

# Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School Student & Parent Handbook

James A. Dendinger, Principal



<b>School Address:</b>	100 E. Heath St. Baltimore, MD 21230
<b>School Phone:</b>	410-396-1575
<b>School Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/84">www.baltimorecityschools.org/84</a>
<b>School Hours:</b>	Elementary School: 7:45 a.m. – 2:25 p.m. Middle School: 7:45 a.m. – 2:35 p.m.
<b>School Uniform:</b>	Elementary School: Royal Blue Tops/Khaki Bottoms Middle School: Hunter Green Tops/Khaki Bottoms
<b>School Mascot:</b>	Lions

**This Handbook Belongs To:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My Homeroom is:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My Locker Number is:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My Homeroom Teacher is:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School**

100 East Heath Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21230  
410.396.1575 Fax: 410.545.7345  
[www.baltimorecityschools.org/84](http://www.baltimorecityschools.org/84)

James A. Dendinger, Principal

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Dear Parents and Students,

I am pleased to provide you with the Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School Student Handbook. This handbook provides you with valuable information about your school. It includes procedures, policies, and guidelines on topics such as absences, lateness, early dismissals, behavior, the dress code, and many more. It describes many of the rules and policies of Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School and Baltimore City Public Schools.

It is intended that this handbook be read carefully by parents and students together. Both students and parents should become familiar with all of the information in the handbook. Teachers will review the handbook with students periodically throughout the school year.

I wish you an excellent and productive school year!

Sincerely,

James A. Dendinger  
Principal

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# Code of Conduct



Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School is committed to providing an environment where teaching and learning take place every day in a safe and orderly learning environment. In order to accomplish this goal, Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School follows the Baltimore City Public Schools Code of Conduct regarding all school rules. This Code of Conduct is distributed to all students at the beginning of each school year, and both students and parents should be familiar with the code.

A major responsibility of Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School is to promote the growth of young men and women in self-discipline; appreciation of the rights of all people-students and staff; and understanding that responsibilities to others, as well as to oneself, go with these rights.

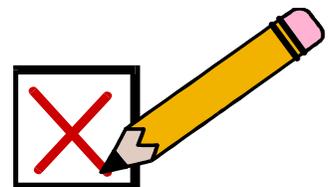
The City Schools Code of Conduct is a guide to behavior that protects the rights and safety of all and promotes a school environment in which students can learn comfortably. The principles behind the City Schools Code of Conduct are the following:

1. I respect others and myself. I am kind and courteous. I demonstrate positive verbal and non-verbal communication and positive behaviors.
2. I am responsible for my behavior and the consequences for my behavior.
3. I come to school on time, focused, and prepared to work.
4. I demonstrate behaviors that promote a clean, safe, and civil learning environment.
5. I respect school property and the property of others.
6. I present myself in appropriate and orderly fashion at all times and in all settings. I demonstrate personal honor and integrity at all times.

## Thomas Johnson School General Rules

1. Respect yourself, peers, adults, materials and property.
2. Be safe.
3. Follow directions.
4. Come prepared to learn.
5. Honor instruction and the learning environment.

## Attendance



No single factor contributes as much to success in school as punctual, daily attendance. Students must make a total commitment to daily and punctual attendance, thereby establishing a pattern of responsible behavior, which will also make them successful in their adult lives. Parents are charged with the responsibility of daily and punctual attendance of their children as required by the law. Parents should understand that grades are negatively affected by habitual poor attendance and lateness, and that poor attendance can result in failing a grade.

## Absence

In the event of an absence, the day the student returns to school, they must bring a note, signed by the parent and dated, stating the reason for the absence. Maryland State Department of Education recommends that students miss no more than 10 days of school in a school year.

Maryland State Law (Section 7-301) requires regular attendance of all students between the ages of five and 16 years old. The parents of students who are unlawfully absent 20 days or more will be referred for attendance hearings and to Baltimore City Truancy Court. These parents are subject to legal fines of \$50.00 per day for each day their child is absent past 20 days and/or imprisonment. The Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School Administration will refer parents to court if their child is absent more than 20 days.

## **Lateness**

Homeroom starts at 7:45 a.m., and students will be marked late if they are not in the classroom by 8:00 a.m. Students who arrive at school after 8:00 a.m. are to sign the late book in the main office and obtain a pass before reporting to class. Lateness adversely affects student and class performance and routine. Students who are late more than two times in a quarter or more than eight times in a school year are not eligible for perfect or good attendance awards and parties.

The bell schedule at Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School is as follows:

### Pre-K – Kindergarten:

7:45 a.m. – Homeroom begins  
2:20 p.m. – Dismissal

### 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade:

7:45 a.m. – Homeroom begins  
2:25 p.m. – Dismissal

### 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade:

7:45 a.m. – Homeroom begins  
2:35 p.m. – Dismissal

A free breakfast program is available from 7:20 a.m. to 7:45 a.m., but is not mandatory. Breakfast will not be available on days that City Schools declares a one or two hour delay due to inclement weather.

## **Bake Sales**

Individual grade levels will host bake sales throughout fall and spring (see monthly calendars for specific dates). Bake sales raise money to help reduce the cost of grade level activities. Parents of the sponsoring grade are asked to volunteer to assist with running the bake sales.

## **Before & After School Policy**

### **Before School Policy**



For your child's safety, please make certain that you have arranged for your child's transportation needs to coincide with the school's entry and dismissal times. Students must remain on the school grounds at all times while waiting to enter the building. Elementary and middle school students will have specified doors for morning entrance. At entry time, students will enter the building promptly and report immediately to their homeroom classes. The breakfast program will only be available in the cafeteria from 7:20 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. The breakfast program will not be available on inclement weather days where there is a delayed opening

### **After School Policy**

At dismissal, students are to meet their parents in front of the building, promptly board the bus, or begin walking home from school. Elementary students waiting for middle school siblings should wait outside the building and not in the middle school wing. Once students have left the building, they will not be permitted to re-enter the building without parental supervision. Loitering on or around school grounds



after dismissal is not permitted. Students are not permitted on the playground after dismissal without supervision (see Playground Safety).

For safety reasons, children must be picked up by parents or guardians promptly at dismissal time. Provisions for students requiring supervision after dismissal can be made through The Ella Bailey Recreation Center or Fitness Fun & Games (FF&G). (See Child Care After School). Supervision is provided for a fee to those children who must stay after their designated dismissal time. Information for FF&G and The Ella Bailey Recreation Center can be obtained in the main office. You can access the Fitness Fun & Games website at [www.fitnessfunandgames.org](http://www.fitnessfunandgames.org). Only students involved in an approved after school program may remain on school grounds after dismissal.

Students who are not regularly picked up by 2:25 p.m. (elementary) or 2:35 p.m. (middle) will be referred to the appropriate agency for support services. School personnel are not available to assume parental supervision after the close of the school day. It is the parents' responsibility to pick up students *promptly* at dismissal.

## Book Bags



Students in grades 6-8 must use clear or netted book bags. Book bags that are not clear or netted must remain in lockers during the school day. Book bags must be small enough to fit inside a locker.

## Bus Use

### Privileges/Responsibilities

Students who are transported to and from Thomas Johnson School by yellow bus or MTA buses are expected to follow specific guidelines. Certain behavior is expected of each child on the bus. Failure to obey the established rules will cause you to lose the right to ride the bus. The rules for bus behavior are listed below:

1. Each student will conduct himself/herself in a courteous manner and follow the instructions of the bus driver.
2. Profanity will not be allowed on the bus.
3. Fighting will not be allowed on the bus and will be punished with a disciplinary removal.
4. Throwing objects on the bus or from the bus windows will not be allowed.
5. Hands and heads must be kept inside the bus.
6. Each student will remain seated while the bus is in motion.
7. Loud talking and yelling are not allowed on the bus.
8. Eating and drinking is not permitted on buses.



### MTA Bus Eligibility

Eligibility for MTA transportation is determined by the Transportation Department. Questions pertaining to eligibility for MTA transportation should be directed to this department.

### MTA Bus Procedures

At the start of the school year, eligible students will be issued an MTA One Card. The One Card can be used on school days throughout the school year. It is similar in size to a credit card. If a student forgets or loses their One Card, they will have to pay \$5 for a replacement.

# Cafeteria



All students in Baltimore City are eligible to receive a free cafeteria lunch every day. If students do not want the lunch that is provided, they may bring their own packed lunch. It is expected that students behave appropriately in the cafeteria, and follow the cafeteria rules and procedures.

## Cafeteria Rules

1. Walk into the cafeteria quietly and sit at assigned tables.
2. Remain seated at all times unless you have been called to line, and you are moving directly to line.
3. Do not throw anything in the cafeteria.
4. Do not take any food that does not belong to you. This includes sharing and trading food.
5. At the end of lunch all tables must be cleared of food and trash. Designated students will pass trash cans from table to table. All other students must remain seated. Each student is responsible for the cleanliness of their table and area.
6. If the administrator or adult in charge gives the quiet signal by raising their hand and saying “Hands up once, hands up twice,” talking and movement must stop *immediately*.
7. Be ready to move quietly, with your teacher, to class when you are called to line at the end of lunchtime.

## Child Care after School

Parents of Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School students have options for extended day child care services after school hours. Parents can enroll their children in Fitness Fun & Games (FF&G) or at The Ella Bailey Recreational Center. These programs have specific fees associated with enrollment, and the agencies should be contacted directly for more information regarding costs, hours, guidelines, etc. FF&G can be contacted at 410-433-2719 or by e-mail at [thomasjohnson@fitnessfunandgames.org](mailto:thomasjohnson@fitnessfunandgames.org). You can view the FF&G website at [www.fitnessfunandgames.org](http://www.fitnessfunandgames.org). The phone number for The Ella Bailey Recreational Center is 410-396-4634. FF&G and The Ella Bailey Recreational Center operate separately from Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School and are a separate entity from Baltimore City Public Schools.

## Classroom Parties



All classroom parties must be coordinated by the classroom teacher. During various occasions throughout the school year, such as holidays, teachers may plan a classroom party. These classroom parties will be announced by teachers and communicated in advance to parents. Parents who would like their child to be excluded from any classroom party, should notify their child’s teacher.

### Guidelines for Classroom Birthday Parties:

1. If a parent/guardian would like to plan a classroom birthday party, arrangements must be made with the classroom teacher in advance. Classroom birthday party activities must be approved by the classroom teacher prior to the planned date. We will not accommodate impromptu birthday celebrations.

2. **All treats must be store purchased and individually wrapped with an ingredient label.** Treats must be approved by the classroom teacher in advance. Parents who do not want their child to accept treats brought in for birthday celebrations must notify their child's teacher.
3. No more than ten minutes will be allotted for classroom birthday celebrations, and these celebrations should occur at the end of the school day.
4. Participation of parents or guardians at classroom birthday parties may not be accommodated depending on classroom instruction and classroom activities.
5. Only the parent or legal guardian is permitted to provide treats for birthday celebrations.
6. Only students in pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are permitted to have classroom birthday parties and bring in treats for birthdays. Classroom birthday parties will not be conducted in middle school.



## Daily Folders

Daily Folders will be sent home every day to provide parents/guardians with a means of communication with teachers. Teachers and school administrators ask that all parents/guardians check Daily Folders every day for communication from the school and for homework assignments. Some of the items that will be sent home in daily folders include, but is not limited to homework assignments, field trip permission slips, letters from teachers, monthly newsletters, report cards, progress reports, etc.



## Delayed Opening

When Baltimore City Public Schools announces a delayed opening due to inclement weather or hazardous conditions the building will generally open on a one or two hour delay. Parents should check the Baltimore City Schools website or local news stations to get the most recent school closings report if they think opening might be delayed. Students will not be admitted into the school prior to a delayed start time, and students will not be supervised outside prior to a delayed start time. For this reason, it is important that parents have a pre-arranged plan of what to do on days when school is delayed as teachers and staff will not be able to accept students who arrive prior to the revised start time. If there is a two hour delay, doors will open at 9:45 a.m. It should also be noted that the breakfast program will not be available on days that there is a delayed opening.

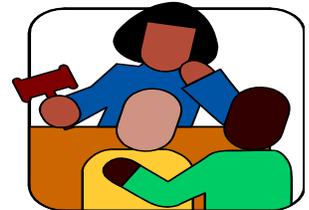
## Discipline Policy

Effective disciplinary policies are critical to the well-being of a school. Every effort will be made to correct disciplinary concerns immediately. When disciplinary infractions occur, there is a continuum of disciplinary actions that will be taken by administration and/or teachers.

In addition to disciplinary actions, Thomas Johnson utilizes the Restorative Practices model to build positive relationships and community and to decrease negative behaviors.

The continuum of disciplinary actions is as follows:

- Loss of privileges
- Lunch detention
- Parent conference
- Administrative after school detention



- Short-term suspension
- Long-term suspension
- Expulsion

Disciplinary action may be taken for infractions that occur in school, on school grounds, in the school community, and on the way to and from school. The following information is a partial list of disciplinary actions that a student may incur for infractions of the discipline code. Please refer to the Baltimore City Public Schools Code of Conduct for additional explanations of rules, policies, and consequences.

### **Loss of Privileges & Lunch Detention**

Students may lose privileges or receive lunch detention for inappropriate behavior or misconduct. Some examples of offenses which may result in loss of privileges or lunch detention are:

- Class disruption
- Not following teacher directions
- Inappropriate behavior in the halls
- Being in the halls without a pass
- Late to class
- Late to school
- Failure to complete homework or classwork

### **Parent Conference & Administrative After School Detention**

Students may receive a parent conference letter or administrative after school detention for a continual pattern of inappropriate behavior or misconduct. Some examples of offenses which may result in a parent conference or administrative detention are:

- Repeated pattern of class disruption
- Repeated pattern of not following teacher directions
- Repeated pattern of inappropriate behavior in the halls
- Repeated pattern of being in the halls without a pass
- Repeated pattern of being late to class
- Repeated pattern of being late to school
- Habitual truancy
- Repeated pattern of failure to complete homework or classwork
- Using a cell phone or electronic devices such as iPods and personal video games
- Using computers/internet/technology inappropriately
- Students who go in “off limits” areas of the building
- Repeated violations of the school uniform policy or the City Schools exclusionary dress code policy
- Cutting class
- Academic dishonesty

### **Short-Term Suspensions**

Students may be suspended from school for up to ten days for serious or continued misconduct. Students who are placed on short-term suspension may not return to school until the administrator who authorized the short-term suspension has a satisfactory conference with the parent or guardian. Some examples of offenses which may result in short-term suspension are:

- Refusal to follow administrator or teacher directives
- Petty theft of student/school property
- Involvement in a fight
- Physical attack on a student
- Fighting on or off school grounds
- False activation of a fire alarm
- Inciting or participating in a disturbance
- Classroom disruption
- Throwing food or other objects in the cafeteria
- Profanity directed towards a staff member or student
- Threatening or aggressive language or gestures directed toward a student
- Disrespect toward a staff member
- Extortion
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Insubordination/defiance towards a staff member
- Refusal to report to detention
- Disruptive behavior during a fire drill
- Harassment based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or religion, including cyber harassment
- Repeated classroom disruption (i.e.: making intentionally disruptive noises, throwing objects, use of profanity, or distracting others)
- Sexual harassment (i.e.: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature)
- Graffiti or destruction of school property
- Gambling
- Trespassing on school grounds
- Bullying
- Misconduct on buses
- Alcohol consumption, possession, distribution, or selling
- Possession of objects that could endanger the safety or health of others or cause disruption to the smooth operation of the school (i.e.: stink bombs, popping string etc.)
- Using a cell phone or electronic communication device to take, share, record, and/or publish inappropriate pictures, videos, or recordings

### **Extended Long-Term Suspension**

An extended long-term suspension is a severe disciplinary action brought about as the result of either extreme inappropriate conduct or a continued pattern of unacceptable behavior. During an extended long-term suspension, the suspended student may not be on school grounds for any reason. Some examples of offenses which may result in extended long-term suspension are:

- Intentionally doing bodily harm to staff member or student
- Threat or aggressive language against a teacher/staff member
- Vandalism/malicious destruction of school property
- Vandalism/malicious destruction of teacher/staff property
- Bomb threat
- Chronic disrespect towards teacher/staff member/other students
- Extortion

- Theft of school property
- Sexual assault/offense

## **Expulsion**

An expulsion is the most serious form of disciplinary action. Expulsions occur as a result of extreme infractions of school and district rules. During the expulsion period, the expelled student is not permitted to attend any City Schools regular day school program. Examples of offenses which may result in an expulsion are:

- Assault on teacher/staff member
- Serious bodily harm to a student or teacher/staff member
- Possession or distribution of drugs or illegal substances
- Possession of any type of weapon and/or weapon look-alike object
- Arson

## **Note on Weapons:**

Baltimore City Public Schools has a rule regarding students who have weapons in school that states the following: Students found in possession of any weapon will be expelled. Students must understand the following:

1. It does not make a difference what kind of weapon is found or why the weapon is in the student's possession. Weapons include, but are not limited to the following: a box-cutter, a penknife; a pocketknife; a knife; brass knuckles; a chain; a pipe; a BB gun; a pellet gun; a starter pistol; a toy gun if it resembles a real gun; a revolver or automatic pistol-loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable.
2. If anyone asks a student to hold a weapon, the student should refuse. The student will be expelled because the weapon is in his or her possession. The person who brings the weapon to school will also be expelled.
3. A student of any age may be expelled for weapons violations.
4. The weapons rule covers all activities that are connected with school. Students will be expelled if they have weapons at athletic games, dances and while traveling to and from school.
5. Miscellaneous items, such as scissors, when used as a weapon will be treated as a weapon violation.

## **Note on Drugs/Medicine:**

1. You do not have the right to use, sell, distribute, possess, or be under the influence of drugs, including alcohol and marijuana, on school property or during school-sponsored activities.
2. The office and school nurse must be notified in writing by your parent or physician, if you are taking medication, or you cease to take medication.
3. You are not allowed to carry any kind of medication with you during the school day. This includes over the counter medications.
4. If a student must take prescribed medication or over the counter medication during school hours, the school office will issue the parent/guardian a "Parent's Request and Authorization to Administer Medication to a Student in School" form, to be completed and signed by the physician and the parent/guardian and returned to the elementary school office.

## **Note on Bullying and Harassment:**

It is the policy of Baltimore City Public Schools to maintain a learning environment that is free from bullying and harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for students to bully or harass other students or staff

through conduct of a sexual nature or conduct designed to reduce dignity of that individual with respect to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, or parental status. Cyber-bullying is included in the City Schools Bullying and Harassment Policy. Violations of this policy will be cause for disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Students who believe they have suffered bullying or harassment shall report such matters in a timely manner to a teacher, counselor, or building administrator.

## **Dogs and Other Pets**

Dogs are not permitted on school grounds. Parents and guardians should not bring dogs onto school grounds when bringing students to school and when picking up students at dismissal. Some children are afraid of dogs, and some dogs can behave unpredictably around crowds of people.

## **Dress Code & Uniform Policy**

1. **All students are *required* to wear the school uniform.** The school uniform consists of khaki pants, skirts, shorts, or jumper worn with a solid royal blue shirt (Pre-K-5) or hunter green shirt (Grades 6-8) such as a polo shirt, buttoned-down collar shirt, sweater, or sweatshirt. These items may be purchased through Allena Graphics at [www.allenagraphics.com](http://www.allenagraphics.com) or at any clothing store.
2. Writing is not permitted on shirts or pants other than approved Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School logos (e.g. ROAR84, Live Well, lion mascot logo, etc.).
3. Uniform shirts may not have patterns such as stripes and polka dots.
4. Sweaters and sweatshirts worn during cold weather must be royal blue or hunter green.
5. Anything worn under the uniform (e.g. layered shirts) should be royal blue, hunter green, or white. For example, a white collared shirt worn under a royal blue or hunter green sweater is acceptable.
6. Outerwear: Coats, jackets, sunglasses, hats, stocking caps, bandanas, scarves, or any other outside clothing may not be worn inside school. Outerwear worn to school must be removed upon entering the building and left in lockers.
7. Clothing that might be considered beachwear or lounge clothing should not be worn to school.
8. Open-toed shoes, flip-flops, and slippers are not permitted. Sandals may only be worn if the sandals are designed with substantial covering over the toe and foot and have a strap around the heel (e.g. Keens).
9. Students may not wear shorts above mid-thigh or mini-skirts (skirts above mid-thigh).
10. Students may not wear see through blouses, or blouses which expose the midriff, halters, sundresses, tank-tops, spaghetti strapped tops, or strapless tops.
11. Students may not wear sweatpants.

12. Students may not wear inappropriately torn clothes to school.
13. Excessive jewelry such as large earrings, large necklaces, and large belts are not permitted. This includes jelly bracelets, silly bands, or other forms of wrist bands. Other accessories that are excessive, brightly colored, or otherwise distracting from the uniform are prohibited.
14. Students improperly attired will be sent to the main office, principal, or assistant principal. Parents will be contacted for a change of clothing to be brought to school.
15. Students are to remain in uniform while they are on school property.
16. The uniform policy will be enforced.

## **Early Dismissals**



### **Early Dismissal by Parent Request**

Please consider planning out-of-school activities such as doctor's appointments or family outings after school hours if at all possible. Students lose valuable instructional time when they leave before the school day has ended; for some students, early departure occurs too regularly. Students who have more than two early dismissals in a quarter or more than eight early dismissals in a school year are not eligible for perfect or good attendance awards and parties.

### **Early Dismissal Procedures**

Students must come to the main office during the homeroom period with a written note from home. Students should have a hall pass from their homeroom teacher before coming to the office. The note from home should contain the following information: student's name, class, reason for request, date and time of requested early dismissal, parent's/guardian's name and a phone number for verification. When the request has been verified, an early dismissal pass will be written and logged in the early dismissal book. The student will be given the early dismissal pass when he/she reports to the office at the indicated time of early dismissal. Students will only be released to parents, guardians, or persons listed on the emergency card unless specified in writing from the guardian in advance. For the safety of our students, no child will be dismissed during the school day without an adult signing her/him out in the main office and showing proper identification.

**\* Early dismissals will not be given between 2:00 and 2:35 p.m.** If early dismissals are necessary, please make arrangements for the early dismissal to occur prior to 2:00 p.m.

**\* If an early dismissal is requested by a parent after a field trip, all of the procedures detailed above still apply in addition to writing a liability waiver.**

### **Purpose of Early Dismissal Procedures**

The purpose of early dismissal procedures is to:

- Ensure the safety of students.
- Protect both the parents and the student from a fine for violation of the regulations pertaining to mandatory school attendance and curfew law.
- To provide a systematic means of communicating with the home and the homeroom teacher when students leave the building before the regular dismissal hour.



## Weather-Related Early Dismissals

When Baltimore City Public Schools are dismissed early due to inclement weather, hazardous conditions, or excessive heat, the building will be closed within thirty minutes after the announced official closing time. Parents should check the Baltimore City Public Schools website or local news stations if they think there may be an early dismissal because of weather conditions. Remember that the MTA does not revise bus schedules during such conditions. It is important that you have a pre-arranged plan of what to do on days when school is dismissed early.

## **Emergency Cards**



It is important that every student has an emergency card on file in the main office. It should reflect *current* information. This is required by law and allows us to communicate with parents in the event of an illness or accident. It is the parent's responsibility to report any change of emergency information immediately. It is critical that the emergency card is signed by a parent or guardian, and that serious medical problems are noted.

## **Field Trips**



Field trips are periodically used to enrich the curriculum. Below are a few notes on field trips:

1. Only students with a signed permission slip may attend field trips. Students must give their permission slips and trip money to the teacher in charge of the trip prior to the date of the trip.
2. Students are to wear their school uniforms on all field trips as a measure of safety and security.
3. Field trips may be designated as merit-based incentives, and students can be excluded from attending field trips as a result of inappropriate behavior.
4. Parents must notify teachers if their child takes medication or has any health or medical needs that may impact field trip participation upon receiving the field trip permission form.
5. Chaperones will be used for field trips. However, parents may be restricted from chaperoning field trips if they are not approved through the school's visitor sign-in system, if they have failed a criminal background check, or if they have behaved inappropriately in school or on a previous field trip.

## Field Trip Chaperone Guidelines and Responsibilities

Parents should be advised that we may not be able to utilize every parent who would like to serve as a chaperone. Teachers will reach out to parents prior to the field trip if they are selected to serve as a chaperone. In order to

help ensure that field trips result in safe and educational experiences for all participants, the following guidelines have been prepared to provide information about volunteering as a field trip chaperone.

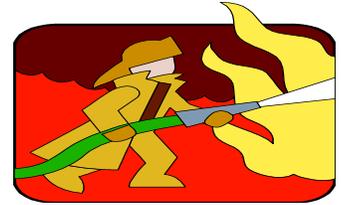
1. Chaperones are expected to comply with City Schools and Thomas Johnson policies, follow the directions given by the coordinating staff member, work cooperatively with other staff and volunteers, and model appropriate behaviors for students.
2. All chaperones must be at least 25 years old.
3. Chaperones may not:
  - Use, sell, provide, possess, or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol
  - Smoke, use tobacco products, or vape
  - Be in possession of any weapon
  - Administer any medications, prescription or nonprescription, to students
4. Students must be supervised at all times while on field trips. Chaperones will supervise a small group of students, helping them learn and making sure they behave appropriately. Students must stay with the chaperone at all times. Chaperones must account for all students regularly and before changing activities. Chaperones must be sure they know when and where to meet the rest of the group at the end of the visit. Chaperones must be readily available, be mindful of safety concerns, and respond to students' needs.
5. Chaperones should work with teachers to support and promote good behavior from students. Chaperones should bring inappropriate behavior to the attention of teachers, but should not issue disciplinary actions or consequences. School rules related to student behavior apply. Chaperones should go over rules and standards of behavior, safety rules, and any site specific rules with students. Chaperones should ensure that students do not get involved in extra activities not pre-approved by teachers and administrators.
6. Eating and drinking are not permitted outside of designated areas and predetermined times.
7. For the protection of both the student and the chaperone, chaperones should not place themselves in situations in which they are alone with a student such as restrooms and locations away from the main areas of the field trip.
8. A chaperone may not bring additional children to the field trip. Additional children can distract a chaperone from their duties as a chaperone, and are not allowed.
9. Chaperones may not transport students in their personal vehicles, including their own children.
10. Chaperones are expected to provide supervision of students to and from the field trip and must remain with assigned students at all times.
11. In the event that more chaperones volunteer than what is needed, a lottery system will be utilized to determine which chaperones will be used.
12. Chaperones must remain on duty for the duration of the field trip and may not leave prior to the end of the field trip.
13. Chaperones should not depart from the field trip early with students, including their own children, in the format of an early dismissal.
14. In the event that more chaperones volunteer than what is needed, a lottery system will be utilized to determine which chaperones will be used. Your child's teacher will contact you if you are selected to be a chaperone.

## **Fire Drills and Other Safety Drills**

Fire drills and other safety drills help students learn what to do if there is an emergency. In addition to fire drills, students will complete lockdown drills, tornado drills, earthquake drills, and evacuation drills periodically throughout the school year. It is critical that students know the procedures for all safety drills.

## Fire Drill Procedures

1. Remain absolutely silent for the duration of the fire drill.
2. When the alarm rings, stop what you are doing and silently get in line.
3. Listen for teacher directions.
4. Walk in line quietly to your assigned emergency assembly area.
5. Stand in the emergency assembly area in silence.
6. Teachers check attendance log to confirm that all students are accounted for.
7. When the signal is given, walk in line silently to return to your classroom.



## **Grading Policy and Homework Policy**



Students and families will receive a syllabus from the teacher highlighting grading practices for the course or grade level. All teachers will use Infinite Campus as their official gradebook and, with the exception of resource classes or when assignments take more than a week to complete, will enter at least one grade per week. Parents and students can track grades using Infinite Campus Parent Portal, which can be accessed by receiving an access code from the main office and visiting [www.baltimorecitypublicschools/campus-portal](http://www.baltimorecitypublicschools/campus-portal).

Grading Components for Core Subjects:

Assessments	
• Formative	50%
• Summative	20%
Classwork	15%
Participation	10%
Homework	5%
Total	100%

Grading Components for special area classes:

Assessments	
• Formative	50%
• Summative	20%
Classwork/Participation	15%
Total	100%

## Grading Components *while in distance learning*:

Assessments	
• Formative	50%
• Summative	20%
Classwork & Participation	30%
Total	100%

Homework provides opportunities for students to reinforce skills, gain a better understanding of the subject matter, and extend their thinking through research and application. Homework helps students hone their work habits and organizational and study skills; it helps them to increase independence and responsibility. In addition, homework connects parents/guardians with what their children are learning in school.

### **General Homework Expectations and Policy**

- Students are expected to complete homework assignments every day. Depending on the students' grade level, home assignments may include research, reviewing vocabulary, studying for tests and quizzes, reading assigned texts/related subject matter, or preparing reports. Primary grade assignments may include handwriting practice, story reading, vocabulary practice, skill worksheets, book reports, etc.
- Teachers will check homework for completion and accuracy. Written homework will be corrected with appropriate feedback given to students according to the lesson design established by the teacher. For example, the work may be self-corrected after correct responses are reviewed in class, peers may correct written work, or the teacher may collect and grade the homework. Teachers may require that students obtain a parent signature on written homework.
- Teaching teams in the upper grades will coordinate the due dates of major assignments, long-term projects, and major tests to avoid a conflicting and excessive work load for students. Long-term assignments will not be due on the day students return from an extended holiday.
- Homework will be factored in as a percentage of the total quarterly grade. Extended projects will also account for a portion of the total quarterly grade.
- Students must put their names on their homework assignments. Students who fail to write their name on papers may not receive credit for the assignment.
- Students are encouraged to attend available coach classes if they need assistance with class work especially after an extended absence.

### **What to Expect if a Student is Absent from School**

#### **Short Term Illness**

- Upon returning from a short-term absence from school (one or two days), the student must obtain missed homework and classwork.
- All make-up work must be completed within two days of returning to school unless other arrangements are made with the teacher. When make-up work has been successfully completed, the student's grades shall reflect the completion of such work.

#### **Extended Illness**

- During an extended illness (three or more days), parents are encouraged to acquire work for their children to complete at home before returning to school. Parents should contact the teacher(s) or

office and allow from 24 to 48 hours for teachers to assemble the work packet. The packet will then be available for the parent to pick up.

- The teacher will determine the due date based on the quantity and nature of work to be completed. When make-up work has been successfully completed, the student's grades shall reflect the completion of such work.

### **Chronic Health Impaired Program (CHIP)**

- Work is requested on the day of absence; the home school teacher will come to the school to obtain the work packet.
- The student is marked present for the day.
- CHIP students must return the CHIP work packet to their teachers upon return to school.
- It is strongly recommended that the parents of students with chronic illnesses apply to this program. The school nurse will assist parents with children who have chronic illnesses with applying to the CHIP program.

### **Family Vacations**

- Vacation is considered by Baltimore City Public Schools to be an unlawful absence from school.
- Teachers are under no obligation to provide advanced or make up homework for families who plan vacations during the school year.
- School administrators and teachers will evaluate the educational merit of certain travel to allow for possible alternate assignments for which students may receive credit in relevant content areas.
- Before planning a family vacation, families should consider the following:
  - More than 10 days of unlawful absences may cause a student to be in danger of repeating the grade.
  - Court referral is submitted after 17 days of unlawful absence.

### **Suspensions**

- If a child is suspended he/she will receive a work packet to be completed during the suspension period.
- Additional make-up work may be required upon return to school.
- The work packet must be completed and the assignments turned in to the teachers the first day upon return from suspension.

### **What to Expect if a Student Fails to Turn in a Home Assignment**

- Students may receive partial or no credit for late homework assignments depending on the nature of the assignment and grade level policy.
- If an assignment is graded in class on the scheduled due date, the teacher may determine if late work will be accepted for partial or no credit.
- Students may miss Fun Friday activities in order to complete missing assignments.
- Failure to turn in homework will result in a lowered total quarterly grade, and puts the student at risk for failing the class.

## Homework Responsibilities/Expectations

### **The Student's Responsibility:**

- Students are expected to complete *all* homework assignments *every* day.
- Students are responsible for completing their homework on time and in the required format.
- Students are responsible for recording all homework assignments in an agenda book and taking home all books and materials necessary to complete the assigned homework. (In the lower elementary grades, students are given assignments in their take-home folders).
- Students are responsible for requesting make-up work when they return to school after an absence.
- In order to increase reading fluency, students are responsible for reading on a daily basis regardless of whether homework is assigned.
- Students are responsible for placing their name on all assignments.
- Students are responsible for attending coach class as needed.



### **The Teacher's Responsibility:**

- Teachers will assign relevant homework that complies with professional standards.
- Teachers will provide criteria when requiring a specific format.
- Teachers will check homework for completion and accuracy.
- Teachers will make available the work the student has missed due to absence.
- Teachers will notify parents if their child is repeatedly not completing homework.

### **The Parent's Responsibility:**

- Parents *must* make homework a priority in the home by *expecting* and *monitoring* that their child completes homework.
- Parents should provide an appropriate work environment.
- If circumstances arise at home which prevent students from completing their homework, parents should send a note to school to explain the reason. Teachers will exercise judgment regarding a possible extension of the due date.
- It is appropriate to assist children with homework when they are getting started and when they have questions. However, parents should promote independence in their children by allowing them to complete homework and projects independently.

## **Honor Roll/Awards Criteria**

Honor Roll and other awards are presented to students quarterly and annually. These are awards of distinction that all students should strive for. Parents are welcomed to attend awards assemblies.

### Awards and Criteria:

#### **High Honor Roll:**

- For Elementary School, "Es" in all subjects
- For Middle School, 90%-100% average and all grades above 90%
- Given each quarter and annually at the end of the school year



**Honor Roll:**

- For Elementary School, “Es” and “Gs” in core subjects (language arts, math, science, social studies) and no more than one “S” in a non-core subject.
- For Middle School, 80%-89% average and all grades above 80%
- Given each quarter and annually at the end of the school year

**Perfect Attendance:**

- Student must be present every day of the quarter with no absences for any reason
- Student must be late no more than two days during the quarter and no more than eight days during the school year.
- Student must have no more than two early dismissals during the quarter and no more than eight early dismissals during the school year.
- Given each quarter and annually at the end of the school year

**Good Attendance:**

- Student may only be absent one day per quarter with no more than four absences per year
- Student must be late no more than two days during the quarter and no more than eight days during the school year.
- Student must have no more than two early dismissals during the quarter and no more than eight early dismissals during the school year.
- Given each quarter and annually at the end of the school year

**Most Improved:**

- For Elementary School, awarded to one student for language arts and to one student for math
- For Middle School, awarded to one student for each of the four core subjects (language arts, math, science, social studies)
- Awarded based on teacher decision
- Given each quarter and annually at the end of the school year

**Citizenship Award:**

- Awarded for overall good behavior and kindness
- Awarded to no more than two students per class
- Awarded based on teacher decision
- Given each quarter and annually at the end of the school year

**100 Book Challenge Recognition:**

- Awarded to top three readers per class
- Given each quarter and annually at the end of the school year

**Effort Award:**

- Awarded for recognition of excellent effort
- Student may not receive high honor roll or honor roll in combination with the Effort Award
- Awarded to no more than two students per class
- Awarded based on teacher decision
- Given each quarter and annually at the end of the school year

# Lockers

Book bags must fit within your locker. All students in grades 4-8 are required to have a combination lock for their locker. Students must provide their homeroom teacher with the combination for their lock. Students and parents/guardians are expected to know their locker combination number. Students should make sure their locker is locked every time it is used, and should not give their locker combination to anyone other than their homeroom teacher. Students must provide their own locks. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.



# Lost and Found

Lost and found for clothing items will be located in the cafeteria. All items of value will be kept in the main office. Students who have lost an item should check the lost and found to see if their possessions have been found. It is suggested that coats, clothing, lunch boxes, and other items are labeled in the event that they are lost. Items not picked up in a reasonable amount of time will be donated to a charitable organization.

# Money at School

Students should not carry extra money to school. Any money that students must bring to school should be carried in a safe place and not shown to others. Parents should be concerned if students come home with extra money found at school, or if items are bought from other students. Students are not allowed to sell items of any kind at school.



# No Smoking

By order of Baltimore City Code, Article 8, Section 807.01, Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School is a tobacco-free school. Smoking is not permitted in the school or anywhere on school grounds. This policy pertains to all school property including the playground and sidewalk area in front of the school. In order to keep our school a healthy place for students, parents must abide by this policy at all times.



# Parent Participation

Parents are always welcome in our school. There are several ways to participate:

- Parents are encouraged to join the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). (See school calendar for dates and times.)
- Parents are encouraged to join the School Family Council. (See school calendar for dates and times.)
- Parents should attend parent-teacher conference consistently. Dates for parent-teacher conferences are scheduled throughout the school year and are noted in the school calendar.
- Parents are invited to attend awards assemblies and school-wide functions throughout the year.
- Parents are welcome to volunteer their services in the cafeteria, at recess, in the classroom, and in the library. Interested volunteers should contact the main office for details on how they can assist. **All volunteers must complete a criminal background check at the Central Office per Baltimore City Public Schools policy.**

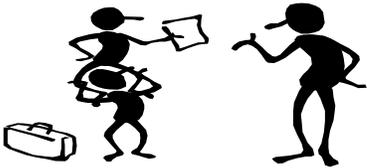
# Parent-Teacher Conferences



Teachers are responsible for the supervision of students and have busy schedules; therefore parents must make an appointment to meet with teachers. Teachers cannot always have impromptu conferences prior to, during school, or at dismissal. Parents are encouraged to contact the main office at 410-396-1575 to schedule a parent-teacher conference. Baltimore City Public Schools offers several scheduled parent-teacher conferences during and after normal school hours.

# Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)

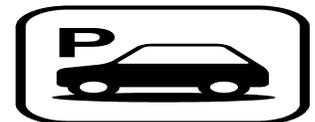
The PTO meets monthly. PTO meeting dates and times are detailed in the school calendar, and notices are sent home in newsletters. This is one of the most important ways that parents can get involved at this school, and all parents are encouraged to be active members. Formal elections for the PTO Executive Board are held every two years. Positions include President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.



# Parent Volunteers

School volunteers are needed in various ways: assisting in the library, helping in the office, photocopying, assisting with special projects or committees, and working with students. Volunteers are utilized at staff request. Respect for confidentiality remains essential in all volunteer roles. All volunteers must complete a criminal background check at the Central Office, per Baltimore City Public Schools policy. *Volunteers do make a difference.* Parents/guardians interested in becoming more involved, should contact the main office at 410-396-1575.

# Parking



## Arrival and Dismissal

1. Parking in the bus lane is prohibited and violators will be ticketed.
2. Double parking is prohibited and violators will be ticketed. Double parking puts the safety of students at risk.
3. The school's parking lot can accommodate only faculty and staff. Cars parked without a TJEMS parking tag will be ticketed or towed.

\* Parents may not smoke on school grounds when dropping off or picking up students. Smoking on school grounds by parents or students is a violation of Baltimore City Law, Article 8, Section 807.01. (See No Smoking).

# Personal Emergencies

**Accidents:** Should a student have an accident while in school, they should tell a teacher or nearest adult. Parents will be called when accidents occur. For this reason, it is very important to have an emergency card on file in the main office.

**Illness:** Should a student become ill in school, they should tell their teacher and will receive a pass to the main office/health suite. Parents will be called and asked to come and pick up ill students. All students who become ill while at school must be picked up by a parent or individual listed on their emergency card.

**Medicine:** Parents must tell the main office and nurse in writing about all medications that a student must take while in school. Documentation from doctors may be required. Students are not allowed to carry any kind of medicine during the school day.

## Playground Safety



Students must play in a manner that is safe and respectful. Football is not a permitted activity on the playground, as it frequently leads to rough play and injury. Students are not permitted to jump off playground equipment that is high off the ground. Students are not permitted to play on playground equipment that is wet, as doing so may result in injury. The school may distribute balls, jump ropes and other playground equipment during the recess period; therefore it is not necessary for students to bring playground equipment to school. When the bell is sounded, students are expected to stop all activities and immediately walk to their designated area to form a line and wait to be escorted into the building.

On occasion, parents have asked if a child could stay inside at recess time. Since there is no supervision within the building at recess time, this is not possible. Under our current staffing model, supervision is *outside* during recess. Be assured we do not hold outdoor recess in very wet or cold weather. In cases where your child's physician has given playground restrictions, please contact the main office.

### Playground Equipment Age Requirements:

Playground equipment has specifications for students based on their age, and the following age regulations must be adhered to: (1) The standard swings are only available to students four years and older. (2) The bucket swing is only available to students two to four years old. (3) The adaptive swing is only available to students two to five years old. (4) The large post and platform structure is only available to students five years and older. (5) The monorail and monkey bars may only be used by students who are six years or older. (6) The small post and platform structure is only available to students ages two to five years. (7) The “turbo tower” is available to students ages five to twelve years. (8) The large fire engine ramp and play structure is only available for students ages three to twelve years.

### Playground Use Before and After School:

Unsupervised play on the playground is prohibited. Students are not permitted to play on the playground prior to the school day. Students may only be on the playground after school dismissal if they are participating in an approved after-school program, or if they are supervised by their parent or legal guardian.

## Prohibited Items

Portable electronic devices, iPods, CD players, laser lights, electronic games, trading cards, communication devices, toys, sunflower seeds, gum, skateboards, scooters, and other problematic items are not to be brought to school. Also, students may not bring skateboards or scooters to school for play or as a means of transportation. Thomas Johnson teachers and administrators will not be held responsible for lost or stolen items that are not permitted in school. Additionally, teachers and administrators are not able to look for or address lost or stolen items that are prohibited in school.

## A Note on Cell Phones:



Cell phones are not to be used during school. The use of cell phones will result in disciplinary action. Cell phones must be turned off and put away while in the school building. Thomas Johnson Elementary Middle School will not be held responsible for lost or stolen cell phones. School personnel will allow students to use the phone in the main office when necessary.

## Report Cards

Formal report cards are sent home four times a year. Progress reports are sent out in the middle of each grading period. Parents or guardians should contact the school if there is an indication that a conference is requested by the teacher. Parents are also encouraged to schedule a conference to discuss any concern that they have. Teachers are not available to discuss grades at entrance and dismissal times.

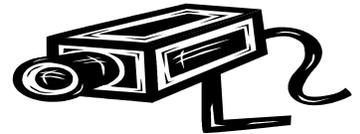


## Restrooms

Students must have a lavatory pass from the classroom teacher to use the lavatory, and must sign the classroom lavatory log. Students should use the facilities as quickly as possible and leave after washing their hands. All students have the responsibility of keeping the restrooms in a clean and orderly condition. Any student found not using the restrooms appropriately will be referred to the office and may receive disciplinary action and be required to make restitution for any damage done.



## Surveillance Camera System



The school building has a surveillance camera system that records visitors and students throughout the school. This surveillance system has the capacity to record people inside and outside the school building, and is monitored by school police at Central Office during and after school hours.



## Telephone Use

Class time is dedicated to student learning; therefore, classroom interruptions, which are not related to the educational program, are kept at an absolute minimum. Office telephones are to be used only in emergencies. They are not to be used to make after school plans. Students should make sure they know who is picking them up after school and where they are to meet them before leaving home in the morning.

If a parent needs to contact a student during the school day, messages will be forwarded to that student. Students should not come to the office and ask to call home for something they have forgotten to bring. Teachers and the main office will make sure that students have what they need. Only in the case of emergencies will telephones be used for personal situations. Only in extreme emergencies will school personnel disturb classroom instruction to call a student out of the room to deliver a phone message. The principal or designee will determine when such an emergency exists and if school support personnel may be required. **Cell phones are never to be used during school. Cell phones must be turned off and put away while in the school building.**

# Textbooks



Individual textbooks issued to students can cost from \$40.00 to \$90.00. It is important that they be used and handled with care. If any student should lose or damage textbooks assigned to him/her, the parent/guardian will be required to replace the textbook or pay the cost of repairing the damage. The principal may withhold books, supplies, student records, and/or report cards if textbooks are lost or damaged and payment is not made.

# Visitors

For security reasons, parents and visitors must enter the building from the front door only. Visitors must ring the doorbell located on the front door for admission into the school. Visitors must provide identification, sign the visitor's log, and obtain a visitor's pass from the main office. Visitors are required to provide state-issued identification cards to main office personnel. Identification cards will be scanned through a screening machine in order for main office personnel to conduct a background check. Only those visitors who are approved through the screening process will be issued a visitor's pass and be permitted in the school. Baltimore City Code Article 24, Section 21, which is posted in the main lobby states, "It shall be unlawful for any person to enter any public school building owned or leased by the City of Baltimore or its agencies without immediately registering at the office of the principal or other designated head of that school." Due to testing schedules, planned classroom activities, and security/safety protocols, parents who would like to observe their child in the classroom should make a request to school administration with at least 24 hours of notice.



Parents are encouraged to visit and confer with teachers and administrators, however parents must make an appointment in advance. After receiving a visitor's pass and reporting to the main office, visitors will be directed to their conference or classroom visit. Teachers cannot be interrupted for conferences during instructional time or during times when they are supervising children.