

Helena Middle School

2021-2022

Student Handbook



1299 Hillsboro Parkway

Helena, AL 35080

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Principal, Andrew Gunn

Assistant Principal, Henry Long

Assistant Principal, Kristen Glover

<http://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/schools/hlms/index.htm>

Welcome to Helena Middle School

Home of the Huskies!

We encourage each student to participate in our academic, athletic, and extracurricular activities. HMS has a lot to offer and we hope that each student will get involved.

MISSION STATEMENT

We at Helena Middle School aspire to create a rigorous and differentiated curriculum to prepare all students as they become College and Career ready in a global and diverse world.

VISITORS

Visitors will be allowed in the building by appointment request. Please contact the main office at 205-682-5320 if you need to enter the building. Check ins and check outs will be conducted through our buzzer system in the front of the school. You may buzz the front office at the main entrance door to conduct student a check in and check out. Please be prepared to have your ID ready for a student check out.

SCHOOL OPENING

The school doors will be unlocked at **7:15 am** each morning. Shelby County Board of Education and Helena Middle School are not responsible for students dropped off prior to 7:05 a.m. unless they are under the supervision of a coach or sponsor. Upon arrival at school, **ALL** students will report to their first period class, unless they are eating breakfast in the cafeteria.

MORNING BELL SCHEDULE

First Bell 7:35 a.m.

Tardy Bell 7:45 a.m.

IMPORTANT: The tardy bell rings at 7:45 a.m. **Students need to be in their first period class at 7:45 and NOT walking in the building. If a student can't get to class by 7:45, they need to report to the front office to sign in. If students receive 3 tardies to school in a 9 week period they will be issued a detention. Any additional tardies during the 9 week period will result in further discipline consequences. If students receive 6 tardies to class in a 9 week period, they will be issued a detention. Any additional tardies during the 9 week period will result in further discipline consequences.**

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL SCHEDULE

3:00 Dismissal for all students

ATTENDANCE

It is vital that your child be in school on a regular basis. A student who accumulates more than 10 absences during a school year is subject to retention. Attendance letters will be mailed to parents after the 2nd and 5th unexcused absence. Students will be referred to Early Warning Court upon the 5th unexcused absence. Students who are absent should bring a written explanation of their absence from the parent or guardian within **3** days of the student returning from an absence. **The school will not accept an excuse after 3 school days of the absence.** All absences over the 10 excused absences allowed must be accompanied by a doctor's excuse or court excuse or by permission of the principal. Any unexcused absences count against the 10 excused absences allowed.

TRANSPORTATION

- Please note all traffic is **ONE WAY** starting to the left of the school at the top of the hill. This is a permanent change and will be in effect at all times.

· **IMPORTANT: Any changes in a student's transportation for the day must be submitted to the office NO LATER than 2:00 p.m. so that we can ensure there is plenty of time to communicate the change to the student.**

Car Riders load and unload in the **back** of the building. Students should not be dropped off prior to 7:05 am and should be picked up by 3:15 pm.

Walkers and Bike Riders must use the designated CROSSWALK in front of the school. Also, walkers and bike riders should enter and exit the building through the **front** of the school.

- **Bus Service** is available for all students. We encourage parents to take advantage of the Shelby County Bus service in order to cut down on traffic at the Middle School and the High School. Some buses run a double route. Students **must** ride the bus they are assigned. If a student is to ride home a different way or on a different bus, a note from the student's parent/guardian must be sent to the main office that morning. The note will be signed by an

administrator and returned to the student. See above regarding changes in transportation.

- **Bus Discipline** The sole purpose of a school bus is to transport students safely to and from school. The school bus is an extension of the classroom and all SCBOE rules apply. Our goal is to ensure that all students who ride the school bus exhibit good behavior while on the bus. In the event the bus driver deems it necessary to issue a disciplinary notice, an administrator will take appropriate action.

- **Inclement Weather which requires dismissal** Parents should begin to listen to the local news for announcements of school closings in case of inclement weather. Parents should also check their e-mail and the Shelby County website for the announcement of school closing early. Buses will run their routes unless a tornado warning is in effect. We will also use BlackBoard Connect to send out messages to parents with additional information related to adjusted dismissal times due to inclement weather.

BOOK BAGS

Book bags can be brought to school but **must** be placed in the locker before 1st period. Book bags should not be brought into class unless an administrator allows special permission. Book bags, purses, etc. are not allowed in the serving area of the cafeteria.

WATER BOTTLES

Students are allowed to bring water bottles or hydro flasks to school. They must be clear and see through. Students are allowed to use the water fountains to refill their water bottles during the school day.

DRESS CODE

HMS follows the Shelby County Code of Conduct Dress Code. Students who violate the HMS dress code policy will face discipline consequences. Students who come to school out of dress code will be placed in In School Suspension until a change of clothes is brought to the school. Leggings may NOT be worn with t-shirts or sweatshirts. Sweat pants and athletic pants will be allowed. Please refer to the Dress Code Policy in the *Code of Conduct* for a more inclusive list of acceptable standards.

CELL PHONE

Students are asked to keep electronic devices turned off and in their lockers during the day. If a student has their phone taken up, the first incident will result in a warning. The second offense will require the student to attend after school detention and the device will be held by administration until it can be picked up by a parent. Further offenses will result in more severe consequences.

LOCKERS

Every HMS student will be issued a locker at the beginning of the year. The locker rental fee is to be paid at registration. Students MAY NOT change lockers without approval from their teacher or administration.

LOST & FOUND

The school cannot assume responsibility for the loss of personal items. Lost and found will be located behind the computer lab. Students may also check in the gym or on the stage in the cafeteria. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity every two weeks. Personal devices need to be labeled with the student's name.

DETENTION

Detention is held every Tuesday and Thursday. We will only have afternoon detentions this year. They are from 3:10 PM - 4:10 PM. Attendance is mandatory if you are assigned detention as a consequence. Failure to attend detention could result in more severe punishment.

IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION (ISS)

ISS is offered Monday through Friday, 7:45-3:00 PM. Students must report to the ISS room by 7:45 AM.

EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Helena Middle School offers a wide variety of extracurricular activities for our students. Students may participate in athletics, band, choir, dance team, majorettes, cheerleading, and yearbook. They also can involve themselves with service clubs and academic teams. We encourage all of our students to get involved.

MEDICATION POLICY

Information about medications is included in the SCBOE Code of Conduct. For questions please contact the HMS nurse at 682-5300.

STUDENT OFFICE PHONE USE

Students may use the office phone for EMERGENCY USE ONLY. They may not call home for forgotten items. Parents may call and leave a message for their child, but students will not be allowed to leave class to return parent phone calls unless there is an emergency.

Every time a forgotten item is delivered to a classroom, instructional time is interrupted. Thank you for your understanding.

MEDIA CENTER

Students will not be allowed to enter the Media Center unless they are with a class.. All books, with the exception of certain reference and reserve books, may be checked out. Lost books cost \$20.00 to replace. Visit the HMS Media Center blog for more information. podcasts.shelbyed.k12.al.us/pdodson/

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM CHARGED MEAL PROCEDURE

Shelby County Schools realize that students may forget or lose lunch/breakfast money. To make it easy for parents to view charges, fund accounts, and get notified of low balances, we have partnered with www.myschoolbucks.com. There is no charge for parents to create, monitor, or receive emails regarding low student meal balances. Parents may also utilize the myschoolbucks mobile app on their mobile devices to monitor accounts. Parents will still be notified in writing of negative student balances and will be afforded a reasonable opportunity to clear the bad debt.

It is unlawful for the Child Nutrition Program to absorb unpaid, charged meals. Parents are responsible for providing funds for student accounts. If parents need financial assistance paying for school meals, a meal benefit application for free/reduced price meals must be completed. The meal application only takes a few minutes to complete and can be found online at www.myschoolapps.com or <https://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/cnp/mealbenefits>, at the local school, or at the Central Office. Applications for meal benefits can be completed at any time during the school year. If a parent refuses to complete a meal benefit application or provide funds for student meals after a reasonable amount of time, an alternative meal may be provided at the principal's discretion after parent notification. Please make sure your child's lunch account is up to date. If you have questions regarding your child's lunch account, please call the cafeteria manager at 205-682-5306.

CATEGORICAL GRADING

Grades in all Helena Middle School classes will be assigned in the following format:

Bronze 10% - Minimum 10 assignments

Silver 30% - Minimum 6 assignments

Gold 60% - Minimum 3 assignments