

HELENA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK
2021-2022



#BeTheDifference

Welcome to HIS!

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www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/schools/his

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H.I.S PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM (ASCP)

The After School Care Program (ASCP) provides childcare to students on a daily basis throughout the school year. **Prior registration is required in order to participate.** ASCP is available after each regular school day Monday through Friday until as late as 6:00 P.M. Activities include crafts, games, and outdoor games.

After school enrichment classes will also be offered through ASCP at an additional cost. Registration in ASCP is required to participate in these enrichment classes. See the school website for additional information. Space is limited in the ASCP program.

ASCP is closed on days when school is dismissed early due to inclement weather. Parents must provide transportation arrangements for their children on these days.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Car riders may not arrive at school prior to 7:00 A.M.

Car riders are dropped off in the unloading area in front of the school. Students may unload **only in the single lane along the curb** nearest the building in front of the school. Car riders should unload anywhere between the third crosswalk (last crosswalk when coming in) and the end of the sidewalk in front of the gym. (During busy arrival times, a staff member may direct drivers all the way forward to the front of the sidewalk area.) **Please do not STOP until you have moved all the way forward in the unloading area.** By unloading along the entire sidewalk area, more students are able to unload when vehicles are stopped. This procedure allows the unloading area to move more quickly and makes space available for other students to unload. Drivers unloading students should remain in the lane along the curb until they have cleared the unloading area. Drivers should remain inside the vehicle at all times.

When unloading students, drivers should place their vehicle in park. Students should load and unload on the right hand side of the vehicle when possible. Students should NOT walk between vehicles when loading or unloading unless supervised by the parent. All car riders will enter the building through the main front entrance. All buses load and unload behind the school in the bus loading/unloading area. Cars may not load or unload in this area. Bus riders will enter the building through the rear main entrance.

The outside lane away from the curb is reserved for through traffic. Students **may NOT unload in the parking lot area (or parallel parking spaces)** and walk across the traffic lanes. To encourage independence and to reduce congestion, parents should not park and walk their students into the building except in special circumstances. When crossing at the crosswalks, please allow the cars in the drop off lane to continue to move forward to their designated stopping point, and then cross when cars are stopped.

All students arriving between 7:00-7:30 A.M. should go directly to the cafeteria if eating breakfast or purchasing snack items. Other students should go directly to their assigned location. Students in 3rd grade will go directly to the 3rd grade hall and line up near their homeroom classroom. Students in 4th grade will go directly to the gym and students in grade 5 will go directly to the fifth grade hall. Students may not be in restrooms or in other undesignated areas of the building during this time without permission of a staff member. In order to be punctual for the start of the school day, students who are eating breakfast should arrive in the cafeteria before 7:30 A.M. Students who are purchasing snacks should arrive in the cafeteria before 7:35 A.M.

Students will be dismissed to their homerooms at 7:30 A.M. **All students should be in the building when the tardy bell rings at 7:45 A.M.** [Parents and students must consider the amount of time it takes the student to enter the building and get to his/her classroom in order to be on time.](#) **After the tardy bell rings, the parent must walk the student into the office and sign a tardy pass.** The parent must designate the reason for the tardy. Punctuality should be made a priority by parents and students. (See Check In.)

Dismissal times are as follows:

2:45 p.m.	3 rd Grade Early Bus Riders/All ASCP
2:47 p.m.	4 th Grade Early Bus Riders
2:49 p.m.	5 th Grade Early Bus Riders

2:52 p.m.	Car Riders and Daycare Van Riders
2:55 p.m.	Late Bus Riders

Teachers and staff will assist all students in getting to their designated areas at dismissal time.

Car Riders

All car riders should be picked up through the car rider lines. **Parents may not wait inside the lobby** at dismissal time to meet students. A security issue is created when unidentified visitors are in the building. It is also inconsiderate to other parents who are following the pick-up procedure by waiting in the car rider lines. **Parents also may not park in the parking lot area** and have students cross the traffic lanes to load (or unload). If your child has an after school appointment that requires you to pick him or her up immediately, you should check out your child prior to dismissal. Your support in following these policies is appreciated for the safety of all students and in fairness to all parents.

Each student is responsible for being attentive during pickup time and identifying his or her vehicle for pickup. If a parent has any concern about his or her child being able to identify the correct vehicle for pickup, notify the school principal prior to dismissal. Special provisions will be made to assist the child in car loading.

In the car loading line, drivers should place their vehicle in park when students are loading. Drivers should wait until all students in a group are loaded before moving their vehicles.

Bus Riders

Due to overcrowding and safety concerns on our buses, students may ride only their regularly assigned bus to and from school each day. Students may not ride other buses with friends to and from school. Parents must make transportation arrangements involving visits with friends outside of school. In the event of an emergency, contact the school office for approval for a student to ride an alternate bus.

Safety is a MUST on our buses. For the safety of all students, every child is expected to show appropriate behavior at bus stops and on the bus at all times. All students are subject to the rules of Shelby County Schools once they arrive at the bus stop. Bus drivers may contact parents to discuss inappropriate bus behavior or refer students to the school administration. Students may be suspended from riding the bus for any inappropriate behavior. Suspensions may range from one day to indefinite suspensions. A student is also subject to suspension from school or other disciplinary measures for inappropriate bus behavior. Please support your child's driver in disciplinary matters for the safety of ALL students.

Daycare Van Riders

As a courtesy, you should notify your child's daycare **in advance if your child will not be riding their usual daycare van.** Daycare vans check their rolls for riders each day before leaving the school campus. Many times our daycare vans are unnecessarily delayed when a regular daycare van rider is not present on the daycare van.

Transportation Changes

Notify your child's teacher through a note sent to school by the child (no e-mail) if there is any change in your child's transportation home from school for the day. The note will be sent to the school office and a record will be made of the change.

Cut-off time for transportation changes is 1:00. PHONE CALLS WILL BE ACCEPTED ONLY IN CASE OF EMERGENCY and must be approved by an administrator. For this reason, parents should make dismissal arrangements with their child prior to the student coming to school each day.

ATTENDANCE

Our school is held accountable for maintaining a high rate of attendance. State law holds parents responsible for having their children in school regularly. According to the Alabama State Department of Education, excused absences may be for: (a) Illness; (b) Death in the immediate family; (c) Inclement weather which would be dangerous to the life and health of the child as determined by the principal; (d) Emergency conditions as determined by the principal; (e) Prior permission of the principal and consent of the parent or legal guardian (a parent's prior notification to the school does not automatically excuse the absence). **Excuses for absences must be turned in within three (3) days of the student returning to school.**

Excuses may be e-mailed to: schoe-hlis@shelbyed.org. Please include the student's full legal name in the subject line.

All excuses should be handwritten by the parent and signed by the parent. Then, take a picture or scan the excuse (make sure dates of absences are included) and e-mail it.

If you wish to request permission for an excused absence due to extenuating circumstances (other than illness), contact the school registrar for a Parent Request Form for Excused Absence. The student's prior academic and attendance record will be considered by the school principal in determining whether the absence(s) will be excused. The form is also available in the Student Code of Conduct book and school website.

According to the Shelby County Student Code of Conduct and Attendance, the parent or guardian is responsible for arranging necessary make up work with the child's teacher when a child is absent. Make up assignments for absences may be picked up from the teacher(s) by the student upon the student's return to school. Make up work must be turned in at a time agreeable to the teacher(s). HIS school policy states that **a student will generally be provided a length of time equal to twice the number of days missed in order to turn in missed assignments**. For example, a student absent for one day will be allowed two days to make up missed assignments. A student absent for two days will be allowed four days to make up missed assignments. If additional time for make-up work is needed beyond this guideline, parents must contact the child's teacher within three days of the student's return to school to request additional time.

If a child is checked out before 11:15, it is considered a full-day absence.

Unexcused absences will be monitored closely by the school administration, and may be referred to the Early Warning Program (a cooperative effort of Shelby County Schools, the District Attorney's Office, and the Juvenile Court Services).

- **Three (3) unexcused absences** will require a parent to meet with an administrator for a Pre-Early Warning Program referral conference.
- **Five (5) unexcused absences** will result in a referral to the Early Warning Program.

Absences beyond 10 (excluding 2x and 3x absences) must be documented with a doctor's or court excuse or permission of the principal. Parent-written notes will not excuse time missed from school after any combination of absences coded 1x, 4x, 6x, or 7x has exceeded 10 or more. Once a student has accumulated 10 or more absences (coded 1x, 4x, 6x, and 7x), a doctor's excuse will be required to explain any future absences through the end of the school year.

Codes for absences: 1x parent note, 2x doctor's excuse which indicates that the student visited the doctor and was treated for the illness, 3x court excuse, 4x principal's permission/death in the immediate family, 5x suspension, 6x parent note unexcused, 7x no note or explanation. 1x, 2x, 3x and 4x are excused absences. 5x, 6x and 7x are unexcused absences.

CHECK INS

Students should arrive by 7:40 each morning in order to be in their classroom and ready for instruction to begin at 7:45 A.M. Students arriving **at the tardy bell or later** must get a tardy pass from the office. When a student is tardy, a parent is responsible for a child's supervision into the school office for a tardy pass. The tardy will be considered unexcused unless the parent signs the child in at the office and provides a valid reason for the tardy. Excused tardies include doctor's appointments and mechanical breakdowns. Unexcused tardies include oversleeping and traffic (you must plan ahead for "Helena traffic"). A tardy for traffic will be considered excused only if the traffic problem has caused one or more of our school buses to be late in arriving to school. Exceptions may be made by the school administration when other unusual circumstances occur. Otherwise, students should arrive on time for school. To protect the learning time of other students, parents may not go to the classroom when checking in their child except with permission from the office/administration.

A letter will be sent home after **five (5)** unexcused tardies in a calendar month. While it is understood that the parent may be responsible for the child's tardies, the child has missed instructional time in class. After **ten (10)** unexcused tardies, parents will be required to meet with an administrator. Excessive tardies (**15+**) may result in a parent being referred to the Early Warning Program (a cooperative effort of Shelby County Schools, the District Attorney's Office, and the Juvenile Court Services).

CHECK OUTS

Students checking out of school during the day must be checked out in the office by a parent or person designated by the parent on the enrollment sheet.

Parents are asked to not check out students prior to dismissal except when necessary. **Checkouts are considered an absence from the class missed and will be considered excused or unexcused based on the Attendance Policy.** (See Attendance)

FORGETTING ITEMS AT HOME

If your child has forgotten items at home, they will not be allowed to call home (unless it is for lunch money or glasses). If an item (homework, snack, lunch) is dropped off, the office staff will make arrangements to get those items to the classroom.

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM (CNP)

Breakfast and lunch are served each day in our cafeteria. All meals are offered at no cost this year. In order to encourage good nutrition and a balanced diet, a student is not allowed to “skip lunch.” Deposits may also be made by going online to www.myschoolbucks.com. If you would like to join your child for breakfast or lunch, breakfast for adult visitors is \$3.50 and lunch is \$4.50.

A la carte items may be purchased each day from the cafeteria at an additional cost. Any parent who does not wish for his/her child to be able to purchase a la carte items may notify the CNP manager. Students who qualify for free or reduced priced lunches may file an application with the Shelby County Board of Education. Applications may also be filed directly online through the Shelby County CNP website. Only one application per family is needed for children in any Shelby County School. You may call the Child Nutrition Office at the county board at 682-6532 for more information.

If you are visiting your child for lunch, sign in at the office and receive a visitor’s pass. Visitors should wait in the school lobby for their child’s class to come to the lunchroom. A visitor bringing food items into the cafeteria is **not permitted to share food items with students other than his/her own child**. Students may not bring carbonated beverages (soft drinks) to lunch. Parents are welcome any Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.

CLASSROOM PARTY/SPECIAL WHOLE SCHOOL DAY EVENT GUIDELINES

Classroom parties are held on three occasions: Christmas, Valentine’s, and at the end of the year. Regular party snacks are allowed on these occasions.

Parents are invited to be a part of the Christmas and End-of-the-Year parties only. Please note that **siblings are not allowed to attend classroom parties, school day events (such as Take Your Parent to PE, Parenting Day) or field trips (including children in strollers)**. The classroom parties are for the enjoyment of our students, and alternate childcare arrangements must be made for siblings.

Birthday party invitations are not allowed to be distributed at school unless there is an invitation for every child in the classroom.

CELL PHONES

The SCBOE respects parents’ wishes for their child to bring a cell phone to school. However, cell phones brought to school must be stored appropriately (turned off and in the backpack). Cell phones cannot be audible on school property or on buses. When a student is found to be using his/her cell phone without permission during the school day, the phone will be taken from the student and given to a school administrator. The parent will be notified and the phone will be returned to the student for their first offense. For their second offense, the parent will be notified and will be asked to pick up the phone.

COMPUTER USAGE

Technology is an important tool for classroom instruction. The internet may be used from time to time to supplement this instruction. Our school administration and staff share your concern regarding online dangers. Extensive filtering software measures have been put in place by the Shelby County Board of Education to increase student safety while using the internet. School personnel also work to help students learn safe practices to use when online. Students are responsible for immediately notifying the teacher if inappropriate content is found at anytime through a school computer.

CONFERENCES

Please call the school office if you need to schedule a conference with your child's teacher, or email the teacher directly. Each teacher's email address is listed on our [www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/ schools/his](http://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/schools/his) website.

When you arrive for your conference, sign in as a visitor in the school office. Our office personnel will notify the teacher of your arrival. **In some instances, conferences may be held virtually or over the phone.**

Any concerns regarding your child should be directed **first** to the appropriate teacher. If a concern is not resolved, the parent or teacher may request an administrator to meet with the teacher and parent in a subsequent conference.

COUNSELORS

A student may access the school counselors in one of three ways: student request, parent request, or teacher request. Parents may schedule a conference with the counselor by calling the school office.

CUSTODIAL PARENTS / GUARDIANS

If a child does not reside with both biological parents, court approved legal documents must on file in the school office (divorce decree, custodial papers). Both custodial and non-custodial parents have full rights to educational records and information (for example, academics, attendance, and behavior information) unless restricted by a court order. **Court approved documents must be on file in the school office to restrict a biological parent's access to a child or his school records.** If court approved papers do not exist regarding custody, contact the school registrar.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

To create a positive learning environment for all students, appropriate behavior is essential. Please note that by law, parents are held responsible for ensuring that a child behaves appropriately at school (Alabama Code 16-28-12). The administration and instructional staff at HIS wish to work with students and parents in a positive manner at all times to resolve discipline issues. Teachers may send notes, make phone calls, send emails, or request a conference to discuss discipline issues with parents when deemed appropriate. However, students are responsible for appropriate behavior, and discipline consequences of a moderate nature may occur prior to parent contact when deemed appropriate. School administration and/or teachers will always work to make parent contact if serious offenses occur.

School Discipline Plan:

Students may lose privileges from the teacher for misbehavior. A student may be assigned a "conduct mark" for significant or repeated behavior concerns. These behavior concerns will be communicated directly to parents through a communication log (or direct contact). Conduct charts should be reviewed by parents. Serious offenses will be referred to the office for immediate action. Incidents that will result in **immediate referral to the office** may include incidences such as serious physical harm to another student or disrespect to a school board employee.

In accordance with the Shelby County Code of Conduct and Attendance, inappropriate behavior may result in a student being assigned to detention, In School Suspension (ISS), Out of School Suspension, or further actions as deemed necessary by an administrator. All consequences for inappropriate behavior will be consistent with the Shelby County Code of Conduct and Attendance.

DRESS CODE

Parents are asked to first be responsible for making sure that students follow dress code guidelines. More detailed information can be found in the Shelby County Student Code of Conduct and Attendance booklet. A parent may be called to bring appropriate clothing to school if an infraction is noted.

Dress Code guidelines include:

- Ear piercings are allowed. All other piercings, hairstyles, and other adornments (including tattoos) that draw attention to oneself in a manner that may be disruptive to the educational process are prohibited.

- No obscene, suggestive, or inappropriate language and/or advertisements for illegal substances or inappropriate products may be worn on clothing or accessories (this includes face masks/shields/gaiters).
- Pants, shorts, and skirts must be worn at the waist and fit properly. Articles of clothing worn too low, too long, too large, too short, too tight, or too loose are not permitted. Skirts, shorts and dresses must be mid-thigh or longer in the front and back. No slits or leg openings may be above mid-thigh. Leggings/jeggings may only be worn as an accessory to a dress, skirt, or appropriate top that is at least mid-thigh length. No t-shirts with leggings/jeggings will be allowed. **Rule of thumb:** If your top/shirt cannot be worn without leggings, the it should not be worn.
- No halters, backless dresses, midriff shirts, spaghetti straps or cut-off shirts will be allowed.
- Students are to wear appropriate shoes that fit securely at all times. Shoes with wheels, flip-flops, and “toe shoes” are not appropriate for school. **Tennis shoes are required for participation in PE activities.**
- Students are prohibited from wearing any metal chains, metal spiked apparel, or accessories.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment at HIS is dependent upon a student maintaining residence in the Helena Intermediate School attendance zone. If the residence of a student changes during the school year, the parent should immediately notify the school principal to request information regarding out-of-zone approval.

A student living outside the Helena Intermediate School attendance zone is subject to immediate dismissal from the school without out-of-zone approval.

EXTRACURRICULAR CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

A number of extracurricular clubs and activities are offered to students at HIS. Information will be sent home at the beginning of the year.

Many extracurricular classes are also offered through the After School Care Program (ASCP). A child must be registered with ASCP to enroll in an enrichment class offered through ASCP. Additional information will be sent home throughout the year involving these clubs and activities.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are designed to enrich the classroom curriculum. Students are encouraged to be a part of field trips as part of the learning experience. Expenses of field trips are estimated in advance in order to cover all admission costs, bus driver costs, and mileage costs. Any excess funds collected for field trips will be donated to a school fund to assist needy students with the cost of field trips, or to the school to use for classroom materials, instructional materials, technology equipment, professional development and/or incentive items (including food items), unless a parent requests a refund in writing to the school principal at the time of the field trip. **Siblings are not allowed to attend field trips.**

FLORIST DELIVERIES/SPECIAL DELIVERIES

To protect instructional time for students and to protect from disruptions in the school day, special deliveries for students may not be sent to the school. Deliveries that may not be sent include flowers, balloons, etc. in recognition of special events such as birthdays.

FUNDRAISERS

Various fundraisers are held throughout the school year by the school, our PTO, and various student groups. These fundraisers provide important funds for our programs and activities. Funds may be used for instructional materials, technology equipment and software programs, copying costs, office supplies, salaries for locally funded school personnel, building/grounds maintenance and additions, incentive items for students (including food and drink items), professional development expenses, and other reasonable expenses as approved by the school principal. We appreciate your support of our fundraisers.

ILLNESS

For the health and well-being of all students and staff at our school, you should not send your child to school if he or she is sick. If a student is running a fever, the student must remain at home and be **fever-free for 24 hours without the aid of a fever-reducer** before returning to school. If a student becomes ill while at school, parents will be contacted. Arrangements must be made for a sick child to be picked up immediately. Parents are responsible for sending an excuse for the days following the check-out. Please check your doctor’s note before your child returns to school. If your child

comes to school before the doctor writes that it is ok to return, we will call and ask you to take your child home. Please make sure the school office has current phone numbers for all contacts listed on the Student Registration Form.

LOST AND FOUND

Please mark all outer garments, school materials, lunch boxes, school bags, purses, face masks, etc. with your child's name with a permanent marker. The Lost and Found is located in the cafeteria (large items) and office (small items). Each year, we send off unclaimed items to charity because we can't find its owner. PLEASE write your child's name on all of their belongings.

MEDICATION GUIDELINES

Students are not permitted to transport medicine of any kind to the school office. All medication (prescription or over the counter) must be brought to the school office by a parent. A Medication Authorization Form must be completed and signed by the parent. For any prescription medication, the form must also be signed by the child's doctor and on file with the school prior to the medication being administered by school personnel. This form is available in the school office and is also generally available at all doctor offices. Over-the-counter medications will require the parent/guardian signature only on the medication authorization form and is valid for the entire school year.

All medications, whether over-the-counter or prescription, must come in the original container, properly labeled and dated. Medication will not be accepted unless it is in the original prescription bottle with the student's name or original container (if nonprescription).

No student will be permitted to carry or possess any type of medication, whether prescription or non-prescription, on their person at any time (except for asthma inhalers or EpiPen with special permission). All medications will be kept in a locked area in the office area. When the course of medication is out-of-date, it will be discarded. Medications not picked up by the parent by the last day of school will be destroyed.

NOTE: Advil and Extra Strength Tylenol (or generics) cannot be administered to children under the age of 12. The only exception will be with a doctor's prescription. Refer to the Shelby County Schools Medication Policy for more information or contact the school nurse at 682-5489.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

We have a very active and involved PTO that supports our school in many ways. Please become a member and become involved in our school. Contact the school office at 682-5520 for more information.

Many opportunities are available to volunteer your time in support of HIS. Please contact a PTO officer for additional information.

PARKING

Parking for our school is in the front of the building in designated parking areas. In order to adhere to fire department recommendations for our school, there should be no vehicles parked directly in front of the school building or in the back of the building along the curb.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is a requirement of all elementary age students in Alabama. Any long term restrictions for a student's participation in P.E. must be made known to the P.E. teacher with a written verification from a physician. If a student cannot participate in P.E. activities for a brief period of time, send a note to the P.E. teacher for approval.

Reminder: Tennis shoes are required for participation in PE activities.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

HIS is required to inform you of the following: As a parent of a student in a Shelby County school, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teachers, and requires us to give you this information in a timely manner if you ask for it. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers: (a) Whether the Alabama State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades

and subjects he or she teaches; (b) Whether the Alabama State Department of Education decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances; (c) The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees; (d) Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications. You may contact the school principal for information.

All teachers at HIS are certified by the state of Alabama to teach in their respective areas.

REPORT CARDS/Progress Reports

Parents should contact teachers anytime they have concerns regarding their child's progress. Report cards are sent home following each nine week grading period. Progress reports are sent home each quarter between report cards. **Parents also have access to the i-Now portal to check current attendance and grades.**

SNACKS

It is important for students to form healthy lifestyle habits by learning the value of healthy snacks. Healthy snacks include fruits, vegetables, granola or cereal bars, fruit or oatmeal bars, trail mix bars, rice krispies treats, animal crackers, baked chips and pretzels. Please note that candy bars are not allowed for classroom snacks. The recommended guidelines for healthy snacks are as follows: 1 to 1 ½ ounce servings, low or moderate in fat, less than 30 grams of carbohydrate, less than 360 mg of sodium, and a source of nutrient(s) or fiber. Water is the only drink allowed in the classroom. Please encourage your child to form healthy habits by sending only healthy foods for classroom snacks. (These guidelines apply to classroom snacks only and do not apply to snacks brought with sack lunches.)

VISITORS

For the security of staff and students, all visitors must report to the school office (including before and after school). All visitors must sign in and wear a visitor's badge. In order to protect planning time for teachers and instructional time for students, conferences with teachers must be arranged **in advance**, including visits prior to the beginning of the school day. If you need to contact a teacher, send a note or email asking that you be contacted, or contact the school office. If an immediate conference is needed with the teacher due to an emergency, contact an administrator.

WEBSITE

To learn more about Helena Intermediate School, or to contact us, visit us on the internet at our www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/schools/his website. You may also find useful information on our Facebook page!

WITHDRAWALS

Contact the school registrar at (205) 682-5522 in advance of a withdrawal in order for the paper work to be prepared for the last day the student is in attendance at school.