

**McCONNELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
2023-2024 STUDENT HANDBOOK**



**8629 CAMP COLUMBUS ROAD • HIXSON, TN 37343
Phone: (423) 843-4704 • Fax: (423) 843-4706**

WELCOME TO McCONNELL!

McConnell Elementary School has a talented and experienced staff who enthusiastically work together to ensure an appropriately challenging and positive climate for teaching and learning. Our goal is to celebrate each student as a unique individual and to include each family as an important part of the learning process.

McConnell serves students in grades K-5. Our mascot is the Mustang, and our school colors are blue and gray.

Parents play a very important role in the academic success of each child. As educators, we recognize this role and we strive to work closely with parents to help each student reach their greatest potential. Frequent and open communication with teachers and administrators will help us more successfully meet your child's individual needs.

There are numerous ways for parents to contribute to the overall success at McConnell. Watch for volunteer opportunities to assist with fundraising, special programs, individual classrooms, library assistance, and many more. To share your talents, please contact your child's teacher or the school office and we will be happy to assist you in getting involved to continue making McConnell a great place for children.

Enjoy your year at McConnell. It is truly a great place to be!

McConnell Elementary

VISION

The vision of McConnell Elementary School is to empower creative, critical thinkers who are lifelong learners.

In partnership with parents and community members, we strive for academic excellence.

We foster the development of responsible, caring students, who are prepared to meet the challenges of the present and the future.

MISSION

The mission of McConnell Elementary School is to cultivate compassionate, engaged, problem-solving students.

***"McConnell students have high hopes, high expectations,
and high achievement."***

PARENT/TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The McConnell PTA is a vital part of our school family. PTA programs and activities are designed and directed by parents to enhance the learning environment, assist teachers, and help provide much needed equipment, materials, and supplies for classroom use. Without the involvement and support of parents, we could not provide the quality instructional program now available to our students.

Every parent is urged to become familiar with the PTA, join with other parents in membership, and support its programs and activities throughout the year. The work of the PTA directly benefits your child. Please join!

PTA OFFICERS

Jena Pugh, President

Emily Fant, Vice President

Mystie Swingle, Secretary

Mary Laymon, Treasurer

Holly Delaney, Fundraiser Chairperson

Dana Raines, Membership Chairperson

Heather Teasley, Volunteer Chairperson

Jason Norman, Program Chairperson

Laci Lemons, Marketing Chairperson

McCONNELL ELEMENTARY STAFF

Ruth Pohlman, Principal
Maria Hansen, Assistant Principal

OFFICE STAFF

Tanya Tarver, Secretary
Donnell Howard, Clerical Assistant
Becky Hart, Bookkeeper

KINDERGARTEN

Kristy Bramlett
Madison Davis
Gina Potter
Jeanne Stewart

FIRST GRADE

Heather Greene
Heather Hilliard
Marielle Solis
Erin Thurmond

SECOND GRADE

Allie Chase
Kristin Dotson
Kirsten Elrod
Bethany Price

THIRD GRADE

Chappel Dillingham
Reagan Gibson
Jennifer Leek
Julie Reyes

FOURTH GRADE

Katherine Coppinger
Lauren Enyart
Geoffrey Lee
Josh Young

FIFTH GRADE

Christina Khalili
Julie Spino
Emily Stinnett
Nicole Vitali

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Elijah Alouch, CDC/MH
Taylor Barney, Direct Service/Inclusion
Dana Bridges, Direct Service/Inclusion
Stephanie Turner, Direct Services/Inclusion
Hannah White, Direct Service/Inclusion

Andy Harvey, School Psychologist
Nicole Batta, Speech Therapist
Felicia Bowers, Speech Therapist

Taylor Blanks, Ex Ed Assistant
Tracie Crews, Ex Ed Assistant
Cindy Edwards, Ex Ed Assistant
Laura Long, Ex Ed Assistant

CAFETERIA MANAGER

Tammy Brown

BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Olivia Conway

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Caroline McDonald, Instructional Coach
Laura Hensley, P.E.
Debbie Condry, Library
Jacob Burgess, Music
Jabrina Willard, Computer
Sarah Barnett, School Counselor
Ashley Smithey, RTI Teacher
Emily Giles, Student Support Coach
Lauren Veloz, Social Worker
Lori Denbleyker, Tutor
Carli Kirk, Tutor
Mandy Mullins, Tutor
Madison Sparks, Tutor

SCHOOL NURSE

Lori Rawlins

SCHOOL ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL

McConnell's hours are 8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Students may enter the building at 7:45 a.m. Breakfast is available at this time in the cafeteria. Students should proceed directly to their hallway if they are not eating breakfast.

Cars may not use the LEFT LANE in front of the school until a traffic person signals that it is open for student drop-off. This will ensure the safety of our students.

The tardy bell rings at 8:20 a.m.

Starting the school day on time is very important for students and staff. Please make every effort to get your child here on time each day. **If your child arrives at school after 8:20 please escort your child into the office to pick up a tardy slip.**

A parent note is required if there is a change in the way your child is to go home in the afternoon. When the request involves bus transportation, the note must be signed by the principal and delivered to the bus driver by the child. Teachers cannot allow a student to ride home in a car other than that of the parent or pre-designated carpool without a note. This policy must be enforced for the safety of our children. Please help your child know how he/she is getting home BEFORE coming to school in the morning.

For the safety of our students, no transportation changes will be accepted via phone or Remind. A parent note is required for any transportation changes. Your child should know how he/she is getting home when they come to school.

BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Hamilton County Department of Education provides before and after school child care to accommodate parents who must leave for work before school begins in the morning and who do not get home until after school is out in the afternoon. Parents may sign up at any time during the school year, and in an emergency may use the service as needed. Full day service will be available on days school is not in session (in-service, snow days, winter vacation, etc.). **The hours of operation for this program are from 6:00 AM until 7:45 AM and from 3:15 PM until 6:00 PM.** For more information, please call Shawna Uncapher, SACC Director at 843-4716 between 6:00-8:15 AM and 3:15-6:00 PM.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Should you need to get your child before the end of the school day, please use the following simple procedure:

Should you need to get your child before the end of the school day, please use the following simple procedure:

1. Write a note to your child's teacher indicating the reason for the early dismissal and the approximate time you will arrive to get the child.
2. Upon arrival come directly to the school office to sign your child out. A child will not be dismissed to anyone not listed by you on the registration form/card unless you contact us concerning the change. For the safety of our students we will ask to see identification. Please inform all persons listed on your dismissal card of this policy. Students will not be released to anyone who is not listed as an approved person to dismiss the student.
3. Anyone dismissing a child will wait in the office or lobby area for your child. We will call the child to the office to minimize disruption to the class. **YOU MAY NOT GO TO THE ROOM TO PICK UP THE CHILD.**
4. **Because of the difficulties involved in dismissing our large student body safely and the large amount of traffic, dismissals during the last thirty minutes of the school day will not be permitted unless it is prearranged or in cases of EXTREME emergency.**
5. **Students may not be dismissed when a middle school sibling is dismissed for transportation reasons.** Regulations require a seven hour day for our students. Early dismissals will hinder a student's completion of the school day and may cause the missing of a vital lesson or assignment.

DRESS CODE

Student attitudes are affected by the clothing they wear. Your cooperation is appreciated in using the following guidelines for acceptable attire. **Hats or caps, short shorts (above the end of fingertips), tank shirts, tattered jeans, bare midriffs, spandex biker pants, halter tops, and fishnet shirts are not suitable. All shoes must fasten securely on the foot for the safety of the children (no flip flops, backless clogs or shoe skates). Some advertising, words, pictures, and phrases on clothing are also not acceptable.** The administration reserves the right to add or delete from this dress code in order to maintain a proper educational environment.

BOOKS AND SUPPLY FEES

School textbooks are furnished by Hamilton County. A student is responsible for any books lost or damaged, including any library books. You will also receive a copy of the supply list for your child's grade level. **The \$20 supply fee is used for art, technology, and science and can be paid online. It may be paid in the first month of school or your child's teacher will be happy to work with you about other arrangements.**

SCHOOL PAYMENTS

Separate checks for each child and event should be made payable to McConnell School and turned into the homeroom teacher. Examples may include field trips, fees, and book orders. Outstanding debts for lost books or aftercare charges could result in report card holds.

SCHOOL VISITORS

Visitors are welcome at McConnell. You will need to show a state issued ID before you sign in at the office and secure a visitor badge. Classroom visits must be arranged in advance with the teacher. If you plan to visit your child's classroom, please read the Hamilton County Department of Education Guidelines and adhere to them during your visit. If you need to talk with your child's teacher, please call ahead to schedule an appointment during the teacher's planning time or after school.

Per school board policy 1.501,

Except on occasions, such as school programs, athletic events, open house and similar public events; all visitors will report directly to the school office when entering the school and will sign in via the visitor management system whenever available. Authorization to visit elsewhere in the building or on the school campus will be determined by the principal or designee. Guest passes shall be issued for all persons other than students and employees of the school.

In order to maintain the conditions and atmosphere suitable for learning, no other person shall enter onto the grounds or into the school buildings during the hours of student instruction except students assigned to that school, the staff of the school, parents of students, and other persons with lawful and valid business on the school premises.

Persons who come onto school property shall be under the jurisdiction of the site administrator/designee. Individuals who come onto school property or who contact employees on school or district business are expected to behave accordingly. Specifically, actions that are prohibited include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Cursing and use of obscenities;*
- 2. Disrupting or threatening to disrupt school or office operations;*
- 3. Acting in an unsafe manner that could threaten the health or safety of others;*

4. Verbal or written statements or gestures indicating intent to harm an individual or property; and
5. Physical attacks intended to harm an individual or substantially damage property.

The principal or his/her designee has the authority to exclude from the school premises any persons disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, disturbing the teachers or students on the premises, or on the premises for the purpose of committing an illegal act.

The principal or other appropriate administrators shall engage law enforcement officials when he/she believes the situation warrants such measures. Any administrator who engages law enforcement officials for good cause and in the scope of his/her authority shall be provided a defense and indemnification in the event a complaint is made against the administrator for such action.

TEACHER CONFERENCE

Regular conferences are scheduled during the school year, but your child's teacher will be happy to meet with you at any time. Please be sure to send a note or call if you wish to set up a conference time other than those scheduled county-wide. Teachers are not able to give their full attention to your concerns when they are responsible for other students in the hallways and the classroom. We appreciate you planning ahead to ensure a quality interaction with your child's teacher.

REMIND APP

Please be sure to sign up for your child's teacher's Remind group. The Remind app is used by teachers to communicate with you individually and as a class via text. Teachers can send out school and class events to their entire class group or they can communicate with parents individually. Please ask your child's teacher for their Remind group code in order to join their Remind group.

FOOD SERVICE

McConnell serves breakfast and lunch daily. School breakfast is \$2.00 (30¢ for reduced) and lunch is \$3.00 (40¢ for reduced) for all students. McConnell visitors will be charged \$3.00 for breakfast and \$5.00 for lunch.

Parents may send checks made payable to Hamilton County Food Services and have your child take it to the cafeteria on Monday. Another method to use is the ***MealPayPlus Plan***. This plan allows parents to add money to their child's cafeteria account by making prepayments using your bank account or a credit card. Parents can access this plan through the HCDE website (www.hcde.org). You can search under the lunch menu link.

We realize there are times money is left at home, lost at school, etc., and it is necessary for a child to charge his/her lunch. When this happens, we ask you to pay the next day or as soon as you are notified of the charge. **Lunch charges must not exceed three and must be cleared before the end of each grading period.**

Students **may not** have carbonated beverages in the cafeteria.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Hamilton County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, age, or religion in any of the programs or practices in the school system. A complaint may be filed by anyone who has a grievance regarding discrimination as set forth in one of the following statutes: (1) The Rehabilitation Act of 1972, Section 504; (2) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; or (3) Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. Contact: Sheryl Randolph (423) 209-8654 or Nancy Reed (423) 209-8590.

McCONNELL REGISTRATION FORM

Occasionally it may be necessary to contact parents quickly. Please fill out the McConnell Registration Form and return it to the school by the first day of classes. Emergency information is also kept on file in the clinic. **It is the responsibility of the parent to provide accurate and up-to-date information in case of any emergency.** We ask parents to provide **two** emergency numbers other than the parents. Please provide the following information:

- All contact and emergency numbers must be completed.
- Please complete information concerning persons allowed to pick up your child for any reason.
- Copies of any **custody papers, restraining orders, orders of protection, etc.** which may affect dismissal of your child must be supplied to the school office.

HEALTH SERVICES / MEDICATION POLICY

The clinic is available during the school day. If illness or injury occurs, parents will be notified. The following is an excerpt from the Board of Education Policy Manual:

Non-prescription medication will not be dispensed to students without written orders signed by physician and parent. Administration of prescription medication must comply with the following regulations:

1. A written permission form for prescription medications and over the counter medications will be provided to the school signed by a licensed health care provider and signed by the parent(s).
2. A new permission form must be provided to the school at the beginning of each new school year. The permission form must be updated when there is a change in dosage or time of medication.
3. Medication must be brought to the elementary school clinic by a parent or guardian in the original prescription bottle and refilled in like manner. No medication is to be brought to or from school by the elementary student.
4. All medication will be kept in locked storage boxes.
5. Any unused medication must be picked up by a parent or legal guardian at the end of the school year. Unused medication that is not picked up on or before the last day of school or medication that has expired will be properly disposed of by the school.
6. Prescribed emergency medications to address life-threatening situations must be readily accessible to the student at all times. These may be in the student's possession or in a designated location as is appropriate to the situation (field trips, etc.). Examples of these medications include, but are not necessarily limited to, asthma inhalers, epic-pens, glucose tablets, etc.
7. The school system retains the right to reject requests for administering medication that are not in compliance with the above guidelines.

The school cannot remove splinters or ticks nor treat old wounds or cuts or diseases such as impetigo, poison oak, or pinkeye.

FEVER POLICY: Children should be kept at home any time they are running a fever.

LICE POLICY: If a student is positive for head lice, the student is to be given an information letter for the parents regarding treatment and control measures. The student does **not** have to be sent home. The student must return to school with either a 1) receipt of purchase of lice medication, or 2) a box top, or 3) an empty bottle as proof of treatment.

STUDENT CONDUCT

We believe students must exercise self-control while at school. To ensure appropriate behavior, the staff and faculty at McConnell use positive disciplinary measures to recognize and reinforce responsible and considerate student behavior. Students need to respect others, both students and adults, as well as school property at all times. Students may not prevent teachers from teaching or prevent other students from learning. In accordance with School Board Policy 6.304 - **Student Discrimination/Harassment/ Hazing and Bullying/Intimidation:**

The Hamilton County Board of Education expects all students to treat each other with civility and respect and not to engage in behavior that is disruptive or violent. Hamilton County students are expected to behave in a way that does not interrupt the education of other students. This policy addresses conduct taking place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or at any official school bus stop immediately before boarding and immediately following deboarding.1 This policy also addresses any conduct taking place off of school property or outside of the school sponsored activity if this conduct is directed at a specific student or students and has the effect of either creating a hostile educational environment or substantially disrupting the educational environment or learning process.

The Hamilton County Board of Education will not tolerate acts of discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, hazing, bullying, or cyber-bullying toward students by other students or staff. In addition, the Board of Education will not tolerate conduct aimed at defining a student in a sexual manner, and conduct impugning the character of a student based on allegations of sexual promiscuity.

Bullying, Cyber-Bullying, and Hazing

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully or haze another student whether directly, through a third party, or through the use of electronic devices such as text messages or posts on social media sites.

For purposes of this policy, bullying includes any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance. If the act occurs on school grounds, on a school sponsored activity, on school sponsored transportation or at a school designated bus stop, it is bullying if it has the effect of harming a student or damaging his or her property; knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student or to his or her property; causing emotional distress to the student; or creating a hostile educational environment. If the act occurs off school property or outside of any school sponsored activity, it is nevertheless bullying if it is directed at a specific student or students and has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or a substantial disruption to the educational environment or the learning process.

Cyber-bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets, as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples may include inappropriate text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social network sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Hazing is any act intended or reasonably expected to endanger the physical or mental health of a student or students, or to humiliate, intimidate or demean a student or students in connection with joining or maintaining membership in any team or organization affiliated with any school or school program.

What is Bullying?

A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.

This definition includes three important components:

1. Bullying is an aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.
2. Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
3. Bullying involves an imbalance of power and strength.

Bullying is addressed in a separate McConnell Elementary Olweus Bullying Prevention brochure that was included in your registration packet. The *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* is a best practice strategy utilized throughout the TDOE and implemented in our school. The three main goals of OBPP are:

- Reducing existing bullying problems among students
- Preventing the development of new bullying problems
- Achieving better peer relations at school

Please reference the [McConnell brochure](#) detailed information about bullying policies and procedures for dealing with bullying behaviors. The privacy and anonymity of all parties and witnesses to complaints will be respected.

Hamilton County Department of Education
3074 Hickory Valley Road
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
(423) 498-7020

ZERO TOLERANCE • DISCIPLINE VIOLATIONS

In accordance with Tennessee State Law and/or the policies of the Hamilton County School Board, the following will result in an expulsion of **more than ten (10) school days**:

1. Possession, Use or Distribution of Illegal Drugs
2. Possession of Firearm
3. Possession of Explosive, Incendiary Device
4. Assault of Teacher, Staff or School Resource Officer
5. Aggravated assault of teacher or staff
6. Threats of mass violence (new legislation as of July 1, 2023)

The above includes possession on school property, a school bus or a school-sponsored activity and may be reported to local law enforcement officials.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Hamilton County Board of Education believes in the establishment of a tradition of regular school attendance for each student. This establishes the first step toward a successful academic career culminating in a high school diploma and is an essential concept to learn for the job market.

RECORDING

The Hamilton County Department of Education has a state approved system for maintaining attendance records for each student enrolled in the district.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

- 1. Personal Illness:** Students are excused who are sick and whose attendance would be detrimental to their health and the health of other students. A physician's statement may be required.
- 2. Death in Immediate Family:** Students may be excused for three (3) days in the event of a death in their immediate families including mother, father, stepparent, brother, sister or grandparent. Extenuating circumstances may require a longer period of excused absence.
- 3. Family Illness:** Students having an illness in the family which requires them to give temporary help will be excused from attendance after receipt of a physician's statement concerning the necessity of the student's assistance.
- 4. Religious Holiday:** Students shall be excused on special or recognized religious holidays regularly observed by that particular faith. Prior approval is required should these days occur while school is in session.
- 5. Personal:** Students who are absent for a good cause such as a doctor or dental appointment which cannot be scheduled at times other than school hours, court appearances, etc. may be excused upon proof of appointment. Prior approval by parent or guardian and the principal or his designee is required.
- 6. Approved School Sponsored Activities:** Students shall be marked present when participating in a school sponsored activity away from the school building.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

The law requires that school officials report to the court and parent/guardian of a child who is unlawfully absent from school for any five (5) days during the school year (this means an aggregate of five (5) days) without adequate excuse. When a student reaches five (5) unexcused absences, the school will notify the parent/guardian that their child must attend school on a regular basis by mailing the Attendance Notification Letter. After ten (10) days absence without adequate excuse, a student is referred to the school social worker. If the child continues to accrue unexcused absences after the referral, a legal notice will be mailed by the school social worker.

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCES

By law students are allowed five (5) unexcused absences per school year. HCDE will allow parent excuses to serve as documentation for three (3) additional personal illness days. After the five (5) unexcused days and the three additional personal illness days, parents must provide medical services documentation for the following: personal illness, family illness, or personal (as defined above). To avoid student absences being recorded as unexcused, a written statement signed and dated by the parent or guardian and any medical documentation should be presented to the appropriate school official within five (5) days of the student returning to school.

Dismissals: Early dismissals will be recorded as absences on report cards and for awarding perfect attendance certificates when the accumulated times exceed one-half day. A request to have a student excused from class early should be sent with the student the morning of the dismissal. The time and reason for leaving should be included. When possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

The state of Tennessee considers a student chronically absent if they miss 10% or more of school. Chronic absenteeism includes both excused and unexcused absences. From the TDOE website on Chronic Absenteeism: *Chronic absenteeism, which is defined as a student missing 10 percent or more of the days the student is enrolled - for any reason, including excused absences and out-of-school suspensions. Excessive absences from school represent lost instructional time for a student.* [Click here](#) for more information from the TN Dept. of Education.

HCDE TRUANCY TIERS

After 3 unexcused (UNX) absences, parents will receive a call to inform parents that their child has now accrued 3 unexcused (UNX) absences. This is an automated and scripted call that will come from the school.

Tier 1 Intervention - At 5 unexcused (UNX) absences, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian requesting a formal meeting with the Assistant Principal or her designee. At this meeting a contract will be signed which outlines the HCDE attendance policy, expectations, steps before court, etc.

Tier 2 Intervention - At 8-10 unexcused (UNX) absences, a referral will be made to the school social worker. The social worker will send a legal notice with a request for a meeting with the parent/guardian. A needs assessment will be completed by the social worker with the family at this meeting. If the parent/guardian refuses to meet or does not meet by the deadline, they will automatically be referred to the Tier 3 Truancy Board.

Tier 3 intervention - At 10+ unexcused (UNX) absences, a certified letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian to attend the truancy board meeting. Parents/guardians must attend this meeting in order to avoid a court petition.

IN ORDER TO AVOID THE TRUANCY TIERS LISTED ABOVE, PLEASE TURN IN ALL DOCTOR AND PARENT NOTES AS SOON AS YOUR CHILD RETURNS TO SCHOOL.

SCHOOL SAFETY PATROL

Members are chosen from the 5th grade. They assist in the halls and in front of the school during arrival and dismissal only. Any reports of fellow students are turned in to the office for follow-up. (Members will be rotated each semester.)

STUDENT DELIVERIES/INVITATIONS

Deliveries to students will not be accepted for any occasion (flowers, balloons, etc.). Invitations to private birthday parties may be distributed in a classroom if the entire class is invited. When only a portion of the group is involved, however, invitations should be mailed to avoid the issue of inclusion/exclusion at school.

MAKE-UP WORK

Each elementary school will accept make-up work incurred for assignments missed during absences according to the following:

1. **Make-up work for all absences shall receive full credit.**
2. Specific make-up work and assignments will be determined by the classroom teacher.
3. Make-up work must be completed within five school days of the absence. Teachers may provide additional time if necessary.
4. Teachers and parents are encouraged to communicate about the specific make-up work assignments.

VISITOR LUNCH TABLE

We welcome parents/guests to join their child for lunch once a week. To ensure we have a seat available for you and your student, we ask that you make arrangements with the classroom teacher at least 24 hours prior to a lunch visit. You will need to sign in at the office and show a state issued ID. We will provide a special table for **parents and their students only (no friends)** to enjoy lunch together. Friends are not permitted at the parent/student lunch table. Students with guests for lunch will be required to remain in the cafeteria until the end of the lunch period when students will be dismissed to join their class. We request parents/guests not follow their child to the classroom and instead go directly to the front doors to exit. No outside food (fast food) will be allowed to be brought in when parents come to eat lunch.

CELL PHONES & SMART WATCHES - New Board Policy in 2023

We discourage students from bringing cell phones and smart watches to school. **If a student has a cell phone or smart watch at school, it must be kept in their backpack and powered off at all times while at school.** McConnell Elementary is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones or smart watches. Cell phones and smart watches will be taken up by the teacher if they are not in the backpack and powered off. Parents will be called to retrieve cell phones and smart watches that are taken up by the teacher.

TRANSPORTATION

Remember, riding the bus is a privilege, not a right.

For a safe and enjoyable ride to and from school, children should be reminded frequently about good behavior on the bus. Bus Discipline guidelines will be given to each student who is a bus rider at the beginning of the school year. This sheet outlines all the rules, regulations, and disciplinary actions that may be taken in regard to bus behavior. Parents need to sign and return a detachable memo to verify their awareness of the guidelines. Bus referrals for unacceptable conduct are filled out by the bus drivers and given to the principal for determination of penalty. Penalties may include conference with the principal, in-school suspension or removal from the bus. A copy of the referral is sent to the parent and the Director of Transportation at the Hamilton County Department of Education.

Since transportation services are not available to out-of-zone children, every effort should be made by the parents to ensure the integrity of the learning environment. Situations that disrupt the learning process (tardiness, early dismissals, absences, behavior problems) will be evaluated and addressed on an individual basis during the school year. Enrollment will be denied in those cases failing to address the concerns which impact the education of other children. Transportation Department (423) 498-5555.

CAR RIDERS

McConnell is dedicated to ensuring the safety of each of our students. Car riders remain in the building in their designated areas until their names are called for dismissal. **A teacher begins calling student names from the car rider line beginning at the mailbox. Having your car rider sign prominently displayed so the teacher can quickly read your child's name will expedite this process. If you have forgotten your car rider sign, you will need to park, ring the bell at the front door, and wait for office personnel to check your ID.** Hanging your car sign from the visor is a good way to be sure the name is visible. Please leave your sign in view until you have received your child.

Two lines from Camp Columbus Road enter the drive in front of the school and one line enters from Hixson Pike. When these three lines meet, they need to merge. A staff member will work with these lines to assist with the

process whenever possible, but we ask that parents give consideration to safety and equity as these lines merge.

Some parents choose to arrive a bit later so as to get through the pick-up process more quickly. Working together, we can help our children travel to their cars and arrive home safely.

SEARCHES OF STUDENTS/LOCKERS, ETC.

Students and their possessions, lockers, etc., may be searched by school officials if illegal articles or activities are suspected.