

Bess T. Shepherd School
Parent and Student Handbook
2022-2023



Cultivating Leaders

7126 TYNER ROAD
CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE 37421
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BESS T. SHEPHERD SCHOOL CALENDAR 2022-2023

- **August 10th** -First Day of school
- **August 25th**- Parent Orientation
- **September 5th**- Labor Day Holiday -No School
- **September 7th**-½ day for Students (Dismissal at 11:45)
- **September 19th**-Mobile Food Pantry
- **September 28th-October 7th**-1st-5th Grade Benchmark Testing Window
- **October 6th**- Fall Festival 5-7 PM
- **October 10th-17th**- Fall Break
- **October 17th**- Mobile Food Pantry
- **October 21st**-Report Cards
- **November 3rd**- Parent Teacher Conferences 3:30-7:00 PM
- **November 9th**- -½ day for Students (Dismissal at 11:45)
- **November 14th**- Mobile Food Pantry
- **November 23rd-25th**- Thanksgiving Break
- **December 5th-15th**- 3rd-5th Grade Benchmark Testing Window
- **December 12th**- Mobile Food Pantry
- **December 15th**- Winter Holiday Concert
- **December 16th**- Winter Holiday Parties
- **December 19th-January 3rd**-Winter Break
- **January 6th**-Report cards
- **January 9th-13th**-K-2nd Benchmark Testing Window
- **January 9th**- Mobile Food Pantry
- **January 16th**- Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday-No School
- **February 1st**- ½ day for Students (Dismissal at 11:45)
- **February 13th**- Mobile Food Pantry
- **February 14th**- Valentine's Day Parties
- **February 20th**- Presidents Day - No School
- **February 23rd**- Black History Month Celebration
- **February 27th- March 8th**-3-5 Benchmark Testing Window
- **February 27th- March 3rd**- Read Across America Week
- **March 2nd**- Parent Teacher Conferences 3:30-7:00 PM
- **March 13th** - No School for Students / Mobile Food Pantry
- **March 17th**- Report Cards
- **April 3rd-April 7th**- Spring Break
- **April 10th** - Mobile Food Pantry
- **April 17th- May 5th**- TN Ready Testing Window
- **May 8th-12th**- K-2 Benchmark Testing Window
- **May 8th**- Mobile Food Pantry
- **May 11th**- Creative Discovery Museum Family Night
- **May 19th**- Field Day
- **May 20th** -Tyner Palooza
- **May 24th**- Last Day of School

WELCOME LETTER

August 1, 2022

Dear Parents and Families,

We want to welcome you to a new year at Bess T. Shepherd Elementary School where we are Cultivating Leaders. Our commitment is to Cultivate Leaders by preparing each student to move to the next level of learning with a high degree of creativity, independence, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving abilities. Our trained professionals have worked diligently for the upcoming school year to ensure that our students not only get quality instruction but have access to extra-curricular activities that inspire and motivate students to persevere to excellence.

A new school year presents new opportunities for growth, new classrooms, new friends, and new teachers. You will see some new faces and updates this school year. Please know that change is often difficult at first, but the effects will diminish each day as we develop trust and work together to ensure that the children at Bess T. Shepherd are achieving.

We feel honored to be a part of the Bess T. Shepherd RAMily and are committed to doing “Whatever It Takes!” to provide a quality education for each student. We also know that working together can only improve the quality of instruction and achievement for our students. Education opens up opportunities for ALL students! We are excited to strengthen the educational outcomes of ALL students in the Tyner Community by intentionally collaborating with Tyner Middle and Tyner Academy. This year, we will take steps to operate as ‘One Tyner...One Community’ and to begin to ensure our students have a great K-12 learning experience.

There are many opportunities for parental involvement. You can engage by :

1. Attending monthly PTA meetings, teacher-parent conferences, celebrations of learning, family nights, and other programs throughout the school year.
2. Designate 30 minutes of time daily for reading with your child at home.
3. Facilitate homework completion.
4. Provide feedback and suggestions for school improvement.
5. Participate in fundraising events that help support instruction.

If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, please call the school at 855-2611 to set up an appointment or email us at lane_s@hcde.org & ariall_a@hcde.org. We try to return all calls and respond to emails at the end of the day and no later than 48 hrs.. However, we spend most of our time in classrooms monitoring instruction and assisting teachers and students.

This handbook is intended to serve as a helpful guide to ensure that policies and procedures are followed to guarantee safety and to protect instructional time for children. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.

Bus schedules and routes will be distributed during registration on August 5th. Please remember all stop times are approximate and students should arrive at their bus stop 10 minutes earlier than the stop time listed. If you have any questions concerning transportation, please call 209-8409.

We look forward to a great school year!

Sincerely,
Dr. Sarah Lane, Principal
Mrs. Ashlie Ariail, Assistant Principal

PROUD STAFF AT BESS T. SHEPHERD

Principal: Dr. Sarah Lane **Assistant Principal:** Ashlie Ariail

Kindergarten: Rebecca Alvey, Lisa Filippo, Heather Greene, Sierra Rutherford, Tatum Reaves

First: Allyson Dunbar, Tiffany Harden, Dianna Mammen, Christina Oliver, Tonya Taylor

Second: Quailia Hatcher, Tristen Lowery, Olena Meir, Kristi Sahn, Laura Still

Third: Ashley Hall, Leverice Hall, Holly Jefferis, Camille Mason

Fourth: Kelly Beck, Geoffrey Lee, Emily Thornber, Suzanne Wofford

Fifth: Kristie Dolan, Alesia Cross, Keisha Hunt, LaToya Oliver

CDC Primary: Gena Crittenden

Bookkeeper: Melanie Gregory

Cafeteria Manager: Nicole Turitto

Attendance Clerk: Alisha McLaughlin

Computer Technology Teacher: Jeremy Teague

Head Custodian: Donald Arnold

Educational Assistants: Amanda Wrinn-Bailey, Patricia Eady, Tracy Rogers, Joy Stinson-Tucker

Interpreter: Angel Mejias

ESOL: Michelle Stiles, Amy Willard, Kelly Christensen

School Counselor: Kimberly Daniel

Interventionists: June Chavis, Peggy Hamby, Eva Morton

Library: Cristal Batten

Music: Joa Jacks, Richarra Hardaway

Exceptional Ed. Direct Service Providers: Toletha Ison, Heidi Greene

P.E.: Kelly Fawcett

Secretary: Yolanda Smith

School Psychologist: Jessica Carlton

Social Worker: Mary Catherine Frees

Speech: Tanya Wilkinson

Gifted: Catherine Reksten

Literacy Coach: Laura McBride

Math Coach: Jami Burnes

TITLE I PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

Any person interested in helping this student may sign in place of the parent. I want my child to achieve; therefore, I will encourage him/her by doing the following:

- See that my child is punctual and attends school regularly, ready to learn • Support the school in its efforts to maintain proper discipline • Establish a time for homework and review the work regularly • Pick up my student (s) on time (ex. Car riders)
- Encourage my child’s efforts and be involved in their learning • Read with my child and let him/her see me reading
- Communicate respectfully with teachers.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

STUDENT AGREEMENT

It is important that I work to the best of my ability; therefore, I will do the following:

- Attend School everyday on time (8:00-3:15) prepared & ready to learn. • Complete and return homework assignments
- Observe regular study hours
- Conform to rules of student conduct
- Follow the RAMS Expectations; Be Respectful, Have a great Attitude, Motivate yourself and others, Self-Control is the Key!

Signature: _____ Date: _____

TEACHER AGREEMENT

It is important that students achieve, therefore, I shall do the following:

- Ensure that students are actively engaged in learning!
- Provide reasonable homework assignments for students as practice! • Provide information to parents about students’ learning and achievement! • Follow the RAMS Expectations; Be Respectful, Have a great Attitude, Motivate yourself and others, Self-Control is the Key!

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PRINCIPAL AGREEMENT

I will provide an environment that encourages positive communication and sets high expectations for learning. This includes the BTS Expectations.

Signature: Dr. Sarah Lane Date: 8/1/2022

BESS T. SHEPHERD'S VISION, MISSION, AND BASIC BELIEFS

Vision

At Bess T. Shepherd Elementary, we envision a proud and diverse school community where we are supported in our endeavors to educate all students to reach their full potential. We believe in developing the whole child so that students can become creative, compassionate, productive, respectful, and responsible members of society.

Mission

We value diversity and believe in educating the whole child to become a life-long learner. We are committed to meeting the individual academic and social needs of our students by providing a nurturing environment that fosters a meaningful learning experience.

Basic Beliefs

At Bess T. Shepherd we believe:

- Every child is a Reader, Achiever, and Leader
- Every child has unique talents and gifts that will be developed at school
- It is our responsibility to set policy and to educate and meet the needs of all students
- Everyone should show respect toward all members of the learning community
- Highly qualified teachers implement and deliver effective instruction and appropriate assessment to equip students to become valuable contributors to our society
- The school takes ownership in identifying needs, performance levels and mastery in all stages of learning for each child
- The education of a child is the collaborative effort between home, teachers, students, and the community and utilizes the collective decision making ability of all stakeholders
- The environment of our school should be inviting to students, their families, teachers and the community
- When all these beliefs are put into practice, every child will have the ability to be successful using learned 21st century critical thinking and problem solving skills

Bess T. Shepherd will provide an exemplary education for all students to become productive and responsible citizens. We will inspire excellence in our students as they transform their individual greatness into the following attributes: a student with integrity, a collaborative work ethic, a creative thinker, a problem solver, self-initiative, that respects others, and is a continuous joyful learner!

HAMILTON COUNTY STRATEGIC FOCUS

Accelerating Student Achievement

The board and community have articulated high expectations for student achievement. To improve student outcomes, we will focus on aligning standards, assessments, and instruction, as well as prioritizing educational equity so that all students can reach their full potential.

Future Ready Students

Our overarching mission as a public school district is to ensure our students are successful after graduation. We will work to help students identify their interests and acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities, to pursue their preferred option for college and/or career, whatever it might be.

Great Teachers and Leaders

Our students cannot be successful without strong teachers and leaders to support their learning. Our district must ensure that we attract, develop, and retain top talent across all educational and operational areas.

Engaged Community

Our district serves our community as the public provider of pre-k-12 education for all families. Moreover, we serve the foundation of workforce development. It is important that we continually gather feedback and input from stakeholders, in addition to keeping them informed on our progress.

Efficient and Effective Operations

From building maintenance to transportation to technology infrastructure, we understand that seamless operations are key to delivering a high quality public education for our students. Our operations must help-not hinder- the creation of a safe and healthy environment, conducive to student learning.

School Board Mission: We are committed to Success for ALL Students through increased student achievement, parent and community involvement, safe schools and accountability. The District is led by nine elected school board members and The Superintendent .

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS (Elections will be held after printing)

Rhonda Thurman - District 1
Marco Perez - District 2
Joe Smith - District 3
Tiffanie Robinson- District 4
Karitsa Jones- District 5
Jenny Hill - District 6
Joe Wingate - District 7 (Bess T. Shepherd)
Tucker McClendon - District 8
James Walker - District 9

ATTENDANCE-ABSENCES

It is required by state law that absence of children from school, whether from illness or non-illness, be verified by a note from the parent or guardian. Please include the child's name, days not in attendance, the reason for the absence and the nature of the illness. Parents may provide written excuses for 3 of the allowed 5 unexcused absences. All documentation must be submitted for consideration within five (5) days of the student returning to school. Students may be excused for three days in the event of a death in their immediate families including mother, father, step-parent, brother, sister, or grandparent.

The name of each student who is absent without excuse for **five (5)** days during the school year **must** be reported to the superintendent or his designee, the school truancy specialist. This is according to Tennessee State Law 49-6-3009. The law states that the absences do not have to be chronological, instead after 5 unexcused absences that could be throughout the school year.

Make-up work will be provided for excused absences only. Teachers need at least 24 hours notice to prepare assignments to be sent home if the child is out for more than three excused days. Parents should be in communication with the teacher to determine the best way and time to receive the assignment(s). Students have 3 days to return the make-up work or as determined by the teacher.

School personnel have the responsibility to keep both elementary students and parents informed as to the academic impact caused by absenteeism. Each school will establish attendance guidelines. Students who exceed five (5) unexcused absences in a nine-week grading period or twenty (20) unexcused absences in a school year, may jeopardize promotion to the next grade level and can be retained for that school year.

COVID-19 absences will no longer be an option for students. Students who test positive for Covid are recommended to quarantine for 5 days. Students may return to school once they have been fever free for 48 hours without a fever-reducing medication. Hamilton County Schools will be relying on CDC guidelines. Therefore, changes could be made if the CDC guidance changes.

ADMITTANCE OF A STUDENT AFTER AN ABSENCE

Non-contagious Illness: The student should bring written explanation with applicable dates from home and give it to his or her homeroom teacher. School personnel will contact the parent if there is any doubt as to whether the student is healthy enough to return to class.

Contagious Illness: Re-admission of a student following an illness from contagious disease is permitted only when the student has a permission form signed by a physician.

Absence not due to illness: A student who has not been ill must present to his or her teacher a written explanation from the parent or guardian as to the reason for the absence and the applicable dates.

Absences for trips: If you wish to take your child out of school for a trip of more than two days duration, you must submit a written request to the principal well in advance of the absence. Alternative assignments may be given upon the student's return to school.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Parents are responsible for purchasing insurance for their children. Bess T. Shepherd School nor Hamilton County Schools will pay medical expenses incurred due to accidents or injuries.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

Students will be given three benchmark assessments throughout the school year. Additionally, students will take the iReady screener in the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. Students in grades 3-5 will take the TN State Assessments in the Spring.

BACKPACKS

Check your child's backpack daily for important information such as homework, events, fundraiser information, notices and other important information. It is also important to make sure that your child **does not have** toys, gum, spinners and candy in their backpacks.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Bus Transportation is an elective (privilege) provided by the Hamilton County Board of Education. All students being transported are under the authority of the bus driver and must obey his/her rules. Failure to comply with bus behavior expectations can be and will be grounds for excluding a student from riding the bus. Suspension from the bus privilege does not excuse a student from attending school and does not constitute a suspension from school.

Disciplinary Actions for MAJOR bus conduct offenses:

- First Offense- 5 Day Suspension and Mandatory Parent Conference
- Second Offense- Suspension of Bus Riding Privileges for the Remainder of the school year

Disciplinary Actions for MINOR bus conduct offenses:

- First Referral- Verbal Warning
- Second Referral- Contact Parent & possible 1 day suspension from bus
- Third Referral- 3 Day Suspension from the bus
- Fourth Referral- 10 Day Suspension from the Bus
- Fifth Referral- Suspension of Bus Riding Privileges for the Remainder of the Year

Students suspended through the end of the school year will be required to attend a meeting with the principal, the bus driver, and the Director of Transportation before being readmitted onto the bus for the next school year.

If at any time a bus driver is required to return to the school for disciplinary reasons, or if the driver is forced to request help over the radio or by any other means, the offense will be considered a MAJOR offense and subject to the suspension of all parties involved.

BUS RULES

- a. Follow directions of the bus driver
- b. Walk to your seat, sit, and stay seated while the bus is moving
- c. Talk softly to those who are in the same seat with you
- d. Respect other persons and their property
- e. Keep all parts of your body and all objects inside the bus
- f. No eating or drinking on the bus at any time
- g. Cell phones should not be out while riding the bus. Students should access their cell phone only after they arrive at their stop. The school is not responsible for cell phones.
- h. No toys are allowed out on the bus. Having a toy gun out on the bus will be considered a major bus offense as it creates a major safety bus concern.

In the event of a transportation delay or other issue, we will communicate with families through the Remind App. You may register at this link: <https://www.remind.com/join/besstsh>

CAR RIDERS

The morning carline begins each morning at 7:50 and ends at 8:15. Please be sure to utilize all lanes each morning. Students arriving after 8:15 will have to be signed in as tardy in the front office.

The afternoon car line begins at 3:00 pm. All cars must pick up students through the car rider line. No parents are allowed to pick up car riders from inside the building during dismissal times.

Parents with limited time should arrive early or should arrive toward the end of dismissal.

Each family will receive 2 car tags per school year. BTS Car Tags must be presented every time the child is

picked up through the car rider line. In the event that an BTS Car Tag is not present, the driver will need to park in our parking lot and come inside to get one. Tags will only be issued to persons listed on the Registration Card as authorized to dismiss that child. **Please be prepared to show appropriate identification in order to receive a new tag. This ensures the safety of your child.** Once a new tag is issued, the driver will need to return to his/her car in the parking lot and enter the car rider line before their child is dismissed.

In order to maintain the highest safety standards, students will not be dismissed to parents other than through the car rider line after 2:45pm.

COMMUNICATION

Teachers and administrators at Bess T Shepherd encourage open communication and will strive to respond to communications from parents within twenty-four hours. The exception to this rule would be that any communications received on a Friday will be responded to by the end of the day the following Monday. Connect-Ed messages will also be used to communicate school updates. The primary hub for information updates is the Bess T Shepherd School Website. Please go to <https://bts.hcde.org/> for supply lists, online payments, upcoming school events, and other school information.

CONTACT INFORMATION

It is most important that we have up-to-date emergency contact information and phone numbers in the office for all students. We must have a correct home address and at least two (2) telephone numbers where parents or relatives can be reached in case of an emergency. Please notify the office if you have changes throughout the school year. Students will only be released to persons listed on the Registration Card who are authorized to dismiss them. Please make sure that this information, including contact numbers for those authorized to dismiss a child, is kept current in the office. Parents are required to come into the office to make changes and/or additions to persons authorized or not authorized to dismiss their children.

DAMAGED OR LOST TEXTBOOKS

Hamilton County Department of Education officials and teachers realize that good textbooks for every pupil are a major factor in upgrading education. If students lose or damage their textbooks, the school will need to be reimbursed for the cost of the book. Failure to do this could result in holds being placed on report cards and records. Fifth Grade students will not be allowed to participate in promotion ceremonies if monies are owed to the school. If lost textbooks are recovered by the school or parent and returned to the school, the parent's money will then be reimbursed.

DISCIPLINE/BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

The entire staff of Bess T. Shepherd School believes that all of our students are capable of conducting themselves in a manner which will positively impact our school's learning environment. Each student is expected to respect the rights of others here at school. They can demonstrate this by following the school wide rules and by adhering to the rules established in their individual classrooms. No student will be allowed to interfere with the learning of fellow students. Each parent will receive a copy of the school-wide discipline plan (halls, cafeteria, assembly programs, bus behavior, ect.) It should be read , signed, and returned as soon as possible to the school. Individual teachers will be sending copies of their classroom plans to parents to ensure a smooth transition for your child in the new school year.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Hamilton County students are expected to behave in a way that does not interrupt the education of other students, or endanger themselves. Violence, non-attendance or tardiness, substance abuse, protest, and other unacceptable behavior are not permitted. The code is designed to create a safe and secure environment on school campuses, school buses, and at school functions. The Code's objective is to establish an environment which encourages student interaction and school pride. It will support and recognize positive behavior. Violation of code will result in disciplinary action up to suspension or expulsion.

General Code of Conduct

- Be truthful and respectful in all situations and toward all people
- Refrain from fighting and other disruptive behaviors
- Use appropriate language at all times
- Respect the property and work of others and the school
- Meet or exceed all classroom, playground, cafeteria, and bus expectations

- Be a good example for others at school & while on outings away from school
- Use playground equipment safely and appropriately
- Leave all toys, candy, cell phones, and other electronic devices at home
- Use or possession of weapons, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or illegal/look-alike drugs while on school premises is prohibited

Bullying

We believe that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic and personal standards. Harassment or bullying is conduct that disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate in a safe and disciplined environment. Bess T. Shepherd defines bullying and harassment as “intentional behavior toward a student or group of students whether directly, through a third party, or through the use of electronic devices or media, that places a student or groups of students in fear or creates a hostile educational environment.”

Should students become aware of a bullying situation, they are encouraged to report the incident to a teacher, counselor, or administrator. The privacy and anonymity of all parties and witnesses will be respected. Students may report in the following ways:

1. Written statement detailing the incident
2. Verbal statement to any teacher, counselor, or administrator

Such complaints will be investigated and handled appropriately by a teacher, counselor, or administrator.

Damages to school property

Should a student willfully damage school property, the student’s parents will be expected to pay for replacement or repair of that property.

Zero Tolerance:

The following will result in a suspension of at least a calendar year.

1. Possession of a Firearm, or an Explosive, or Incendiary or Poison -Gas device.
2. Striking a School Employee or School Resource Officer.
3. Unlawfully possessing any controlled Substance or Drug.

DRESS FOR STUDENTS

Bess T. Shepherd Elementary requires appropriate dress for students. Maintaining safety and focusing on learning will continue to be areas of importance. Bess T. Shepherd School dress code is as follows:

Not allowed: T-shirts with vulgar or suggestive messages for alcohol/drug products, **hoodies**, tank tops, spaghetti straps, sheer, see-through, or backless tops. bare midriff tops, flip flops, sandals, roller heel shoes, clogs, crocs, (heels and toes must be covered) baggy, sagging or oversized pants, caps/hats/ bandannas/sunglasses (except on designated school days). Apparel, dress, or grooming that is or may become potentially disruptive of the classroom atmosphere or educational process shall not be permitted. *(Taken from Hamilton County School Board Policy)* Students violating the dress code will result in calling a parent or guardian to bring them replacement articles of clothing. Continued disregard for dress code will result in further disciplinary action.

* All shirts must have sleeves. Therefore, tank tops or spaghetti strap shirts are not allowed. Examples of appropriate shirts include button down shirts, crew neck pull-over shirts, polo shirts, turtleneck shirts, etc. Shirts may not be sheer or see-through, backless, or have holes in them.

*Pants, including jeans, may be worn on any day. However, pants must not have holes in them. Additionally, pants that are excessively tight are not appropriate. Yoga pants, spandex exercise pants, leggings, etc. are prohibited unless worn under a skirt or shorts of appropriate length. Sagging is prohibited.

*Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be at least fingertip (mid-thigh) length. Shorts that are excessively short or tight, such as but not limited to, physical education type shorts, spandex or leotard type shorts, cut-offs, etc. are not appropriate.

*Closed-toed shoes must be worn in the building. However, footwear with attached wheels, “heelies” is prohibited, as well as Crocs and slides. Per district expectations, Tennis Shoes are required for participation in PE classes.

*Hats may not be worn in the building. However, students may wear toboggans or beanie hats outside at recess during the colder months. Any messages on these head coverings must be appropriate and must not contain any offensive or suggestive language.

*Students may wear pull over sweatshirts or cardigan sweaters during the school day. **However, hooded sweatshirts, coats, and jackets must be removed during the school day, being worn only during outdoor/recess activities.** All Advertisements and/or messages displayed on outerwear should be non-offensive and appropriate for a school setting.

*No undergarments or other tight clothing shall be worn as outer garments. This includes, but is not limited to tank/tube/halter tops, spandex/leotard garments, mesh shirts, or midriff tops which cause inappropriate exposure of the skin of the student.

*Clothing which advocates negative advertisements is prohibited, as is the wearing of clothing or accessories which are offensive and could cause the destruction of the operation of the school. Items, such as t-shirts, may fall in this category if they contain indecent or suggestive language.

Children should be appropriately dressed for school; school administration shall have final authority in determining what is appropriate. The administration reserves the right to add or delete from the above dress code in order to maintain a safe educational environment. If the dress code is continually violated, the student will face disciplinary actions.

DRUGS/ALCOHOL

Any student who shall possess, sell, or transfer to another student or receive on school grounds, the school bus, or at any school-sponsored activity any legally controlled drug, prescription drug, look-alike drug, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol, shall be suspended from school for a period of up to one calendar year. (District Policy) The Zero Tolerance policy may also apply which subjects the student to a one calendar year suspension from school.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Occasionally, a medical appointment or family emergency makes it necessary for children to be released before the regular dismissal time. In this event, the parent or guardian must sign the student out in the office. The school will not release your child to a stranger under any circumstances. The person’s name must be listed on the enrollment card. If the need arises and it is necessary for you to take your child out of school, you must come to the office for the release of the child. Teachers are not permitted to dismiss a child from the classroom if the parent does not have a dismissal slip from the office. **Parents are expected to come to the office before going to the classroom.** A student missing over 1/2 day by dismissal or tardy shall be counted absent on attendance reports. Early dismissals will be recorded as absences on report cards and for awarding perfect attendance certificates when the accumulated time exceeds 1/2 day. **Students will not be dismissed between 2:45 and 3:15 p.m. unless it is an emergency.**

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones and other electronic devices (tablets, handheld games, etc.) should not be visible or heard at any point of the school day. They should be turned off and either stored in a book bag or given to a teacher. It is recommended that students leave electronic devices at home as the school cannot be responsible if they are lost or damaged while at school. Devices that are heard or seen during the day will be taken from the student and turned in to the office. If a student has an electronic device taken during the school day, a parent will have to pick it up from the office. Parents Shouldn't text or call students during the school day. If an emergency should arise, then a parent should contact the school office.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Please remember to listen to your radio, television, or a Connect-Ed call from the district for information on school closings or delayed openings due to snow or adverse conditions. Please discuss with your child how and where he/she will go in the event of an emergency closing.

ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMS

In addition to your child's regular academic classes, Bess T. Shepherd offers each student regularly scheduled classes (one class per week) of the following: Computer/ Technology Training, Library, Music and Physical Education.. We also have a Robotics' Club, Leadership Academy, Science Club, Yearbook Club, Soccer and Basketball program.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Students transferring from outside Hamilton County must have a Tennessee Certificate of Immunization (TN state form), physical examination, certified birth certificate, a social security card and two (2) proofs of residence. These include the following:

- 2 Proofs of Residence can be any of the following documents at the physical address in the Guardian's name
- Mortgage, Lease or Deed
- Electric, water, gas, or cable dated within the last 30 days
- Agency or Court Documentation with address dated within the last 30 days (IRS, SS Disability)
- Insurance (medical, life, auto, home) statement dated within the last 30 days
- Current Bank Statement or Employment Check Stub with address dated within the last 30 days

Students transferring from another Hamilton County School must have two (2) proofs of residence. If all of the above listed items do not come with the records transferred from the previous school, parents are responsible for presenting them as soon as possible. (*No longer than 30 days*). Failure to submit the above-listed documents can result in suspension.

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION

State and federal laws require that local systems provide alternative programs for students whose educational needs cannot be met in the regular classroom instructional program. Requests for testing may be directed to the teacher or the administrative staff.

FIELD EXPERIENCES

Educational field experiences, a required part of the curriculum, are planned to provide experience with correlated subjects studied in the classroom. When your child is involved, information will be sent home giving full details including the place the class will be visiting, the method of transportation, and any cost associated with the trip. Parents are not required to pay for field experiences in order for their child to attend. However, students are required to have written permission from a parent or guardian prior to going on field trips. All trips are chaperoned by school personnel. Parents are only allowed to chaperone, if they have passed a background check. **Siblings may NOT accompany classes on field trips. This is Hamilton County Policy.**

GRADING POLICY

Reporting of grades is done in nine-week periods. Mid-term progress reports are issued at four and one-half week intervals. Parent-teacher conferences are welcome at any time and may be scheduled through the office (855-2611) or directly with your child's teacher. Student Grading Reports are printed from PowerSchool. These reports look a little different than previous documents. Parents will be notified in the spring by both the teacher and administration in the event that a student was to be retained, as this information can no longer be found on the PowerSchool Report Card.

Grades K - 2 will have a standards based report card. Students will be scored using a rubric to denote their current levels of achievement.

The grading scale for grades 3-5 is:

HARASSMENT

Report Procedures

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of harassment or sexual harassment by a student or an employee of the school system, or any third person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment or sexual harassment, should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school system official as designated by this policy. The school system encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal of each school or available from the central office locations.

1. **In Each School** - The school principal is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of harassment or sexual harassment at the school level. Upon receipt of a report, the principal must notify the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel and the Assistant Superintendent for School Operations immediately without screening or investigating the report.

Student to student complaints should be reported to the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services and the Assistant Superintendent for School Operations immediately. A written report will be forwarded simultaneously to the Deputy Superintendent. If a complaint made by a student is given verbally, the principal shall reduce it to written form within 24 hours and forward it to the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of School Operations under a *confidential cover*.

2. **System Wide** – The HCDE School Board hereby designates the Superintendent, and/or his designee, to receive harassment reports or complaints of sexual harassment from any student, employee, or individual who states he/she is a victim of harassment or sexual harassment. The complaint shall be filed directly with the Superintendent of Schools and/or his designee.
3. Submission of a complaint or report of harassment or sexual harassment will not affect the reporting individual's future employment, grades, or work assignments.
4. Use of formal reporting forms is not mandatory; however, a sample of the reporting form is attached to this policy.
5. The school system will respect the confidentiality of the complainant and the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed as much as possible, consistent with the school system's legal obligations and the necessity to investigate allegations of harassment and take disciplinary action when the conduct has occurred.

Investigation and Recommendation

By authority of the school system, the superintendent or his designee, upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging harassment or sexual harassment, shall immediately authorize an investigation. This investigation shall be conducted by school system officials or by a third party designated by the board of education. The party making the investigation shall provide a written report of the status of the investigation within 20 working days to the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent. The twenty (20) day period may be extended by the Superintendent or Board of Education if the investigation warrants the extension.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment or sexual harassment, the school system shall consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the sexual advances if sexual harassment is alleged, relationships between the parties involved, and context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

The investigation shall consist of, but not be limited to, personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation shall also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.

In addition, the school system shall take immediate steps to protect the complainant, students and employees pending completion of an investigation of alleged harassment or sexual harassment.

The investigator(s) shall make a final report including findings and recommendations for disciplinary actions, if

any, to the Superintendent of Schools upon completion of the investigation.

School District Action

1. Upon receipt of a recommendation that the complaint is valid, the school system shall take such action as is appropriate based on the results of the investigation.
2. The result of the investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures shall be reported in writing to the complainant by the school system. The report shall document any disciplinary action taken as a result of the complaint.
3. The school system shall take such other steps as are necessary to prevent recurrence of the harassment.
4. The school system shall keep the complainant informed of the status of the complaint.

HEALTH PROBLEMS

Should your child suffer from asthma, allergies, a heart condition or any other potentially serious health condition, be sure to indicate this on the health form. In addition, make it a point to give your child’s teacher a note describing the condition and the appropriate steps to take in an emergency involving the condition.

Please be sure to complete the Health Information Card during registration and keep the school informed of any changes of address or phone numbers, either at work or home.

HOUSE SYSTEM

The primary purpose of the Bess T Shepherd Elementary House System is to further the mission of the school. Through the house system, our school focuses on the following factors while building comradery within our community:

- Student Belonging and Connection
- Student Collaboration
- Positive Relationships and Communication
- Communication and Display of Values
- Fun Opportunities for Engagement

Each House at Bess T Shepherd Elementary is named after a value that we aim to foster in our students. Additionally, these names have been selected to represent the cultures present within our community. Bess T Shepherd Elementary’s Houses are: Neta, Fortitudo, Amistad, Alviva, and Heshima. Every student, faculty, and staff member belongs to a House.

Neta is the house of leadership represented by the color orange and the tiger for their focus and drive.

Fortitudo is the house of courage, it is recognized by the color yellow. The bear symbolizes this house for their bravery.

Amistad, the house of friendship is represented by dolphins and the color turquoise blue for their cooperation and joy.

Alviva is the house of dreamers represented by the color purple. The Eagle symbolizes this dreamer’s ability to achieve and soar.

Heshima, the house of respect, is represented by the giraffe and the color dark green for their uniqueness and confidence.

The three pillars of the House System at Bess T Shepherd Elementary are the expectations that we focus on in our building. These are posted in classrooms, common areas, and frequently reviewed. The pillars are:

- Be Respectful
- Take Responsibility
- Stay Safe

	Be Respectful	Take Responsibility	Stay Safe
Hallway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice Level: 0 • Hands and body off the wall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face the front of the line • Stay in your personal space • Walk on the right side of the hallway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking feet • Stay in control of your body
Bathroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect privacy • Voice Level: 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flush the toilet • Use 2 pumps of soap • Use 2 pumps of paper towels • Clean up any mess 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking feet • Wash hands correctly • Shake off water over the sink
Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice Level in line: 0 • Voice Level at table: 2 • Keep your hands to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your food on your tray • Clean up the space around you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use 2 hands to carry your tray • Stay seated until you are dismissed
Arrival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice Level: 1 • Be aware of personal space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk on the right side of the hallway • If eating breakfast go directly to cafeteria, then K-2 go to your hallway, 3-5 head to gym 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk in the hallway • Carry your breakfast tray with 2 hands
Dismissal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voice Level: 0 • Keep your hands to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be in the correct location. • Listen carefully for your name or bus number • Keep track of your Belongings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking feet • Stay in control of your body

Section 4: House Point System

At the beginning of the school year, students will be somewhat randomly assigned to one of the five Houses. The Houses will be revealed during their sorting ceremony. Each student will remain in the same House for the entirety of their time at Bess T Shepherd Elementary. Students will be given a house shirt that will be kept at the school during the school year.

As students demonstrate the pillars of the House System, faculty and staff will reward these actions with tokens. Tokens will then be placed in the cup of the appropriate House. Each week, the tokens will be delivered to the main office and added to the House's Display.

The last Friday of each month will be the House Meeting and House Party day. On those days, the students will wear their shirts and attend their House's gathering. The House with the most points will receive a House Party. The other four Houses will have a House Meeting that is focused on building comradery and encouraging the students to aim to win the next month.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a part of our school program. The amount and frequency of homework assigned varies among grade levels and subjects taught. Your child's teacher will send specific details regarding the homework policy.

MEDICATION

The only medications given at school will be for those students who require long-term prescriptions, such as Ritalin. If a child is on this type of medication, the following procedures must be followed:

- A written permission form, signed by the parent and physician, is provided to the school and includes the child's name, type of medication, time and dose to be given, and side effects. These forms are available at the school.
- The medication must be delivered to and from school by the parent or guardian. The child is not to handle medication.
- The medication must be in the original prescription bottle.

- No change in administration can be made without written direction from the physician.
- A new prescription form is required at the beginning of each school year.
- Medications are only given at lunch times in the school system. Please remind your pediatrician of this fact when the prescription is written.

The school nurse, or her designee, will administer medication that is given at school. All medication will be kept under lock and key, and administration will be documented in a daily log.

The school cannot give short term or non-prescription medications to students at school. Students are not allowed to keep medications on their person. This includes, but is not limited to aspirin, Tylenol, cough medicines, or antibiotics, etc. Students found possessing drugs at school will be disciplined under the Zero Tolerance Policy. Please remember that antibiotics cannot be given at school. Doctors can usually prescribe one that can be given before and after the school day.

MONEY AT SCHOOL

Whenever possible, payments should be made by check for food services, school pictures, insurance, PTA purchases and the like. Include your child's name somewhere on the check if his/her last name is different from yours. However, sometimes students wish to bring money to school for specific purposes such as field trips or school fund-raisers. The online portal is also available to pay for school fees, field trips, lost books, etc (<https://osp.osmsinc.com/HamiltonTN/>). Money brought to school by students should be placed in an envelope with the child's name written on it as well as the amount enclosed and its purpose. Neither the teacher nor the school can be responsible for lost or misplaced money.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Conferences

There are two designated conference dates set for the school year, November 3rd and March 2nd. However, parents are encouraged to request a conference any time there is a question or concern. Conferences with teachers or the principal must be scheduled so as not to conflict with the teacher's instruction of children. If you call the school to request a conference, the principal, secretary, or teacher will call back as soon as possible to confirm a time that will be convenient to all.

Fundraising at Bess T Shepherd

Bess T. Shepherd School and/or PTA sponsors several fundraisers per year. These include activities such as the Kids First Coupon Book Sale, Food City Boosters, and the Fall and Spring Fundraiser. We encourage everyone to support these efforts. Many instructional materials, incentives and services are provided to the students with the funds that are raised. Your support and active participation are greatly appreciated.

Parent-Teacher Association

Bess T Shepherd has a very active PTA that assists the faculty and staff in maintaining a quality education for our students. Every parent or guardian is encouraged to become involved in PTA activities. Our PTA Officers for the 2022-2023 school year are:

- President: Amanda Negley
- V. President: David Sahn
- Secretary:
- Treasurer:

Volunteers

There will be many volunteer opportunities for parents. Please contact our front office at the school to schedule volunteer times. Be sure to record your volunteer time on our school log which is located in the office.

PARTIES

Classroom parties are scheduled under the direction of the homeroom parents prior to the winter holidays and on Valentine's Day. Look for announcements listing the details of these parties. Special events and activities, which correlate with subject material, may also be held at the discretion of the staff. Individual student birthdays will be announced in the mornings. **Deliveries for students will not be accepted.**

RECESS

Children have outdoor physical play everyday, weather permitting, and are supervised by teachers. Students are expected to actively participate in the teacher-planned activities as well as free play. Parents must send a note if a child needs to stay inside on a temporary basis due to medical reasons; however, a note from the doctor will be needed for longer periods.

SAFETY

Safety is a concern for all of us. Please take time to review with your children safe practices when walking to and from school, riding on the bus, riding in the car or van and playing on the playground. Children succeed when we work together.

SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS

PBIS is a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for schools to help in achieving social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behavior. PBIS framework involves school teams broadly developing: Practices to support responsible student behavior, systems to support staff effectiveness, and evidence from collected data to inform school-based decisions.

SPEECH, HEARING, AND VISION TESTING

Tests for speech, hearing and vision are conducted at the elementary level by professional district personnel according to guidelines prescribed by the Tennessee Department of Education. Requests for specific tests may be made by parents or teachers through the principal.

SUPPLY FEES

The supply fee for each grade level this year is \$35.00. An itemized supply list is distributed to each parent/student at the end and beginning of the school year. This money is used to provide the children with additional materials and supplies. It is very helpful if the entire supply fee is paid at the beginning of the year. If this is not possible, at least one-half should be paid the first semester and one-half the second semester. Although we request help with school fees, **TN State Law states that schools cannot require them.**

TARDINESS

Tardiness consistently detracts from the time spent on task. Each interruption takes away from the class concentration. At Bess T. Shepherd Elementary School, we believe all children want to learn, and they want conditions to be conducive to learning. Due to the continuous learning that occurs during the course of a school day, we cannot overemphasize the importance of being on time, both in the classroom and as a life-long habit. As a result of our intent to create an environment of high expectations and time-on-task, the following Tardy Policy is in place. If a student is **TARDY (after 8:15)**, he/she is to be brought to the office by the person who provided transportation. That person will sign the student in. Tardy students will be given a **TARDY SLIP** which must be given to the teacher. The teacher will then record the tardy on the homeroom attendance roster. ***Teachers WILL NOT admit late students without a tardy slip.***

CONSEQUENCES for unexcused tardies:

- Tardy #1 - Warning/Tardy Form is sent home

- **Tardy #2 - Warning/Tardy Form is sent home**
- **Tardy #3 - Administration will contact you**
- **Tardy #4—Social Worker will contact you**

Because we want all students to learn the importance of being prompt, we encourage them to develop this habit.

TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences with all teachers may be arranged at any time during the school year. Please call the office and leave a message for the teacher to call you, or send a note with your child to arrange a conference. Because teachers' schedules are so full, it is very difficult for them to have a conference on a drop by basis. Scheduling conferences ahead of time is greatly appreciated and very helpful to all concerned. Hamilton County Department of Education also provides two one-half day opportunities for parent conferences. (*See Calendar*)

TELEPHONE MESSAGES

Please do not call a student or ask to have messages delivered to a student unless it is an ABSOLUTE EMERGENCY. This is very disruptive to the classroom learning environment. Please discuss any after school arrangements with your child **before** he or she arrives at school in the mornings. We discourage interrupting the class to remind your child where he or she is to go after school. Teachers may not leave their classroom for telephone conferences with parents during class hours.

VISITING AND OBSERVING

Parents are welcome to visit or observe in their child's classroom. However, these must be arranged by administration and classroom teachers at least 48 hours in advance.. All visitors are asked to check in at the office before going to a classroom.. There is an information sheet with expectations and instructions for you to sign before going to observe in any classroom.

WITHDRAWING A STUDENT

When withdrawing a student from school, please notify the school office several days in advance. This will enable teachers to complete all records prior to the student's last day.