

## ALGOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL Student Handbook

**Statement of Philosophy:** Our purpose is to educate all students to the best of their ability, regardless of race, religion, ethnic origin or socio-economic status. We are dedicated to the total education of all students. We believe that every student is individual and valuable. Their needs cannot be met with only textbooks, but by various methods that address the many different ways that students process information. We, the faculty and staff at Algood Middle School, believe that every student is an untapped resource with varying potentials, characteristics, needs, and interests. We believe that the future of our community and society depends on the young minds that we are educating today.

**Mission Statement:** Our mission is to inspire all students at Algood Middle School to become leaders of learning and responsible citizenship through rigorous and relevant instruction in a safe school environment.

**Algood Middle School is committed to providing a safe, nurturing learning environment for each student. Working together, students, parents, and school staff can provide the best possible environment for academic excellence, while keeping students physically and emotionally safe. The following Code of Conduct is based on the PCS conduct policies and procedures. The requirements of the Code of Conduct shall apply equally to all AMS students and shall be enforced in a fair, consistent and non-discriminatory manner.**

**Alcohol/Drugs:** The use or possession of intoxicants or illegal drugs on school property or in any vehicle used to transport students to school events is prohibited. Attendance at school events while under the influence of any of these is prohibited. Any personal in violation shall be subject to removal from school property and prosecution in accordance with the provisions of Putnam County School Board Policy as stated below:

**Alcohol:** At the first offense of attending school while intoxicated or while using or possessing an alcoholic beverage on school property, the student shall be suspended for ten (10) days. If there should be a second offense, the student shall be suspended for fifteen (15) days and referred to the director of schools for possible expulsion from school.

**Drugs:** Any student using any illegal drug, non-prescribed narcotic drug, or marijuana, or possessing, selling of transmitting drugs or controlled paraphernalia shall be suspended from school for one calendar year. (Board Policy 6.309).

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is essential for promotion and success at school, as well as any vocation chosen in life. When an absence is necessary, it is the responsibility of the student to see that work is made up in the time specified by each teacher. The following are the only legal excuses for absences:

1. Personal illness – doctor’s statement may be required\*
2. Death in the immediate family
3. Observance of a religious holiday
4. Failure of a bus run
5. A medical or dental appointment – these should be scheduled after school whenever possible

\*A doctor’s statement will be required after the 5<sup>th</sup> absence

School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. Students who are tardy miss valuable instruction time and disrupt the class by arriving late. Students who are habitually tardy will be considered truant. A parent/guardian will need to sign in students in the office who arrive later than 8:00 a.m.

Students with **5 absences excused or unexcused** will be reported to the county attendance Supervisor.

Perfect Attendance is defined as “attending every class, every day, for the full period.”

**Backpacks/Bookbags/Totebags/Purses:** All backpacks, bookbags, totebags, purses, etc. are subject to search by school officials. They may be of any type, solid or mesh, except those that have wheels.

**Bicycles/Skateboards/Rollerblades/Scooters:** Bicycles are to be parked in a designated area upon arrival at school and are not to be used until the end of the school day. NO skateboards, rollerblades, shoes with rollers, or scooters are allowed at school.

**Bullying:** According to Tennessee Code Annotated Section 49-6-1014 through 49-6-1019 and Putnam County School Board Policy 6.304, Algood Middle School will provide a safe environment for student learning. See attached Student Discrimination/Harassment and Bullying/Intimidation guidelines.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** Student receives and reviews the Bullying Law and signs the Bullying Contract. The parent is contacted.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** Student will receive 3-10 days of OSS. Rules concerning make-up of work during OSS will apply.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense:** Student will receive 11-15 days of OSS. Rules concerning make-up of work during OSS will apply.

Administrators reserve the right to issue discipline according to the severity of the offense.

**Bus and Car Rider Areas:** Doors to the school will remain closed until 7:15 a.m. At 7:15 a.m., all students are to report to the gym or cafeteria if eating breakfast and remain until dismissal to classes at 7:45 a.m. In the afternoon, bus riders are to go directly to the gym. Car riders are to go directly to the cafeteria, remaining inside the cafeteria until they are called to the car line.

**Bus Conduct:** All students riding buses are expected to comply with the rules and regulations set forth by the School Transportation Department. Disciplinary infractions that occur on buses or at approved bus stops will be reported to the administration for the assignment of appropriate discipline.

**Cafeteria:** Students’ behavior in the cafeteria should be based on courtesy and cleanliness. Students are expected to make the lunch period pleasant for everyone by keeping tables and floors clean and noise to a minimum. Lunches may be paid on Monday or online (<http://www.pcsstn.com/departments/foodservice/index.html>) anytime. Students may pay daily as they go through the line, but this practice is not encouraged. If you wish to manage your students’ lunch account online you may call April Banker at the Central Office (526-9770 ext. 1216) or email ([bankerq@k12tn.net](mailto:bankerq@k12tn.net)). Charging is not allowed. If your child has no money and a zero account balance, he/she will be given a basic lunch normally consisting of peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

**Cell Phones and Electronic Devices:** As per Putnam County Board of Education Policy 6.312, “Students may possess personal communication devices, such as cell phones, while on school property. However, the personal communication device must be in the off mode and must be kept in a backpack, purse, or similar personal carry-all and may not be used during school hours.” School hours are 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Algood Middle School hours also include after school programs. The procedures/consequences for violation for grades 5-12 are:

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense:** Cell Phones/Electronic Devices – 3 days of after school detention. The phone including battery or electronic device will be confiscated and parents/guardians notified by administration. A meeting will be held with parent/guardian to return the phone/electronic device after the discipline has been completed.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:** Cell Phone/Electronic Devices – 5 days of after school detention. The phone including battery or electronic device will be confiscated and parents/guardians notified by administration. A meeting will be held with parent/guardian to return the phone/electronic device after the discipline has been completed.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense and each subsequent offense:** Cell Phone/Electronic Devices – 5 days of after school detention or 3 days of ISS. The phone including battery or electronic device will be held for a ten (10) day period. If the parent wishes to refuse the ten (10) day confiscation, the student will incur a three (3) day out-of-school suspension period, as well as (5) days of after school detention. Parent will be notified by administration.

**Class Trips:** Field trips are considered an extension of the learning process as well as a privilege. Students are expected to represent Algood Middle School in the best possible manner. School rules apply. A student who has been a consistent discipline problem may be excluded from any trip.

**Discipline:** One of the most important lessons students will learn is self-discipline. 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. We believe in helping students develop self-discipline, which will make them a better person and a more productive citizen, as well as making the school a more effective learning environment. Algood Middle School believes in rewarding those that exhibit appropriate behavior. Students will be taught the school rules and those rules will be posted throughout the building as reminders of behavioral expectations.

**Disruptive Devices:** Personal electronic devices are not allowed during school hours or on school premises. Algood Middle School does not assume any responsibility should these items be brought and lost, damaged, or stolen. Students will not be permitted to have tape players, electronic games, laser pointers/pens, beepers, IPODs, cameras, pagers, water guns, shock devices, stink bombs, or any other device that may interfere with the educational process. Such devices will be confiscated and procedures stated above in Cell Phone/Electronic Devices will be implemented. Students are not allowed to bring items to sell or trade unless it is a school-sponsored fund-raiser.

**Dress Code:** Parents and students shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with all aspects of the dress code at any time the student is on school premises or attending a school sponsored function. No apparel, accessory (jewelry, etc.) or any mode of appearance may display, advertise or denote any of the following:

Gang affiliation or gang signs/symbols

Death and destruction

**Skull and crossbones**

Alcohol or tobacco products

Profanity or vulgarity

Sexual preferences or symbols

Racist overtones/hate themes or symbols

Violent, aggressive or combative themes

Any other suggestive or offensive sayings  
or graphics

#### **Dress Code Guidelines:**

1. Soled shoes must be worn. No shower shoes, house shoes, flip-flops. Shoes and sandals must have enclosed heels or permanent heel straps. Any strap that has been self-attached (string, yarn, rope or tape) is unacceptable. If student(s) wear back-less shoes they will call home and someone will have to bring them an appropriate pair of shoes to school. This guideline provides safety on stairs and on the playground.
2. No hats, knit caps, bandannas (unless for religious or medical reasons) are allowed
3. No clothing revealing the midriff or lower back – bare skin cannot be visible while standing or seated
4. All shirts, blouses, sweaters must be at least (three) 3 inches wide at the shoulder. All shirts must be size appropriate and fitted under the arm (no cut-out sleeves). Necklines must be no more than three (3) inches below the base of the neck.
5. No clothing with holes, rips, tears or cuts. This includes the new-style jeans with frays and/or cuts.

6. No sunglasses (unless for medical reasons)
7. Pants, shorts, and skirts must be appropriately sized and worn at the waistline –
  - a. Sagging waistlines or bottoms will not be tolerated
  - b. Shorts, skirts/skorts, and dresses (including any slit) must at the length of no more than three (3) inches above the top of the knee. Even if wearing something under the shorts or skirt, it must be length appropriate
8. Appropriate athletic wear may be worn only during athletic or similar activities
9. No writing or stamping on skin or clothing
10. No visible tattoos
11. Body piercings are limited to the ears only. No other visible spacers or piercings are allowed.
12. Make up should be modestly applied
13. Hairstyles are to be moderate, clean, and of natural color. Startling or extreme hairstyles (Mohawk, spiked, dyed with an unnatural color/tint etc.) are unacceptable.
14. Coats/jackets are not to be worn to class without permission. Length of any outer garment may not be longer than mid-thigh

These standards of dress and grooming do not prohibit the administration from allowing special celebrations that involve variations in dress and grooming. Stricter standards may be imposed upon a student with three or more dress code violations. Discipline of dress code violations may include warning, parent notification to bring appropriate clothing to school, student sent home for proper clothing, conference, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and any other disciplinary actions deemed necessary by administration. These dress code guidelines have been developed in compliance with **board policy 6.310**.

**Driving:** Students are not allowed to transport themselves to/from school by any means of transportation which requires them to have a license. We will, however, provide the proper paper work for students to secure a permit if their parents choose for them to do so. Ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) total unexcused absences during any semester renders a student ineligible to retain a driver's permit. Academic performance must also be at a satisfactory level.

**End of Day Dismissal:** Students should be out of the building fifteen (15) minutes after the dismissal bell, unless they are enrolled in an after-school program or have made arrangements to work with a teacher (academic assistance, etc.) Students are not to loiter on school property. Students may not remain at school for an after-school function that begins after 3:15. They must be picked up at school and return at the appropriate time.

**Fireworks:** Possession of fireworks is a violation of a city ordinance. Violators will be reported to the appropriate authorities as well as being disciplined by the school. The principal or designee will assign out of school suspension, in school suspension, or after school detention accordingly.

**Grading/Report Cards:** Report cards are sent home after each nine-week grading period. A progress report is sent home at the four and one-half week of each nine-week period. Information concerning grades may be obtained by contacting the teacher. Parents may request a conference with the teacher(s) by contacting the counseling center. After the first 4 ½ weeks progress reports, teachers will send weekly progress reports home for students failing an academic subject. Access to PowerSchool is provided.

The following is the Uniform Grading Policy established by the Tennessee State Board of Education (3.301).

Grading Scale:	A	Superior	(93-100)
	B	Above Average	(85-92)
	C	Average	(75-84)
	D	Below Average	(70-74)
	F	Failing	(69 and below)

**Honors Classes:** The above grading scale may include the addition of three (3) points to the grades used to calculate the semester average. All academic classes for high school credit offered at Algood Middle School (with the exception of Spanish) are considered honors classes.

**Guidance:** Guidance services are provided to help each student with educational, social, vocational, and personal development. The counselors are in the Guidance Office daily. Conferences with students receive the counselors' first consideration and are scheduled when needed. Students will need to make an appointment to see a counselor at a time that will not interfere with instructional time. The counselors may assist the student in recommending materials to improve study habits, in planning the school program, in making realistic curriculum selections, in offering aid in adjustment problems, and in offering mediation for conflict resolution. Parents may contact the Guidance Office by calling 537-6141.

**Gum:** No chewing gum allowed at school at any time

**Hallways/Stairs:** Students should be in the hallways/stairs ONLY at the beginning and close of school and while moving from one class to another, unless they have special permission or special duties that require them to be there. Students are required to use their Planner as a hall pass, which must be signed by the dismissing teacher and by a staff person at their destination before they return to class. Only one student per hall pass. Keep halls open to traffic by walking to the right. Pass through halls quietly.

**Head Lice:** Please see School Board Policy (6.4031)

**Honor Roll:** An honor roll will be published for students with all A's or all A's and B's at the end of each nine weeks grading period.

**ICU:** ICU is a new program implemented at Algood Middle School this year designed to ensure that all students complete every assignment to an acceptable level. ICU guidelines will be sent home separately.

**Internet/Technology:** All students will be required to read and sign an Internet use agreement in order to have access to school computers. Access to the Internet is provided to students as an educational resource and a privilege. Failure to observe the expectations set forth in the acceptable use policy may result in a loss of access to the Internet as well as any other appropriate disciplinary and/or legal actions.

**Leaving School:** If it is necessary for a student to leave school, he/she must be signed out by a parent or guardian in the school office before leaving the building. Leaving early is the same as reporting late. Excessive early sign-outs will be reported to the county attendance supervisor.

**Library:** The library provides books, magazines, pamphlets, and audio-visual material for assigned study and recreational reading. All students have access to the Algood Middle School library through activities provided for the whole class, as well as other designated times. Library privileges may be revoked for inappropriate library behavior. Students are responsible for all materials checked out. No materials are to be taken from the library without first being checked out at the circulation desk. Library books and materials should not be loaned to other students and are to be returned directly by the borrower within the allotted time period. Lost books must be paid for at replacement cost.

**Lockers:** Each student is assigned a locker and must use only the locker assigned to them. Inspections may be made by administration and/or teachers at any time. Do not tamper with any locker. No stickers or writing is permitted on lockers. The school strongly suggests, but does not require that each student have a lock for his/her locker. The school does not assume any responsibility for personal items lost, damaged, or stolen.

**Lost and Found:** The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen items. Students should not bring large amounts of money or valuable items to school. Labeling students clothing is recommended to make identification and return possible. Lost and Found is located in the hallway as students travel to PE and lunch. Students are asked to bring items found into the office. Items turned in and not claimed will be donated to charity at the end of each month.

**Make-Up Work:** Students have three (3) days from the time they return from an absence to turn in any make-up work. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> day, the student will be assigned ICU until all work is turned in. Make-up work when students are assigned Out of School Suspension will be expected the day the student returns to school. The maximum grade the student may attain on each assignment during OSS will be 70%. (Previously students received a zero (0) for all worked missed during OSS).

**Medication:** Students taking prescription medication or other medication must follow the school board policy 6.405 regarding medication.

**Parent Conferences:** Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled as needed at the end of the first nine week and third nine weeks grading periods. Parents are welcome to make appointments with teachers, counselors or administrators at any time by telephone the school office or sending a note.

**Parent Volunteers:** Parents who have time available for volunteer work are encouraged to do so. Parent volunteers are needed to do clerical work, tutor, and provide library assistance, teacher assistance and academic assistance in the ICU Learning Lab. Any person wishing to become involved as a volunteer should complete a volunteer sheet (found in the student packet) or contact the school secretary at 537-6141.

**Perfect Attendance:** In order to be acknowledged for Perfect Attendance, a student may not have any tardies, early dismissals (even if they return the same day), and/or absences. School related approved field trips do not constitute an absence.

**Physical Education:** The purpose of Physical Education classes is to help students understand and demonstrate the responsibilities they have as individuals, family members, and citizens to act in ways that enhance health for themselves and others. All students are required to participate in P.E. classes unless we receive a written excuse from a doctor.

**Promotion of Students:**

5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Grades: School Board Policy (4.603) states, "Students will normally progress annually in a sequential order from grade to grade. The professional staff will place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially and emotionally. Retentions may be made when, in the judgment of the teacher, such retentions are in the best interest of the student. Decisions to retain are subject to review and approval of the principal after consultation with the teacher. Upon written request by the parent and/or legal guardian of a student, and upon the concurrence of the director or his/her designee, a student may be retained even though the student would otherwise qualify for advancement to the next grade level."

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grades: School Board Policy (4.603) states, "Students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade must pass math and language arts (70% or above) and maintain an overall 70% yearly grade average in academic subjects (Math, English or Language Arts, Science and Social Studies) to be promoted to the next grade. Passing 70% in Encore classes is strongly emphasized also. Students not attaining an overall 70% average in the core academic and/or not passing Language Arts and Math shall be retained and may be eligible to attend summer school (if available) in order to satisfy the requirements to advance to the next grade level. Parents of students who have been retained more than one year in 7<sup>th</sup> and/or 8<sup>th</sup> grade may request an administrative review for consideration of promotion.

**PTSO:** The Algood PTSO (Parent-Teacher-Student Organization) has been highly involved in improving our school. All parents are urged to become members and to actively participate. Meetings are scheduled three (3) times during the year and are announced several weeks in advance on the school website and in the school newsletter.

**Safety and Emergency Plan:** The Algood Middle School Safety and Emergency Plan is located in the office. Fire and tornado drills are held at regular intervals as required by law. It is essential that everyone take immediate, appropriate action when emergency signals are given. Each classroom teacher will provide specific instructions for the students.

**School Closing and Early Dismissal:** During periods of inclement weather, it may be necessary to close school, delay the starting time or dismiss early. Local radio stations, as well as local TV station Channel 7 will broadcast announcements regarding school closing or schedule changes. In instances which affect school system-wide, the Central Office will also place the announcement on the automated phone message system. Please discuss with your child, plans in case of early dismissal.

**Search and Seizure** (T.C.A. Section 49-6-4204; 49-6-4205): Search of Locker (a) When individual circumstances in a school dictates a principal may order that vehicles parked on school property by students or visitors, containers, packages, lockers or other enclosures used for storage by students or visitors, and other areas accessible to students or visitors be searched in the principal's presence or in the presence of other members of the principals' staff. (b) Individual circumstances requiring a search may include incidents on school property, including school buses, involving, but not limited to the use of dangerous weapons, drugs, drug paraphernalia, which are known to the principal or other staff members, information received from law enforcement, juvenile or other authorities indicating a pattern of drug dealing or drug use by students of that school, and assault or attempted assault on school property with dangerous weapons, or any other actions or incidents known by the principal which gives rise to reasonable suspicion that dangerous weapons, drugs, or drug paraphernalia are held on school property by one or more students.

Search of persons and Containers – (a) A student may be subject to physical search because of the results of a locker search, or because of information received from a teacher, staff member, student, or other person if such action is reasonable to the principal. (b) All of the following standards of reasonableness shall be met:

- a. A particular student has violated school policy
- b. The search will yield evidence of the violation of school policy or will lead to disclosure of a dangerous weapon, drug paraphernalia or drug
- c. The search is in pursuit of legitimate interests of the school in maintaining order, discipline, safety, supervision, and education of students
- d. The search is not conducted for the sole purpose of discovering evidence to be used in a criminal prosecution
- e. The search shall be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and gender of the student, as well as the nature of the infraction alleged to have been committed

**Substitute Teachers:** It is expected that students will treat all substitute teachers with respect. They are to be considered guests in our school and our aim is for our students to be well mannered, courteous and cooperative.

**Tardies:** Students are expected to be in their classroom when the bell rings. School begins at 8:00 a.m. Students are expected to report to all classes on time. The tardy policy is effective for all class periods throughout the day, including encore classes. The number of occurrences is per semester. Teachers will record absences and tardies and report these to the office where they will be recorded in PowerSchool. Consequences for tardies to class are as follows:

3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> tardy – One day of after school detention or one day of ISS

7<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> tardy – Two days of after school detention or one day of ISS. Student is referred to the county attendance officer upon the 8<sup>th</sup> tardy.

Upon the 10<sup>th</sup> tardy and following – Out-of-school Suspension is assigned. Excessive tardies will result in disciplinary action. All absences/tardies are unexcused until appropriate verification is presented to the office.

**Telephone:** The office telephone is for school business and may be used by students only with the permission of the principal or secretary. Messages and deliveries from home should be left in the office. Students will not be called out of class for messages unless it is an emergency. The school phone number is 537-6141.

**Tennessee State Standards:** Go to [www.state.tn.us/education/curriculum.shtml](http://www.state.tn.us/education/curriculum.shtml)

**Textbooks:** Students are responsible for all textbooks and library books issued or checked out to them. Parents will be required to reimburse the school for any lost or damaged books or equipment.

**Title I:** Algood Middle School is identified as a school-wide Title I school, a federally funded program providing academic support to all AMS students.

**Tobacco Policy:** No student shall be allowed to smoke, chew, or possess tobacco or tobacco products on school premises. Tennessee Code Annotated Section 39-17-1505 (b), (c) states, "Any person who violates this section shall be issued a citation by a law enforcement officer or school principal who has evidence of the violation. The citation shall require the person to appear in Juvenile Court for the county in which the violation is alleged to have occurred. At the time of issuance of the citation, the tobacco product shall be seized as contraband by the law enforcement officer or school principal. A violation of this section shall be a civil offense, the penalty for which is a civil penalty of not less than ten (10) dollars, nor more than fifty (50) dollars plus court costs. Upon its determination that the person has violated this section, the Juvenile Court shall determine the amount of the civil penalty and shall order the destruction of the tobacco product."

**Traffic Control:** The entrance to Algood Middle School is on Old Walton Road, the same as previous years with the exit onto Dry Valley Road. Please be patient at the beginning of the year as it always take a week or two for everyone to become accustomed to the traffic routes.

**Vandalism/Property Damage:** Our school building and equipment are the property of the Putnam County School District and, as such, are paid for by the taxpayers of Putnam County. Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay the cost of repair or replacement. If students willfully destroy school property, suspension and subsequent expulsion may be necessary. If a student should accidentally damage school property it should be reported to a teacher or the office immediately.

**Visitors:** All visitors, including former students, or students from other schools visiting Algood Middle School, are to obtain permission from the principal. ALL visitors are to sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's pass.

**Zero Tolerance:** In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment free of violence and dangerous weapons, any student who engages in the following behaviors will be subject to suspension for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The Director of Schools shall have the authority to modify this suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis. Zero-tolerance acts are as follows:

1. Students who bring or possess a dangerous weapon on school property or to a school event or activity, even if that event or activity is not on school property
2. Any student who assaults a teacher or other employee of the school system