression made by the school. Unacceptable conduct includes whistling, uncalled for clapping, boisterousness, and talking during a program.

BUS REGULATIONS

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Only exceptional students are allowed to ride school buses. Students who come to school on the school bus should return home on the bus unless they have a note from their parents, and it is approved by the principal. Improper conduct on the buses will result in that privilege being denied. Bus students are to go directly to their assigned bus as soon as they are dismissed from school in the afternoon.

CAFETERIA

Another service vital to the student's health and his/her success in school is the provision of breakfast and lunch program. This program makes it possible for the student to receive well-balanced meals at the beginning and middle of the school day at a nominal cost. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this service as it contributes greatly to their readiness to take advantage of the academic program.

The lunch period must be orderly and without excessive noise or loud talking. Students are NOT, under any circumstance, allowed to leave campus. Only lunches purchased at the school or brought from home are permitted in the cafeteria. "Fast Food" lunches may not be brought to or by students during the school day. Only non-carbonated beverages are allowed in the lunchroom. Glass bottles or cans are not allowed in the lunchroom. Any exceptions concerning food for special activities/events must be made by the principal.

STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE TEACHER'S LOUNGE!

FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS

Fire and tornado drills are held at irregular intervals throughout the school year. Remember these basic rules:

1. Check the instructions in each classroom (they are posted) indicating how to leave the building in case of fire.
2. No talking.
3. Move quickly to the designated area.

GUIDANCE

The purpose of the guidance program is to help each student achieve his/her highest growth academically, emotionally, and socially. We try to do this in several ways:

1. Develop rapport
2. Provide individual/group counseling sessions
3. Counsel/advise students, parents, teachers, etc.

HALLS

Students should be in the halls only at scheduled times unless they have special permission or special duties that require them to be there. They are to be escorted in the hallways by an adult and they are asked to be courteous. Running/shouting in the halls is not permitted.

LEAVING SCHOOL

If it is necessary for a student to leave school, he/she must have written permission from the parent/guardian. In case of unavoidable medical appointments, the student must bring the written excuse to the nurse or front office prior to first period and secure a permit. Before a student leaves the school property, he/she must sign out in the front office. **Leaving campus without permission will result in a 3-day suspension from school.**

LIBRARY SERVICES

The Media Center is open each day of the school term (180 days) daily. Students are encouraged to use the center individually and in small groups. Written permission is required from the teacher if the student comes from a classroom.

LOST AND FOUND

The school strongly discourages bringing to school large sums of money, or other items not required for student performance in school. The school will not accept responsibility for those items and solicits the cooperation of the parents and students in this regard.

MEDICATION

If it becomes necessary for a student to take any form of medication at school a signed note from a parent must be presented to the nurse. All medication will be kept and dispensed through the clinic or main office.

The nurse is here to provide First Aid and to give medication. When a student needs to go home for medical reasons or has an excuse from a parent or an appointment card, the student should remain in class until a parent comes for pick up. If a student is being picked up by someone other than a parent/guardian or is walking home, approval should be made with the principal upon arrival at school. Students will not be allowed to stand in the lobby while waiting to be picked up.

If the nurse is not available, please sign in with the front office giving and provide the reason for requesting to see the nurse. When the nurse returns, she will call you to her office as soon as possible.

The phone in the nurse's office is for medical and school-related reasons only.

TELEPHONE

Students will not use the office phone for personal calls except in case of an emergency and with staff permission. In the event a student receives a call, he/she will be called out of class only in the case of an emergency.

VANDALISM

Our school buildings and equipment cost taxpayers to construct, purchase, and maintain. Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay for losses or damages. If students willfully destroy school property, suspension and subsequent expulsion may be necessary. Should a student damage something by accident, it must be reported to a teacher or to the main office immediately.

WHO OWNS THIS SCHOOL

YOU do! Your parents and all taxpayers are legally required to pay taxes that build and maintain the public school system. Everyone pays taxes in one form or another. Therefore, any damage done to this building, equipment, buses, or books must be paid for with your family's money. It is not enough that you should refrain from doing anything to increase this cost to your parents, neighbors, and yourself. You must help protect the schools by discouraging or reporting such activity by any others. REMEMBER - most trouble starts as fun.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

In order for all necessary records to be completed, parents must come to the student services (guidance) office to withdraw students from school.

PARENTAL VISITS TO SCHOOL

Parents who desire to visit the school at other times may make arrangements through the administration. All other persons visiting the school MUST get permission from the administration to visit a classroom. If a parent desires to talk with a particular teacher about a student's progress, it is recommended that the parent call the counselor's office to schedule a conference.

STUDENT MESSAGES

Messages should **ONLY** be left in cases of an emergency. Students will not be called out of class for messages unless approved by the administration.

Use of Asthma Inhalers in the School Setting

Early recognition and prompt treatment of symptoms are vital to the management of asthma. The number of diagnosed cases of asthma is increasing each year. Physician prescribed, “inhaled medication” is frequently used to manage the condition and treatment of acute asthma. Easy access to and correct use of asthma inhalers are often necessary to avoid serious respiratory complications, secondary to acute episodes and to improve the quality of life of students with asthma. Therefore, the Richmond County School District has developed policy with the safety of all students in mind.

1. All Richmond County School students who use physician prescribed inhalers must submit a copy of the medication form with a completed medical administration and daily asthma management plan. This form must contain the signature of the prescribing doctor as well as the signature of the parent or guardian of the student. These completed medical forms must be submitted to the school nurse.
2. Students with physician’s orders may carry their inhalers in school, in a before and after school program, at any school sponsored activity, and while under the supervision of school personnel.
3. In the event that the physician does not recommend self-administration of inhalers as documented in the asthma management plan, inhalers will be kept in the clinic in the medication cabinet.
4. Any student found sharing his/her inhaler with any other student will be referred to the principal for appropriate disciplinary action.

EXEMPTION OF EXAMS FOR SENIORS

(No other students are to exempt exams)

Richmond County Board of Education approved that graduating seniors be allowed to exempt their second semester exams if they meet the following criteria:

- a. A senior must have a 90.0 or above average in each class.
- b. A senior must have no more than (5) days of non-school related absences (absences that are not connected with school related activities such as illness, death in family, etc.)

MAKE UP SEMESTER EXAMS

Semester Exams are to be administered in EACH SUBJECT (county policy). Exams for students who did not take their exams will be administered by the subject area teacher as outlined, provided the student’s absence has been approved by administration.

GRADES

Board Policy uses the following formula: Add the final numerical grade for each of the three nine-weeks to the exam grade and divide by four to determine the semester grade.

