

R. C. Edwards Middle School

Student Handbook



Mr. Thomas Preisig

Principal

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Assistant Principals

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Equal Opportunity In Programs and Activities

Federal law prohibits discrimination under programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. The statutes listed below are applicable to Edwards Middle School and provide in part:

TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of , or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of , or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

“No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States shall...solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Edwards Middle School conducts its programs and activities involving admission and treatment of students, employment, teaching, research, and public service in a nondiscriminatory manner as prescribed by Federal law and regulation.

Inquiries concerning the above may be addressed to:

School District of Pickens County
1348 Griffin Mill Road
Easley, South Carolina 29640

R. C. Edwards Middle School
1157 Madden Bridge Rd.
Central, South Carolina 29630

R. C. Edwards Middle School

Mission Statement

R. C. Edwards Middle School,
with the student, family, and community,
will promote high standards of academic achievement,
personal achievement, and career preparation,
in a safe environment.

Principal's Message

Welcome to R.C. Edwards Middle School!

I've enjoyed meeting and spending time with our rising 6th graders and can't wait to have them on campus with our 7th and 8th graders. In addition to our wonderful students, we have added several very talented teachers to our exemplary faculty. Our faculty, staff, students, and families make Edwards Middle School one of the top performing schools in the state. Together, our goal is to foster a love for learning while preparing our students to be successful in high school.

Thomas Preisig
Principal

GENERAL INFORMATION

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential if students are to be successful in school. Absences can be a major cause of learning difficulties in school. Every student enrolled in the Pickens County School District is expected to attend school regularly.

Conditions under which a student's absence shall be excused are:

1. Student's personal illness (a Physician's statement may be required).
2. Illness in the family requiring temporary help from the student (a physician's statement may be required).
3. DHEC exclusionary requirements.
4. Death in the immediate family (not more than five days shall be excused).
5. Observance of religious holidays.
6. Absence due to a school approved activity.

Any student absent more than 10 days in the school year (180 days), except when such absences are excused by the District Board of Trustees designee, may not be promoted at the close of the school year. Every student must bring a note or doctor's statement within three days of returning to school. Once a student has three consecutive unexcused absences or five cumulative unexcused absences, a meeting must be held with the student, his or her parent and the School Intervention Specialist. Further unexcused absences by the student will result in a referral to the district attendance office. A doctor's excuse is required after a student has accumulated a total of 10 absences – excused or unexcused.

Hall Passes

Students are not permitted in the halls during class time unless the student has in his or her possession a written hall pass, has signed out using the digital hall pass, or is accompanied by a teacher, staff member, or administrator.

Tardies

If a student is late to class without a pass they will be marked tardy. If a student accumulates 3 tardies in nine weeks they will receive a lunch detention. Each tardy after that will result in lunch detention until the 6th tardy is accumulated the student will receive a half day of In School Suspension and will be put on our DO NOT ROAM list.

Early Arrival

Students may begin entering the building at 8:00 AM and will report directly to their first period class. Students of school district employees may drop off at 7:30, with prior permission. If students need breakfast they will report directly to the cafeteria.

School supervision of students begins at 8:00 AM and ends at 3:40 PM. Therefore, students should not arrive before 8:00 AM each morning, and all students must be picked up by 3:40 PM each afternoon. Students are not allowed to congregate in hallways before school begins. Furthermore, students should only be reporting to their 1st period classes before the school day begins, unless under the direct supervision of an administrator, faculty, or staff. Students found in violation of these procedures could face disciplinary action.

Late Arrival / Early Dismissal

Arriving Late

Students arriving at school after 8:30 AM are considered tardy. Students arriving after 8:30 must have a parent sign them in and receive a pass from the office before reporting to class. Failure to obtain a pass and properly sign in will result in disciplinary action.

Students who need to leave school early due to sickness or other reasons deemed necessary by their parents or guardians will use the following procedure:

1. Parent or person picking the student up must come into the office and sign the student out of school.
2. The school will not be responsible for the student after they have been signed-out,
3. Anyone other than a parent or legal guardian **must** be listed on the student's sign-out sheet in order to be able to sign-out the student.

Health Room and Medicine

The Health Room is located in the main office and is staffed by a registered nurse. The nurse will evaluate all students who become ill or need medical attention and will contact parents when a student needs to leave school due to illness or injury. **Please note that visits to the nurses office will be limited to emergency situations only.**

Adherence to local school district policies is required for the safe and effective dispensing of medications. Protocols are established for administering emergency medication for acute allergic reactions and dispensing of over-the-counter medications. They are as follows:

1. **All medication must be sent to school in its original container. No exceptions will be made.**
2. If a parent sends medication to school along with written instructions, but has not completed the School District of Pickens County Medication Permit, designated school personnel or the school nurse may give the medicine as directed **only** on that day.

3. The parent must complete a Medication Permit for succeeding days when more of the same medicine is to be administered.
4. All prescription medication brought to Edwards Middle School will be counted and recorded. No controlled medication (for example Ritalin or Dexedrine, etc.) will be sent home with students.
5. No Tylenol, Pepto Bismol , or OTC (over-the-counter) drugs are given unless the child brings this medicine from home and has on file a Medication Permit completed by the parent or guardian.

Visitors

ALL visitors to R. C. Edwards Middle School must report to the office after being allowed to enter through the secure front entrance. Ring the button on the far right door and an office attendant will buzz you in after asking for the reason you are at our school. Once in the office you will be signed in on our computer and given a name tag to wear during your visit.

Messages To Students

The office staff will not carry messages to students during class except in the case of an extreme emergency.

Solicitations

Students are not to sell or promote items unless permission is granted by the administration.

Fire Drills

In case of a fire or other emergency, the signal to evacuate the building will be a continuous sounding of the fire alarm.

Respect for School and Personal Property

Students defacing or damaging school equipment or property of others in any way, will be required to clean the article and / or pay for damages done. The law specifically provides that parents and students are responsible.

Dismissal at the End of School

We will begin dismissal procedures at 3:15 PM. Car Riders will be dismissed to areas outside. Buses will be dismissed over the PA.

Bus Transportation Reminders

Students will be required to ride on their assigned bus; **riding a bus to another student's home will not be allowed without a signed parent note and a phone communication. For extenuating circumstances please contact the school.**

Bus Discipline

The principal of the attending school or his designee is responsible for school bus discipline. However, each student must **obey the bus driver at all times while under his / her supervision.** The driver may not remove a student from the bus without the approval of the principal or his designee, unless the student's behavior is a threat to the safety of other students on the bus. In this case, the driver is instructed to stop the bus and call his / her supervisor. The driver must report all violations of safety regulations as well as any behavior problems to the school principal or his designee.

The administration has the authority to deny any general education student the privilege of riding a school bus.

Breakfast

All students have the opportunity to eat breakfast on campus if they choose. Breakfast is served in the cafeteria each morning before school starts.

Lunch

All lunches are free for students the upcoming school year. Lunch money can be added through MySchoolBucks or turned in to homeroom teacher. A la carte items or second meals will come with a charge. **Students will not be allowed to charge meals.**

Lost and Found

There is a space in the cafeteria for articles of clothing and personal items which are lost and have been turned in. Please report any lost or found items to the office personnel. Every effort will be made to relocate and return your property.

Conferences

Any parent who wishes to arrange a conference with their child's teachers should contact the guidance office. One of our counselors will schedule a conference at a convenient time for the teachers and parents.

Media Center

The Media Center offers an excellent collection of materials for students to use for class assignments, research work, and general reading. Those materials include books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, recordings, pictures, and computers. If a student is absent on the day his/her book is due, he/she will not be fined if he/she returns the book on the first day back from an absence.

Guidance

The purpose of guidance services is to assist students and parents with educational, vocational, or personal problems. Counselors will meet with students and/or parents individually or in small groups.

Computer Use

Tech It Home Overview

All 6th- 8th grade students will be issued a ChromeBook. Students will do their work and access many of their textbooks through the device. In order for your child to receive their device the following must be done:

1. **Recommended: Parents read the Tech It Home Handbook and view the Tech It Home Parent Guide (Middle).**
2. **Recommended: Students read the Tech It Home Handbook and Tech It Home Student Guide.**
3. **Required: Parents and students sign the Tech It Home User Agreement Plan, agreeing to the terms and conditions. The agreement is part of the registration gateway process.**
4. **Required: Pay the yearly \$25 insurance fee payable through MySchoolBucks**

Students and parents are asked to become familiar with the School District of Pickens County's computer usage policy located in the School District of Pickens County's **2025-2026 Back To School Handbook**, which you may obtain upon request. Strict policies govern the use of computers located anywhere on school property.

Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

Any student who feels that he or she has been the victim of harassment (including sexual harassment), intimidation, or bullying is encouraged to report the matter to an adult in building. **All** allegations will be promptly investigated and addressed.

Abusive language between or among students is not allowed (including but not limited to language focused on age, race, religion, color, national origin, disability, but may also include

physical characteristics (e.g. height, weight, complexion), cultural background, or socioeconomic status).

Discipline Philosophy

Expected behavior at R.C. Edwards Middle School is different from expected behavior in elementary school. Middle School students are given more freedom; however, along with freedom comes more responsibility.

The Consequences for Failure to Follow Rules Will Be:

1. Student warned by the teacher.
2. Parent contact made by the teacher.
3. Admin conference with the student.
4. Office referral.

Steps in the above sequence may be skipped if the inappropriate behavior is determined to be severe enough to do so.

Discipline

The extent of discipline in any situation will depend upon such factors as the seriousness of the infraction, total number of offenses, repeated offenses, and if prior warning was given to the student.

Levels of punishment range from lunch detention, In-School Suspension, Out-of-School Suspension, and in the most extreme cases expulsion.

Dress Code

Moderation and modesty should govern student dress. Therefore, students will follow these rules in middle and high school programs in SDPC. The dress code effective for the school year is:

1. Provocative and suggestive clothing is not permitted (tight-fitting, plunging necklines, etc.)
2. Garments worn on the legs (pants, shorts, skirts, dresses, etc...) must have a length within one inch of the top of the knee; with no holes or slits above this line. No sagging pants are allowed.
3. Bare midriffs will not be permitted. The standard used will be that no midriff is visible when the student is engaged in normal movement such as walking, sitting down, standing up, bending over, etc....

4. Any sleeveless garment must have width on the shoulder area of at least four (4) of the student's fingers, and the arm opening should fit the body closely enough to cover the underarm and the side of the chest area.
5. Mesh or see-through garments are permitted only if a legal garment is visible underneath.
6. Underwear should not be seen at any time.
7. Sleepwear is not allowed. This includes bedroom slippers.
8. Shoes or sandals must be worn.
9. Headwear (hats, sunglasses, bandannas, etc...) is not to be worn inside any of the buildings.
10. Hair rollers are not allowed.
11. Face painting and masks are not allowed.
12. No clothing, accessory, or visible tattoo that displays inappropriate language or images (profanity, sexual suggestion / insinuation, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, ethnic slurs, slogans / symbols that may lead to disorder, etc.) is allowed.
13. Chains or other articles hanging from clothing are not allowed, as well as items that have potential to cause harm to one's self or to others.
14. Attire, colors, visible tattoos, or symbols related to gangs are not allowed.

A principal may make an exception to these rules for medical or religious situations or for school spirit or curricular activities. A principal has the authority to judge student dress situations not specifically listed in this regulation as a violation if the situation has potential to disrupt the education process or environment.

First Offense

The student will have to correct the violation before given permission to return to class. The student will be given a formal warning that will be documented (not permanent record).

Second and Subsequent Offenses

The student will have to correct the violation before given permission to return to class. The student will be considered disobedient and an appropriate disciplinary consequence will be assigned based on the context of this situation in the student's discipline record for the year.

Electronic Devices

Headphones in hallways and electronic gaming devices are prohibited on school grounds unless approved by the administration. If the electronic equipment is visible it will be confiscated.

Cell Phones

It is South Carolina state law that cell phones be turned off and stored out of sight during school hours. Those hours are between 8:00am and 3:20pm. Stored out of sight means in pockets, bags, backpacks, etc.

First Offense

Confiscation of the device; and, after a conference with the parent / legal guardian, the device will be returned to the adult.

Second Offense

Confiscation of the device; and, after a conference with the parent / legal guardian, the device will be returned to the adult after 14 calendar days.

Third Offense

Confiscation of the device; and after a conference with the parent / legal guardian, the device will be returned to the adult after 60 calendar days.

Fourth and subsequent offenses

Confiscation of the device, and the device will be returned at the end of the school year.

Also, school personnel and / or the school district are not responsible for the loss or damage of any cell phone brought on school property or buses.

This handbook does not include all the District rules, regulations, and policies which govern students in Pickens County.