Goza Middle School

140 Badger Lane
Arkadelphia, AR 71923

Parent & Student Handbook 2026-2027

Goza Middle School

MISSION STATEMENT

We will ENGAGE, EDUCATE, and EMPOWER all students to excel.

VISION STATEMENT

We envision a school where students, parents, and guardians are in partnership with staff to provide an academic environment promoting success.

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

ENGAGE

- Be a positive, contributing member of my collaborative team.
- Focus on the whole person's well-being -- academically, socially, and emotionally.
- Provide parents and guardians with resources to empower student success.

EDUCATE

- Implement guaranteed and viable standards.
- Implement common formative assessments aligned to essential standards.
- Staying current and improving our instructional strategies.

EMPOWER

- Celebrate the success of staff and students.
- Give more voice and choice.

Goza Middle School Teachers/Staff

Tisha Hunter, Principal		John Bagby, Assistant Principal	
Haley Loy Secretary	Susan Looney Bookkeeper/Secretary	Della Miller Instructional Facilitator	Griffin Pritchard Library Media Specialist
Zina Bailey Registrar	Cheryl Hilser Counselor	Misti Dixon GT/AP Coordinator, 6-8	Anna-Mae Wyatt GT Teacher, 5th
5th Grade Team	**6th Grade Team**	**7th Grade Team**	**8th Grade Team**
Team Leader, **Adason Thorton** Austin Hollis Anissa Middleton Cameron Galliher Lesa Simpson Jamie Rusher, Inclusion	**Team Leader,** **Hallie Unruh** Alison Carter Gannon Arnold Jalisa Bowers Misty Smith Dan Dawson, Inclusion	**7/8 Team Leaders,** **Michael Ankton/Whittle** LaKesha Berry Richard Resnick Juliann Reaper Ashley Whittle- **Science** Rebecca Ivy, Inclusion	**7/8 Team Leader,** **Richard Resnick-Math** Anita Malcom Kelly Rogers-**Leader CTE** Chad Floyd Kanesseia Hall Taylor Stamps, Inclusion

Special Education - Self-Contained

Karen Nelson-Ford (R.I.S.E.) Teacher ♦ Paraprofesionals: Anthony Jenkins & Tia Jackson
Jason Freeman, Resource Teacher ♦ Kamryn Thorne & Tanner Hill (Paraprofessionals)

Dyslexia Interventionist District Coordinator: Jodie Daniell

Joan Crowder (Reading & Dyslexia Teacher) ♦ Celina Campbell (Dyselxia Paraprofessional)

Fine Arts

Larry Brown, Head Band Director ♦ Lindsey Points , Asst. Band Director ♦ Jacob Happy, Asst. Band Director
Aaron McCain, Choir ♦ Jozie Burson, Art

Athletics/PE/Health/JROTC Instructors

Jayden Williams ♦ Kaylin Kauffman♦ Savannah Whitaker ♦ Dalton Alexander III ♦ Gannon Arnold ♦ DeQuan Talley ♦ Paige Rabb ♦ JaMerrick Waller ♦ Denzel Walter ♦ Caleb Loe ♦ Sgt. Robert Parsons ♦ Col. Jeffrey Ward

Resource/Health & Wellness Support

School Resource Officer, Ryan Kluever ♦ Maci Jones, Nurse

Custodial Maintenance

Shawn Russell ♦ Cletis Knox ♦ Brenda Williams

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students,

Thank you for taking the time to acknowledge and read the Goza Middle School Parent/Student Handbook. This partnership is crucial for promoting your child's success and fostering a positive learning environment.

"By signing this document, I acknowledge receiving or downloading a copy of the GMS Parent/Student Handbook. I promise to read its contents with my student and agree to act according to the Policies, Procedures, and Expectations it contains."

A.C.A. § 6-18-502 (d) (e) requires school districts to advise and provide written notification to parents and students of the district's student discipline policies. Act 104 also requires your documentation of the receipt of these policies. Please sign and return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible. Your signatures do not indicate your agreement with the policies – only that you have received them.

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Signature *Date*

_____ _____

Student Name *Date*

Dear Badger Family,

Welcome to Goza Middle School,

These years are exciting yet challenging, marked by a remarkable transition from adolescence to young adulthood. Middle school students undergo significant changes in their emotional, physical, social, and intellectual development. Goza Middle School is not only an essential time in your child's life but also in yours. We hope this handbook will serve as a valuable resource for understanding who we are and how we operate day to day.

We can offer every child the highest quality education by working together as partners. Our mission is to Engage, Educate, and Empower all students to Excel.

As part of our Capturing Kids' Hearts campus initiative, we strive to build strong relationships with students and their families to foster academic success. We look forward to fostering a collaborative partnership that strengthens our children and the community.

We are ready to start a great school year with you and your scholar. Handbooks for the Arkadelphia School District and Goza Middle School are available on our school's website, ***Goza Middle School***.

The Handbook has been developed to inform you of the expectations at Goza Middle School. These rules and procedures support our school's mission, vision, collective agreements, and goals. Our faculty and staff are here to guide and support your academic, emotional, and social growth. We believe in YOU!

Tisha Hunter, Principal

'Where curious minds, spark learning'

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DESCRIPTION

Our primary focus is on the students' physical and emotional safety, so that academic growth and learning can occur. We want students to actively participate in school activities and gain a sense of belonging to an organization that will enhance their development and social skills. We want every student to have a trusting adult with whom they can connect as a source of care, while developing a sense of who they are as individuals and a connection to their school and the community as a whole.

We are proud to be a National Showcase Capturing Kids' Hearts school, where we have seen measurable improvements in daily attendance, high academic performance, and a decrease in office discipline referrals, all of which contribute to a positive change in our school culture.

Our Core courses are English Language Arts, Reading, Social Studies, Math, Science, and Algebra 1. We are building our elective options for students in Coding skills, Art, Band, Choir, PE, Business and Technology Innovation, in addition to Career-Technology Education (CTE) Keyboarding, and career success planning. Our 5th grade students will participate in a six-week wheel rotation of electives to explore electives.

School activities are encouraged and participation in both music and sports may be done with few or no conflicts. Seventh-grade practices occur during the school day, and the number of after-school competitions is limited. Practice time for 8th graders includes both in-school and after-school sessions. Most events/games are on Mondays and Thursday evenings. There are special student performances at Christmas and during the spring. Through sports, music, dance clubs, organizations, and fun events, there are numerous opportunities for students to find their niche and be an active part of the Goza Badgers.

BELL SCHEDULE

5th Grade	6th Grade	7th/8th Grade
1st 8:00-9:10	1st 8:00-9:00	1st 8:00-8:57
2nd 9:13-10:23	2nd 9:03-10:03	2nd 9:00-9:47
Lunch A 10:26-10:46	3rd Elective 10:06-10:46	3rd 9:50-10:37
3rd Recess 10:57-11:27	**Lunch B 10:49-11:27**	4th 10:40-11:27
WIN 11:30-12:06	**WIN 11:30-12:06**	**WIN 11:30-12:06**
5th Wheel 12:09-12:49	5th 12:09-1:09	**Lunch C 12:09-12:47**
6th 12:52-2:02	6th 1:12-2:12	6th 12:50-1:37
7th 2:05-3:15	7th 2:15-3:15	7th 1:40-2:27
		8th 2:30-3:15

2026-27 District Calendar

FIRST DAY FOR STUDENTS: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12
LAST DAY FOR STUDENTS: WEDNESDAY, MAY 19

GRADING PERIODS
1ST Qtr.(ends 10/9) 2nd Qtr.(ends 12/16) 3rd Qtr.(ends 3/12) 4th Qtr.(ends 5/19)

NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS:

Labor Day	Sept 7	**PTC Day, Flex Day**	Feb 11, 12
PTC Day, Flex Day	Oct 22, 23	**President's Day**	Feb 15 (Make-up Day, if needed)
Prof Dev Day	Oct 26	**Prof Dev Day**	March 19
Thanksgiving Break	Nov 23 - 27	**Spring Break**	March 22 - 26
Christmas Break	Dec 17 - Jan 4	**No School**	March 29 (Make-up Day, if needed)
Dr. MLK Jr. Day	Jan 18		

Based On:
384 Minute Instructional Day

School Hours:
Peake Elementary 7:50 - 3:10
Goza Middle 8:00 - 3:15
AHS 8:00 - 3:15

1 Break
4 Work Day (1)
5 1st Day 2nd Semester
18 M.L. King Day (No School)

115.2 Hours
18 Days

4-5 PD Days (2)
6 Work Day (1)
10 PD Day (1)
12 1st Day

89.6 Hours
14 Days

11 ½ Work Day (1/2) PTC 2:00-7:00 (1)
12 Flex Day (1)
15 Presidents' Day Make-Up Day (If Needed)

108.8 Hours
17 Days

7 Labor Day

134.4 Hours
21 Days

12 End of 3rd Quarter 45 Days (288 Hours)
19 PD Day (1)
22-26 Spring Break
29 No School Make-Up Day (If Needed)

102.4 Hours
16 Days

9 End of 1st Quarter 42 Days (268.8 Hours)
22 ½ Work Day (1/2) PTC 2:00-7:00 (1)
23 Flex Day (1)
26 PD Day (1)

121.6 Hours
19 Days

140.8 Hours
22 Days

23-27 Thanksgiving Break

102.4 Hours
16 Days

19 Last Day End of 4th Quarter 41 Days (262.4 Hours)
20-21 Make Up Days
24-25 (If Needed)

83.2 Hours
13 Days

16 End of 2nd Quarter 40 Days (256 Hours)
17-31 Christmas Break

76.8 Hours
12 Days

Totals
1075.2 Hours
7.2 Banked Hours (Over 1068)
168 Student Days
5 PD Days
2 Flex Days
3 Work Days
2 PTC Days

GOZA OFFICE

The primary concern of Goza secretaries is student health and safety. They follow many procedures that help assure these factors. In addition to working with students, they handle record-keeping and assist the administrators. When students, parents, and relatives follow the procedures below, secretaries can perform their jobs more efficiently.

SIGNING STUDENTS IN AND OUT

Parents wishing to sign their student out early for any reason must come to the main office and sign the sign-out sheet. Students are prohibited from checking out with anyone other than their parent/guardian unless they have written consent from the parent.

Students arriving at school after the typical start of the day must sign in at the office. Students who sign in **10 minutes** or more after the beginning of the first class period are recorded as absent for that period.

ADMITS FOR ABSENCE

Upon returning to school, students should report to the office between 7:30 and 7:50. The parent/guardian **must** provide a written excuse explaining the absence. The excuse must include the parent/guardian's signature AND a phone number so we can reach you for confirmation, if necessary.

OFFICE/CLASSROOM PHONE USE

The following rules apply before school, during lunch, and after school collectively:

- The office phone is for school business and emergency use only.
- Emergencies considered are illness or injury. Situations not considered emergencies include books, homework, reports, and other tasks left at home; afternoon plans; appointments; or lunches and money. Students must plan for each school day, before arriving at school.
- **Incoming Phone Messages to Students:** The office does not accept calls from anyone other than a student's parent/guardian. If it becomes necessary to leave a message for students, please phone the office as early as possible to allow ample time to make contact. The intercom will be used for the safety and communication of Goza students and faculty.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

The responsibility for a student's dress and grooming primarily rests with the student and their parents or guardians. Arkansas passed a 2011 law requiring school districts to prohibit the wearing of clothing that exposes underwear, buttocks, or the breasts of a female. We encourage parents to check their child's attire before they leave home.

Allowable Dress & Grooming:

- Students must wear clothing, including a shirt, pants or a skirt, and shoes.
- Shirts and dresses must have fabric on the front, sides, and back. Shirts and dresses must cover undergarments, waistbands, and bra straps.

Non-Allowable Dress & Grooming:

- Clothing may not depict, advertise, or advocate the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other controlled substances.
- Clothing may not depict pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
- Clothing may not use or depict hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected group.
- Clothing may not depict gang identifiers.
- Clothing must cover the upper chest to the mid-thigh—no skin exposure.

Guidelines:

- Tank tops must be at least 2 inches wide at the shoulder (approximately three fingers) - no spaghetti straps.
- Sleeveless shirts must be at least 2 inches wide at the shoulders (approximately three fingers) - no undershirts or muscle shirts.
- Shorts must be mid-thigh in length.
- Ripped jeans - no undergarments may show, no rips in inappropriate places, no holes above the mid-thigh.
- No sunglasses
- Pajama pants - only on specific days determined by the administration.
- Hats and hoods are not permitted inside the building.

"Looking good isn't self-importance; it's self-respect." – Charles Hix

CHROMEBOOKS

All students will be issued a Chromebook, a bag, and a charger. Students must follow the guidelines outlined in the District Technology Usage Agreement. Our district's technology department and teachers use a Chromebook Management System to monitor online activity. Inappropriate use of Chromebooks could result in loss of access to them.

- All students must store their Chromebooks in a Chromebook bag when not in use or when carrying them from one class to another. Its charger is the only additional item that should be stored in this bag. It cannot store books, notebooks, and other personal items.
- Fifth- and 6th-grade students will get their Chromebooks from their 1st-period teacher (homeroom) and return them to their homeroom teacher at the end of the day.
- Seventh- and eighth-grade students will NOT take their Chromebooks. Each classroom is equipped with Chromebooks for student use.

HEALTH SERVICE AND SCHOOL NURSE

Goza Middle School will have a full-time nurse to address students' needs. The nurse will respond as quickly once notified by a school secretary or administrator. Basic first-aid treatment is provided for students who are injured during school hours.

ALLERGIES

<u>If your child has any food allergies that require dietary restrictions, a note from your child's doctor is needed to accommodate these restrictions.</u> A new letter from the healthcare provider is required each year. Suppose your child is allergic to any first-aid medicines listed or any medicine in general. In that case, the school nurse must be informed in writing by the parent and/or physician, and a note of this allergy must be made anywhere on the signature verification page sent home on the first day of school.

ILLNESS WHILE AT SCHOOL

When a school district employee suspects a child has become ill at school, the employee will take the child's temperature. If the temperature registers above 100 degrees, the principal, secretary, or school nurse will immediately contact the parent. All students sent to the office for illness will have their name, date, referral reason, and action taken recorded.

Teachers will use their first-aid kits to treat some illness symptoms, or the student will be sent to the nurse's office to rest on a bed. The school nurse, principal, or secretary will determine if the child is too ill

to remain at school. Parents will be notified by the school office and expected to pick up their children when one or more of the conditions listed below are noted:

- Temperature 101 orally
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Rash
- Suspected communicable illness
- Injury or illness requiring a doctor's evaluation
- Live head lice or scabies
- Conjunctivitis (possible pink eye infection)
- Flu-like symptoms

Please notify the school should your child develop any of the above conditions at home.

- Sick children should remain at home until they have been FREE OF FEVER FOR 24 HOURS. Children who have vomited within 24 hours should not be sent to school. A student who has had a contagious disease and has been treated should be completely free of symptoms BEFORE returning to school or provide documentation from the physician stating when the student can return to school.
- A student with head lice **MUST** remain at home until proof of treatment can be presented to the school and/or a statement from a certified health official has been obtained.
- The school should be notified of a student's diagnosis of contagious diseases, including the flu, strep, and stomach viruses.

GUIDANCE COUNSELING PROGRAM

The school district offers a full-time guidance and counseling program (K-12) to support students, parents, and faculty. The guidance office collaborates closely with students to address their educational, vocational, health, social, and personal needs.

ELEVATOR

The elevator is reserved for use by individuals with disabilities or injuries only. Students are prohibited from using the elevator without permission from a teacher or administrator.

WATER BOTTLES, GUM, CANDY, AND FOOD

Water bottles must be made of plastic, clear, and have a pop-top spout. Open spouts and straws are prohibited. The only liquid allowed in bottles is water. Chewing gum is not permitted at Goza Middle School. Only candy and snacks supplied as part of our school-wide snack days or aligned to class celebrations are allowed. Students are prohibited from selling gum, candy, or other items unless it is part of a school-sponsored fundraising activity. (Students must have approval from administration).

PERFORMANCE REPORTING/PROMOTION/RETENTION

1. Parents will receive reports on their child's academic progress from the classroom teacher at the end of each nine-week grading period. These reports are in addition to the nine-week report card.
2. School-wide parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year, once during the fall and again in the spring.
3. Teachers will communicate with parents/guardians of students who are not performing at the expected level for their grade. If parents have any questions or concerns at any time, we encourage them to contact the office.
4. Conferences can also be arranged at other times. Parents are asked to call the office to arrange a conference time (preferably during their planning period) with the teacher. Surprise visits are not allowed during class sessions.
5. Parents and students can monitor student progress in every class, using ECHO (LMS) and HAC (Home Access Center). Usernames and passwords are printed on the letters sent to students in August to welcome them back to school. Additionally, one teacher from each grade level (5-8) will have access to the HAC information and will make it available to students after the start of school.

PROMOTION & RETENTION OF STUDENTS

It is the philosophy of the Arkadelphia Public Schools that all students should be placed in instructional programs that enable them to achieve academically and develop emotionally, socially, and physically. It is expected that most students will progress from one grade to the next each year. As soon as the possibility of non-promotion becomes a consideration for the school staff, parents/guardians will be consulted.

Promotion of students in grades 5-8 will be based on:

1. The recommendation of the professional staff and administration.
2. Compliance with State Attendance Law and the Board.
3. Passing grades in three (3) of the four (4) core subjects (English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. A passing grade is determined by receiving a final average (60% and above) of the 1st and 2nd semesters and student performance on multiple assessments -- per local, state, and national policies.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Goza Middle School believes in providing students with opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities that enrich their educational experience. At the same time, a student's participation in such activities cannot come at the expense of his/her classroom academic achievement. Interruptions of instructional time in the classroom must be minimal, and absences from class to participate in extracurricular activities shall not exceed one per week per extracurricular activity (tournaments excepted).

Additionally, a student's participation in extracurricular activities shall not be considered a "right" by students, but a privilege. Sponsors, coaches, directors, etc., may establish eligibility requirements for their organization, provided approval is obtained from the principal and superintendent in advance.

School activities are an essential component of the Goza curriculum. Students are encouraged to participate in school activities and become active members of the Goza student body. Involvement in music, sports, and clubs is a standard expectation for all students in Arkadelphia Schools. All Arkadelphia Schools have individual staff members who teach art, music, and physical education. School activities do not guarantee success, but being involved in them is a common factor among successful people.

- Academic Quiz Bowl (GT)
- Arkansas Game & Fish Council
- Art Club
- Band
- Boys Athletics *(Football, Basketball, Track)*
- Cheerleaders
- Chess Club
- Choir
- Book Club
- Broadcasting Team
- Talent Search with Henderson State University
- Archery
- Girls' & Boys Athletics *(Basketball, Volleyball, Track)*
  Fellowship of Christian Athletes *(FCA)*
- Jazzlers Dance Team
- STEAM Club (Floyd & Whittle)
- Student Council (Student Ambassadors)