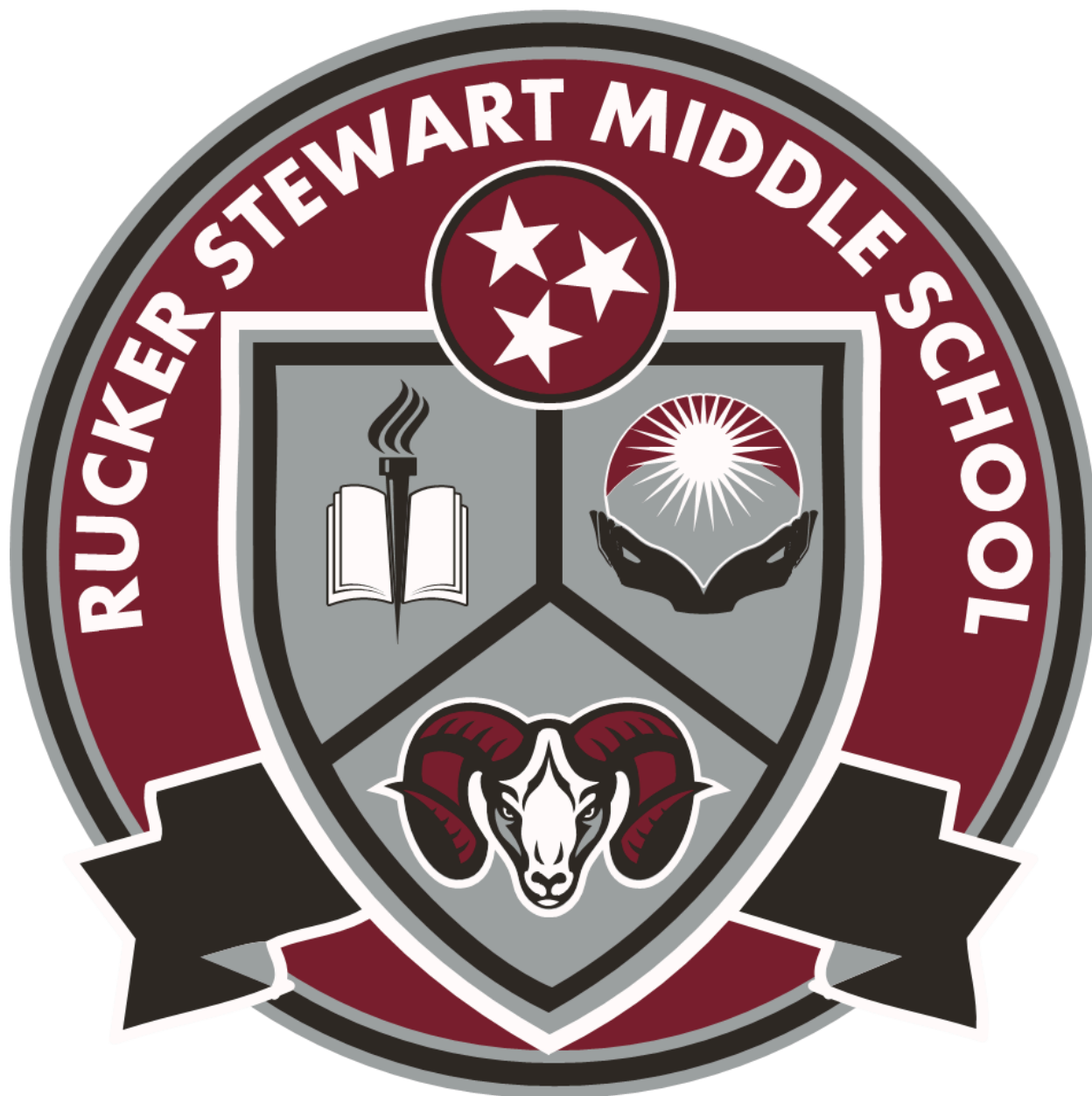


Rucker-Stewart Middle School



2024 - 2025

Student Handbook

Sumner County Schools

Preparing Graduates, Engaging Minds, Developing Character

RUCKER-STEWART MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK

350 Hancock Street, Gallatin, TN 37066
Telephone: (615) 452-1734 Fax: (615) 451-5297

<https://rsm.sumnerschools.org>

Hours: 7:45 – 2:45

Principal: Shaun Glasgow

Assistant Principal (A-K): Dr. Valencia Smith Assistant Principal (L-Z): Amy Simmons

Lead Educator : Shay Cox

Guidance Conselor: Charles Billingsley

Guidance Counselor: Mary Beth Say

First, I want to welcome everyone to Rucker-Stewart Middle School for the 2024-2025 school year. For our incoming 6th grade class and new teachers and staff, I would like to say thank you for being part of our RSMS family, and welcome to our school. This is an exciting time of year, and I encourage everyone to reach out to someone new, build healthy relationships, and find your place within this great school community.

For our returning 7th and 8th grade Rams, welcome back! Parents and guardians, we as an RSMS family look forward to working with you to help your child succeed both academically and socially, and that can only happen if we work together and you are involved in this important journey. Use this handbook as a resource, read it, know what the expectations are of your child in being a Rucker-Stewart Ram, and what we can offer them. Become familiar with important dates throughout the year along with those surrounding progress reports and report cards, learn the names and email addresses of your child's teachers, and the requirements and expectations each of those teachers have for your child.

Rucker-Stewart has a long and ongoing tradition within the Gallatin community, and we as a school, look to represent that tradition with excellence. We all have things that we can improve on, and we at RSMS are no different. Let's work together to continue to grow and achieve that excellence so we can better serve our students, parents, schools, and community. In doing so, we can ensure that our students have the opportunities they need to succeed in achieving their goals and in becoming better people every day. The team at RSMS looks forward to working with you, and we eagerly await a great 24-25 school year.

Thank you,

Shaun Glasgow, Principal



Rucker-Stewart Middle School

Ram P.R.I.D.E. **P**erseverance **R**espect **I**ntegrity **D**iscipline **E**mpathy

In our mission of educating the whole student, we strive to not only provide growth and success in academics, but to also provide opportunities for growth in character and life skills. Respecting other students, teachers, and staff is an important responsibility you have here as an RSMS student, and they should respect you also. Ram P.R.I.D.E. is part of that foundation that will aid in providing the framework to challenge students to continuously increase their strength of character and civic duty while always working to be a better person, citizen, friend, and scholar.

Through integrating the concepts surrounding P.R.I.D.E. into our school culture, we want our students to strive to always have Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Discipline, and Empathy. The tradition RSMS has within this community is strong, and we will strive every day to make that sense of tradition, ownership, grit, and pride stronger within our student body. In doing so, we can better ensure your future success as you move forward with your next steps into high school and beyond as you strive to reach your future goals and ambitions. We, as Rucker-Stewart Middle School and the surrounding community, will work hard to provide you with opportunities, but it is up to you to put in the work and take advantage of those opportunities. When you do, you become an integral part of what will inevitably strengthen the tradition and culture of RSMS.

Vision:

Sumner County Schools is a collaborative culture of high performing students, teachers, and school communities.

Mission:

Sumner County Schools commits to growing learners who are college and career ready through quality instruction, effective use of resources, building a collaborative culture, and strong leadership.

Quality Instruction

- Teachers deliver quality standards-driven instruction that is informed by student results.
- Quality instruction provides students with self-directed thinking/learning experiences.
- Authentic learning experiences allow students to be engaged in learning, to have opportunities to develop character, and to be prepared to contribute to the community.
- Students receive quality feedback and equal access to differentiated instructional opportunities (enrichment/intervention) based on individual needs.
- Teachers engage in ongoing, job-embedded professional learning to design and deliver quality instruction.

Collaborative Culture

- The diversity in thinking of all those who are invested in education is welcomed.
- Structured opportunities are in place to promote collaborative discussions that include an atmosphere of mutual respect.
- Collaboration is student-focused dialogue with a shared purpose.
- Trust encourages the use of innovative and unique solutions.
- Purposeful and intentional communication among all stakeholders cultivates a culture for results.

Leadership

- Effective leaders understand the vision and consistently communicate and model it to all stakeholders.
- Keeping the vision in the forefront, leaders involve all stakeholders in setting goals and improving their organization.
- Leaders set high expectations and hold themselves and others accountable for results.
- There is a commitment to building and growing leaders at all levels with an intentional focus on improving student learning.
- Leaders grow other leaders by modeling transparency and by working collaboratively.
- Leaders are strategic in making decisions based upon the examination and analysis of data.

Resource Utilization

- The district continuously recruits, develops, and retains exemplary employees.
- There is access and equity in the use of facilities, materials, and technology for instruction.
- Community and business resources are aligned to support student needs.
- Resources are strategically utilized for collaborative learning among schools and across the district.

A WORD ABOUT SAFETY AND CHARACTER IN OUR SCHOOL

Your school is as safe as we all make it. The best things that you can do to make it even safer are simple: don't tease, don't bully, don't make fun of other people, don't put people down, be friendly and polite to everyone, don't isolate or squeeze out other people and hurt their feelings. Treat each other the way that you want to be treated. Help each other. The focus of our school-wide bullying prevention program is to structure our school setting so that bullying is less likely to occur or to be rewarded.

Good RSMS Rams have strong character traits. Respect, courage, honesty, caring, citizenship, cooperation, fairness, responsibility, and the pursuit of excellence are habits that we must work on every day as we deal with each other at school. If you know of another student who is alone, talk with them. Tell an adult. If you have reason to think that someone has a weapon at school or if someone talks about hurting anyone here, tell an adult.

INTRODUCTION

This handbook was prepared by the teachers and staff of Rucker-Stewart Middle School to help students and their parents better understand the policies of our school, and more fully appreciate the standards and high expectations for which our school stands. One of the goals of Rucker-Stewart is to provide for each student an opportunity to become self-directed and internally motivated in a safe, responsible and respectful atmosphere. Students and parents are encouraged to read these rules together and to refer to them when questions arise during the year. The rules given are for the sole purpose of helping the school to provide a healthy educational environment for the students, a place where people can get along and work together. Any cases of discipline not specifically addressed in the handbook shall be left to the discretion of the principal. In addition, the administration reserves the authority to amend any provision in this handbook when they deem it to be in the best interest of the educational process at Rucker-Stewart Middle School.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy:

- Step 1: Use the school wide “stop phrase” – Stop Phrase
- Step 2: If the person stops, say “cool” or “OK” and move on with your day
- Step 3: If the person does not stop, decide whether to ignore the person or seek support
- Step 4: If you decide to ignore, don't look at our talk to that person. If you decide to seek support, select a school adult to approach and ask for support.

If you use the school-wide stop phrase and the person doesn't stop:

- Step 1: Decide whether to ignore it or seek support.
- Step 2: If you seek support, select a school adult to report to.
- Step 3: Approach the adult immediately following the incident and say, “I'm having a problem with _____. I asked her to stop and she continued.”
- Step 4: If the adult doesn't have time to help solve the problem right then, ask the adult when they will have time and make an appointment.

If a student approaches a teacher with a problem involving disrespectful behavior the following will occur:

- Step 1: Say “Thanks for telling me.”
- Step 2: Listen empathetically. Ask if this is the first time; determine who, what, when, and where.
- Step 3: Ask the student if the person who didn't stop is likely to retaliate if confronted.
- Step 4: Help the student select a course of action. Possibilities include:
 - Filing a report (To be reviewed by administration for disciplinary actions)
 - A safety plan for minimizing contact
 - Letting it go (“I just needed someone to talk to”)

ATTENDANCE POLICY (School Board Policy JB K-12)

The Board recognizes that good attendance at school is basic to student learning. Attendance is a key factor in student achievement: therefore, students are expected to be present each day that school is in session. Parents have both a legal obligation and a moral responsibility to see that children are present every day that school is in session.

The Compulsory School Attendance Law in Tennessee requires children to attend school each day. A student who has been absent five days (this means a total of five days during the school year and not necessarily five consecutive days) without adequate excuse is considered truant and may be summoned to court. Whenever possible, attendance issues should be resolved at the school level. Prior to referral to a truancy officer, a meeting shall be held at the school to assist the family and improve student attendance via an attendance contract. If unexcused absences continue to accumulate, the Director of Schools or his/her designee will report the parent and student to the Juvenile Court for further action.

The following are official/adequate excuses that should be turned in to the attendance secretary in the school office

- Medical note for the student (doctor, dentist, hospital, etc.)
- Student illness not requiring a doctor visit (five parent notes per semester)
- Court notes for the student
- Funeral notice
- Recognized religious holiday
- College Visits
- Military deployment paperwork for parent

Appeal Procedure for Unexcused Absences

The initial appeal shall be to the building principal or designee. If not resolved at the building level, the parent can request in writing an appeal to the Attendance Office at the Sumner County Board of Education. The appeal will be heard by the Appeals Committee consisting of Director of Schools Designee, an Attendance personnel representative and a principal/assistant principal representative. The burden of proof rests on the student or guardian. The appeal process for determining unexcused absences is ancillary to a truancy decision rendered by a juvenile court judge as described in T.C.A. 49-6-3010.

A principal may verify absences for the following:

- Approved school activity that is school sponsored and school supervised
- Extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis

Tardies: Any student not in the classroom when the class begins is tardy. Students who accumulate excessive unexcused tardies are considered truant and will be reported to Juvenile Court. **A tardy is only excused by a doctor's note.**

Unexcused Early Dismissals: For any student that is dismissed from school without a valid reason, the absence will be considered an unexcused early dismissal. A doctor's note excuses the early dismissal. **A parent note may only be used to excuse a full day of absence.**

Make-up work: Upon the first day of returning to school, it is the student's responsibility in middle and high school and the parent's responsibility in elementary school to make contact with the teacher(s) regarding make-up work. During the school year, make-up work must be completed within a number of days equal to the number of consecutive days of the absence. Student's should also check the teacher's Google Classroom to make up any missed work. Parents are encouraged to follow up with their child/student to make sure all missing work, due to absences, is completed.

Students with eight or more unexcused absences and or ten or more unexcused tardies could lose the privilege of attending extracurricular events. These include but are not limited to the following: dances, athletic events as a spectator or participant, competitions, conferences, field trips, plays, concerts, pep rallies, etc.

Out of school suspension is classified as an unexcused absence.

Procedure When Returning from an Absence:

1. The student must bring a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian, stating the child's full name, grade, date(s) of the absence, and a daytime phone number so that we can verify the note.
2. This should be brought to the office before school begins.
3. Even if a student does not have a note from home, he/she must still report to the office for an admit slip.
4. The student has a maximum of three (3) school days to bring a note for an excused absence. Failure to comply will result in an unexcused absence.
5. Any class work missed must be made up at the teacher's convenience. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher concerning a make-up schedule. This should be done before or after class. All work must be completed prior to the next grading period. The teacher will allow three (3) days to turn in make-up work.
6. Please do not call the office for make-up work unless the student has been absent at least three (3) consecutive days.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Permission to be dismissed from school must be obtained from the office before the first period begins. A note from the student's parent or guardian is to be on file in the office before a student leaves school. The student is expected to return to school as soon as possible after a doctor's appointment or funeral. Failure to do so will count as truancy from school. Remember that the time missed for these appointments will be counted as an absence from the class or classes missed. If a student becomes ill during school hours, he/she is to come by the office and let the secretary/nurse call home. It is state and county regulation that students are not to be released during school hours unless actually delivered into the custody of the child's parents or near relatives and that any request for release of the child contrary to these regulations will not be complied with. **Any student participating in after school extracurricular activities (athletic or non-athletic events) must be present for at least a half-day.**

*Any person taking a child from school must be listed on the child's registration card. They will be asked to show proof of identification.

AFTER SCHOOL

We will have a staggered dismissal.

- 2:43 - All 6th grade students report to the gym.
- 2:45 – First load bus riders will be dismissed.
- 2:45 – Car riders will be dismissed.
 - o 6th grade students and siblings of 6th grade students will be dismissed from the back of the school under the awning between rooms 405 and 407.
 - o 7th and 8th grade students will be dismissed from the front of the building.
- 2:45 – Walkers will be dismissed
- 2:48 – Remaining bus rider will report to their indicated locations as marked in the 7th & 8th grade hallways

ZERO-TOLERANCE BEHAVIOR

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment free of drugs, drug paraphernalia, violence and dangerous weapons, any student who engages in the following behaviors will be subject to suspension for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year:

1. Students who bring or are found in possession of a drug, drug paraphernalia or a dangerous weapon on a school bus, on school property or at any school event or activity on or off campus.
2. Any student who, while on a school bus, on school property or while attending any school event or activity on or off campus:
 - a. is under the influence of a drug; or
 - b. possesses a drug, drug paraphernalia or dangerous weapon; or
 - c. assaults or threatens to assault a teacher, student or any other person.

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Any Principal of any public school in this state is authorized to suspend a pupil from attendance at school or any school-related activity on or off campus, or from riding a school bus, for a period of one (1) to ten (10) days for good and sufficient reasons including, but not limited to (1) Willful and persistent violation of the rules of the school or truancy; (2) Immoral or disreputable conduct, including vulgar or profane language; (3) Violence or threatened violence against the person of any personnel attending or assigned to any public school; (4) Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of the school or the property of any person attending or assigned to said school; (5) Inciting, advising or counseling of others to engage in any of the acts herein enumerated; (6) Possession of a pistol, gun, or firearm on school property; (7) Possession of a knife, etc., as defined in TCA 49-6-1701 on school property; (8) Assaulting a principal or teacher with vulgar, obscene or threatening language; (9) Unlawful use or possession of barbitol or legend drugs as defined in TCA 52-10-101; (10) Engaging in activity which disrupts a class or school-sponsored activity; (11) Off-campus criminal behavior resulting in felony charges; when behavior poses a danger to persons or property or disrupts the education process; (12) Any other conduct prejudicial to good order or discipline in any public school.

Note: **Suspended students are not to return to school for any reason during their suspension without a parent.** Unaccompanied students will be considered trespassers and prosecuted as such. In the event a suspension occurs during the last ten (10) days of any semester, the student may be permitted to take such final examinations or submit such required work as is necessary to complete the course of instruction for that semester, subject to the actions of the principal, or the final action of the Board of Education upon any appeal from an order of a principal continuing a suspension.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

The principal/administration may suspend any pupil from attendance in a class or classes at the school pursuant to the in-school suspension policy adopted by the Board of Education. Good and sufficient reasons for such in-school suspension shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Behavior, which adversely affects the safety and well-being of other pupils.
- B. Behavior which disrupts a class or school sponsored activity; or
- C. Behavior prejudicial to good order and discipline occurring in class during school-sponsored activities or on the school campus.

In an attempt to provide a more constructive program and as an alternative to out-of- school suspension, students who fail to uphold appropriate standards of safety, respect, or responsibility will be assigned “in-school suspension” when deemed necessary by the principal. This will provide students an opportunity to receive credit for their academic work while being disciplined. The student will spend the assigned time in a designated area under a very strict set of rules and will be required to do all work for the classes missed. Students will not socialize with the other students and will not be allowed to participate in any school functions during the school day, including any club or team activities or pictures. A student who violates the rules in ISS is subject to OSS.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

Students will not possess, distribute, or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages in school buildings or on school grounds, in school vehicles or buses, or at any school-sponsored activity at any time, whether on or off school grounds.

1. **Alcoholic Beverage** includes alcohol, spirits, liquor, wine, beer, and every liquid or solid containing alcohol, spirits, wine, or beer and which is fit for beverage purposes either alone or when diluted, mixed, or combined with other substances.
2. **Illegal drugs** include controlled substances, prescriptions not intended for the possessor or user, over-the-counter substances used for pain relief, substances used as an intoxicating inhalant, or any other substance which is portrayed as one of the above. Drug paraphernalia are also forbidden.
3. **Use** shall mean the introduction of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages into the body in any manner or the indication of action or behavior that such introduction has taken place.
4. **Possession** will mean either having alcoholic beverages or drugs on the person, or in the immediate vicinity of the person, or among the student's personal possessions (locker, car, etc.)

If it is determined that Board policy has been violated, the principal shall notify the student's parents or guardian and the appropriate law enforcement officials, and the student shall be subject to suspension for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year.

TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Students shall not use or possess tobacco products in any form (including vapes, juuls, etc.) while on school property, attending or participating in a school-sponsored event, while on school buses to and from school, or on school buses to and from school-sponsored events. On the first offense, a student shall automatically be given a minimum of one day of Out of School Suspension. Further offenses will result in increased levels of discipline, along with potential educational programs/requirements to further educate students on the dangers of these actions. Any student found in an area where smoking is taking place on school property may be punished for condoning smoking. Students are not at any time to have matches or lighters in their possession. On the first offense, the student will be given a minimum of two days of ISS

WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS

The Sumner County Board of Education has a **zero tolerance for weapons**. Any student found to have brought a weapon to school or is found in possession of a weapon on school property shall be **expelled** from attending Sumner County schools for **a minimum of one (1) calendar year**. When deemed necessary, a disciplinary committee may recommend expulsion longer than one year. Where appropriate; criminal charges will be brought against the student and parents or legal guardian. If it is determined that a student has an IEP, an M-Team meeting, which shall include the Director or his designee, will be called to determine the appropriate disciplinary action.

Any student who brings to school or who is found in possession, on school property, or at any school-sponsored activity on or off campus, of any dangerous instrument will be immediately removed from the general student population. Within ten school days, a disciplinary committee shall recommend the disposition, including expulsion, of the student. The Director of Schools may modify the recommendation on a case-by-case basis. The Director must report each case to the Board at its next regular meeting.

Toy weapons or facsimiles will not be permitted on school grounds. Students who possess toy weapons or facsimiles of weapons including water guns will be suspended as determined by the principal. The principal shall report his action to the Director. Depending on the circumstances, the principal may refer a student possessing a toy weapon or facsimile, including a water gun, to the disciplinary committee for disposition as determined by the committee.

The term weapon shall be defined as any dangerous instrument. The term dangerous instrument shall include but is not limited to the following: knives, box cutters, razor blades, clubs or police batons, paint ball guns, pellet guns, BB guns, brass knuckles, chains, ice picks, spiked wristbands, any object used in such a manner that could cause bodily harm or inflict damage to property, any explosive device including but not limited to all fireworks, any firearm; and any item which could be perceived to be a dangerous instrument such as a toy or non-working device.

This list is not all-inclusive; therefore, the principal shall use his discretion in ascertaining whether an object is a weapon as defined in this policy. Each case regardless of the circumstances must be reported to the Director of Schools. Full documentation is required including written statements from all witnesses. The principal shall notify the parents or legal guardian of any student found in violation of this policy. The use of weapons and dangerous instruments in school plays, school bands, or any other school activity is prohibited unless sanctioned in advance and in writing by the Director of Schools.

Any other person in violation of this policy will be removed and appropriate criminal charges filed. This includes anyone with a legal permit from Sumner County or the State of Tennessee to carry a gun, except a person acting under authority of a governmental law enforcement agency shall be exempt.

SEARCHES

Any principal or his designee having reasonable cause for a search, may search any student, place, or thing on school property or in the actual or constructive possession of any student including during any organized school activity off campus, including buses, if he receives information which would cause a reasonable person to believe that the search will lead to the discovery of evidence of any violation of the law or any violation of the school rules or regulations of proper standards of conduct and/or any object or substance which, because of its presence, presents an immediate danger of harm or illness to any person. A student may be subject to a physical search (with a witness). We may require a student to empty pockets, purses, or other containers.

SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE PLAN FOR ROUTINE MISBEHAVIORS

We expect our students to behave in a manner that shows safety, respect and responsibility to teachers and other learners. The student who cannot behave cannot be taught. Routine disruptions can be handled with detentions or missed activity time. For severe violations of our expectations that students behave in a safe, respectful and responsible manner, a teacher may write that student up for immediate removal from class to be disciplined by an administrator. It is expected that if this occurs the student has been given several chances to comply with school policy or the action was so egregious that immediate removal from class was necessary. Discipline for a violation will be determined by administration. In all cases the parent will be notified when these instances occur. Continued willful violations of school policy may result in OSS and referral to the Disciplinary Hearing Authority.

GENERAL CONDUCT

1. Students are expected to be in class on time.
2. Students are not to buy, sell, or trade articles/food at school. Any student who violates this regulation is personally responsible for the consequences, and disciplinary action may be taken.
3. Bicycles are to be parked in the designated area.
4. Loitering in corridors and restrooms is not permitted.
5. Laser pens, toys, dice, radios, music players, video games, playing cards, baseball or action figure cards, as well as any other personal property, including any large sums of money must be left at home. Anything over a few dollars will not be needed at school.
6. Skateboards are not to be used on campus except for arrival and departure.
7. Sumner County Board of Education Policy states that any student who is responsible for destroying or defacing school property shall be held responsible for the actual cost of replacing or repairing the property. Failure to comply within two (2) weeks will subject parents or guardians to prosecution.
8. Gambling at school is prohibited.
9. Any stealing or destruction of a fellow student's property may result in disciplinary action from administration. Full reimbursement could be required.
10. Obscene or distasteful literature or illustrations are not allowed at school.
11. Head coverings and sunglasses may not be worn inside the school building. Prescription sunglasses may be worn upon an order from a doctor.
12. Water bottles are permitted, please refrain from bringing oversized metal bottles that do not have a sealed lid and oversized water containers (Stanley cups are not permitted).
13. Skipping a class or school will result in ISS for the first offense.
14. Students are not permitted to leave school grounds at any time without office permission. Anyone who rides a school bus or is dropped off at RSMS is considered to be on school property for the school day. A student who leaves campus after school, but then returns to catch a bus, will be considered skipping.
15. Students are not to leave class without a hall pass from the teacher. Doing so could be considered skipping class.
16. Whiteout products and permanent markers are not allowed in the possession of students because of their potential for damage to school property and student health. Items will be taken up if found.

17. Privileges for attending various events and extra-curricular activities can be revoked for students who accumulate disciplinary infractions that range in severity or that are persistent in frequency. These decisions will be made at the discretion of administration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS

As a rule, the office will relay only emergency messages from a parent or guardian. An emergency could be, but is not limited to, an illness, death in the family, dismissal/pick-up change, etc. When possible, non-emergency messages will be delivered to students during lunch or after school. Any emergency messages from parents to their child must be called in prior to 2:00 P.M. Messages received after 2:00 P.M. may not reach the student in time for school dismissal.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS

Students arrive at RSMS between 7:00 A.M. and 7:35 A.M. are to report immediately to the cafeteria, if eating breakfast, or to the gym, if not eating. There is no eating or drinking in the gym, so any eating or drinking should be done in the cafeteria only.

Cars with students who are being dropped off should remain in the drop off lane in the front of the school. Students should then exit vehicles on the sidewalk side of the vehicle. This will help provide a safe and efficient way to drop off students.

All students are to be in their first block class no later than 7:45.

Note: Upon arriving at school, whether by bus or otherwise, students are not allowed to leave campus and are not allowed to roam the hallways or go to the library before 7:35, unless arrangements have been made ahead of time with the bus duty staff. Failure to comply could be classified as skipping or being “out of area”. Loitering is not allowed anywhere on campus. It is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements a day in advance to make up work or receive tutoring from a teacher in the mornings before classes. A pass is needed in order to meet a teacher in the classroom. It is the responsibility of the student to get this pass from the teacher they need to see the day before.

Backpack/Bag Policy

To maintain the safety and focus of our students and staff, RSMS has a Locker Policy for Backpacks/Bags. Students will be required to place all backpacks, lunch boxes, purses and sports bags into their locker before 1st period each morning. These bags cannot be carried from room to room throughout the day. Students will have access to their lockers before 1st period, after 4th period and after 8th period. They may retrieve items for emergency situations from their backpacks, lunch boxes, purses or sports bags.

CAFETERIA

Student behavior in the cafeteria should be based on courtesy and cleanliness. This means leaving the table and surrounding area clean and orderly. At no time are students allowed to take food, drinks, containers, or straws out of the cafeteria. **Students are always expected to remain seated.** Scuffling, breaking line, or throwing drinks or food will result in discipline, up to and including out-of-school suspension. Students may not call out or order food to be delivered to RSMS. No outside food deliveries (fast food, door dash, etc..) that are not packaged at home will be permitted. The School Nutrition Program will be operated on a nonprofit basis and will comply with all rules and regulations pertaining to health, sanitation, internal accounting procedures, and service of foods and will meet all state and federal requirements necessary for participation.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES (Includes Smart Watches)

Any student who brings their own devices to school is subject to a reasonable search if suspicion arises that the device contains evidence of a violation of school policy or of an illegal infraction. In accordance with school board policy, students may possess personal communication devices, such as cell phones while on school property.

Student cell phones, smart watches, etc. are not to be seen or heard at school. Student cell phones must remain in the student's locker between the hours of 7:35 - 2:45. The teacher/administrator may grant a student permission to use a personal communication device at his/her discretion for educational purposes within a classroom setting. They must be turned off and in the locker (this includes smart watches) when not being used with teacher permission. When a student is in violation of the cell phone or electronic device policy, the following steps will take place.

1st Offense: The cell phone or electronic device will be taken to the office and locked up. The student will notify the parent with an adult present, and the student or parent can pick up the device at the end of that day.

2nd Offense: The cell phone or electronic device will be taken and locked up overnight in a secured location and may be picked up by the student or parent at 2:45 the following day

3rd Offense: The cell phone or electronic device will be taken and locked up overnight in a secured location. The student will be issued a detention and the device may be picked up at the end of the day by the student or parent once the detention has been served.

4th & Subsequent Offense: The cell phone or electronic device will be taken, locked up overnight in a secured location. The student will be issued 1 day of ISS and the device may be picked up at the end of the day by the student or parent once the ISS has been served. If continued violations occur, the cell phone could be taken up and secured until the end of the semester.

A student who is in violation of the cell phone policy and refuses to turn over his/her cell phone to a teacher will receive a minimum of 1 days ISS. Refusing to turn over a cell phone to an administrator will result in a minimum of 2 days ISS, and repeated refusal could result in OSS.

Earbuds/Airpods are not allowed between the hours of 7:35 and 2:45. If students violate the earbud policy, earbuds will be collected, and students can pick them up at the end of the day in the main office. Repeat offenders may receive additional consequences.

Use of cameras on personal communication devices is strictly prohibited on school property and at school functions, including restrooms or locker areas. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action by the school and/or law enforcement officials. Students may carry cell phones while participating in off-campus activities, such as field trips, if specifically authorized by the teacher. Principals may authorize the use of personal cell phones in the event of an emergency or serious situation.

**At the conclusion of the academic school year, any cell phone that has not been picked up by the student or parent will be discarded at the school's discretion.*

CHEATING POLICY

If a teacher suspects a student of cheating to earn a grade, then that teacher shall consider an alternative test or measure. When a teacher has proof of cheating by a student, the student can receive a "0" for the work and a parent will be notified. Alternate assignments may be required. Further disciplinary action may be required by the administration.

CONFERENCES

Appointments are to be made with teachers by contacting the specific teacher. Please make appointments a day or two in advance. A teacher will not be called out of a class for phone calls. A message can be left with the secretary. Parents wishing to call an IEP team meeting should contact the special education case manager assigned to their student. Please call the principal if you are unable to resolve an issue after having met with the teacher.

DETENTION

Routine disruptions can be handled with detentions. Students have 10 school days after the issuance of a detention to serve it. Failure to serve a detention will result in classroom isolation or lunch isolation, and the number of days will be determined by the number/sessions of detentions issued. In lieu of detentions, teachers may issue Dirty Duty (cleaning of classroom, desks, boards, and various areas of the school or grounds).

DISRESPECT

Respect is a major tenant of our school beliefs, and students are expected to be respectful and courteous to all faculty and staff members. Disrespect to any teacher or staff member whether in the classroom or otherwise will be considered an infraction of our school policy and consequences will be issued.

DRESS CODE POLICY - SCS

Values

- Commit to minimizing personal distractions to prioritize learning.
- Communicate clear dress code expectations to preserve a positive learning environment.
- Cultivate relationships between staff, students, and families.

Goals

- Ensure students' class time is minimally impacted by dress code violations.
- Use consistent discipline practices.
- Encourage students' to express individual styles that are appropriate for school.

Basic Principles

The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and families. The school district and individual schools are responsible for seeing that students' clothing choices do not interfere with the health, safety, and learning for any student.

1. Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for all students.
 - Clothing must be worn in such a way that undergarments are covered at all times. TN law prohibits exposing body parts in an indecent manner that disrupts the learning environment.

2. Students MUST Wear

❖ Tops

- must have sleeves or wide straps at the shoulder
 - non-see through fabric from underarm to waistband
 - overlap waistband
 - hoods must remain down

❖ Bottoms

- sweatpants, non-see through leggings, yoga pants, jeans, pants
 - holes or tears must be below mid-thigh as a halfway point between the hip and knee
 - leggings, spandex shorts, or yoga pants must be paired with tops that extend past the student's wrist with arms by their side
- shorts, skirts, dresses
 - mid-thigh as a halfway point between the hip and knee

- ❖ Shoes
 - students' shoes must be secured as designed
 - elementary students' shoes must have heel straps

3. Student MAY Wear

- ❖ (Within the guidelines provided in section 1 and 2)
 - Hooded tops
 - Jeans
 - Skinny jeans
 - Pants
 - Yoga pants
 - Leggings
 - Shorts
 - Sandals, slides, tennis shoes, boots
 - Non-natural hair color
 - Religious headwear

- Hats
 - Outdoors on school property
 - Special occasion days
 - Health and/or safety requirements for certain classes

4. Student CANNOT Wear

- ❖ Images, logos, or language depicting drugs, alcohol, illegal items or activities
- ❖ Images of violence, demeaning or derogatory speech, profanity, or pornography
- ❖ Sleepwear or slippers/house shoes
- ❖ Shoes with wheels
- ❖ Clothing that reveals undergarments
- ❖ Accessories that are considered a weapon, pose a threat, or are a potential safety hazard
- ❖ Items that hide any part of the face (except as a religious observance or medical reasons)
 - Examples include but are not limited to medical masks, bandanas, and hoods
- ❖ Articles of clothing that are not compliant with section 1 and/or 4

School Agreements

- ❖ Ensure ALL students are treated equitably.
- ❖ Clearly convey dress code guidelines to students and families in a variety of ways.
 - ie. student handbook, social media, posters, announcements etc.
- ❖ Maintain a safe learning environment where protective clothing, shoes, & accessories are needed.
 - ie. eyewear in chemistry, athletic shoes in PE, etc.
- ❖ Exceptions for attire for special occasions is at the discretion of the administrative team.
 - ie. school-wide programs, special performances, or dress up days etc.
- ❖ Students out of compliance, section 1 and/or 4, deemed by the administrative team, options are:
 - Students will be asked to change into their own alternative clothing.
 - Students' guardians(s) will be contacted and asked to provide alternative clothing.
 - If available, alternative clothing may be provided by the school. (Optional)
- ❖ If a student refuses to change or is a habitual offender, the school administration has the right to assign consequences.

Dress Code Guidelines

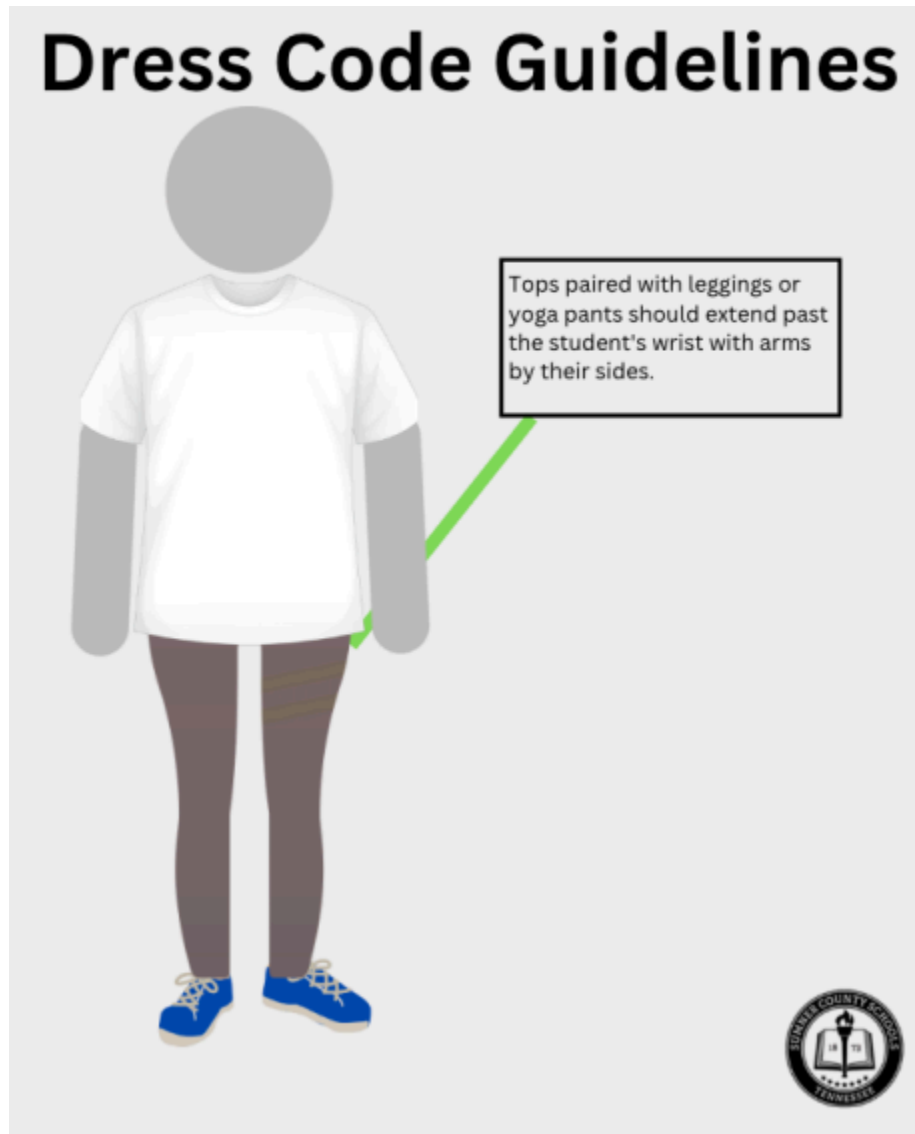
Shirt/dress must have sleeves or wide straps with non-see through fabric from underarm to waistband.

Shirt should overlap waistband.

Shorts, skirts, and dresses should come to the mid-thigh or longer.



Dress Code Guidelines



NOTE: The administration reserves the right to determine what constitutes appropriate dress.

Students who do not adhere to these guidelines will not be allowed to attend class. When a student is in violation of the dress code (e.g. holes, sagging pants, etc.), we will attempt to correct the issue, and the student will be required to change into appropriate clothes provided by the parent or the school. The student's return to class will be dependent on the plan to correct the issue. If a student is unable to change to approved clothing, he/she will be assigned to ISS and/or a parent conference. Continued refusal to adhere to the dress code will result in disciplinary action, up to and including ISS. Please plan your daily outfits with the dress code in mind.

EXAMS/TESTS

Exams/tests will not be given early under any circumstances. Any student truant from a semester exam will receive a zero on the exam

FIGHTING

Fighting is a major violation of the tenets of a safe, responsible, and respectful student and school; all fighting will result in stern disciplinary action not only because we want our school to be a safe learning environment but also because we wish our students to learn positive ways to solve conflicts in their future. The punishment for a fight will be determined by the degree of involvement of the individual students. Most fights have loosely defined stages or steps including mouthing, taunting, cursing or other put-downs, threatening, pushing and shoving, and wrestling, as well as actual hitting. All of these steps are considered contributing factors to, and a part of, the fight. In most cases both students are deeply involved in several of these steps. For that reason, except in very rare instances, all parties involved in any of the steps of a fight will be disciplined.

Each of the developing stages of a conflict presents the opportunity for a student to simply walk away or to notify an adult of the problem. To refuse to do so is a choice to continue the development of the fight.

Suspension could result for both parties. Including, but not limited to, ISS for pushing-shoving fights or verbal altercations, depending on the nature of the situation. OSS if punches are thrown. The setting and nature of the incident and altercation can also affect the discipline assigned and can include but is not limited to 2 – 10 days of OSS. In addition, any student who actively encourages the fight or contributes to its developing stages may also be disciplined, and this includes attempting to record fights on cell phones. Repeat fighting will result in notification of the SRO for potential charges and arrest, the filing of a petition in Juvenile Court for unruly behavior, and referral to the School Board Disciplinary Hearing Authority for a hearing.

FIRE ALARMS

Fire alarms are located in the building. They should only be used in case of a fire. If any student is found guilty of pulling a false alarm, he/she will be disciplined accordingly and reported to the necessary authorities.

FIRE DRILLS

When a fire drill is conducted, we expect our students to leave the building in a quiet and orderly manner. Fire drill plans for evacuation have been given to each teacher. Students are to follow the specific instructions of the adult in charge, regardless of the period of the day when the alarm is sounded. Stay with your teacher and do not mix with other classes. Because of the safety issue involved, it is critical that every student gives total cooperation to the school or emergency officials on the scene. If a student is between classes when the alarm is sounded, he/she should walk immediately to the nearest exit. Once outside, quietly await instructions from an adult.

GIFT DELIVERY

Rucker-Stewart Middle School requests that you do not send special occasion balloons, flowers or gifts to your child at school. Such items will not be delivered to classrooms and cannot be transported on school buses.

GRADES AND GRADING SCALE

We expect middle school students to be responsible for getting information to their parents. Report cards will be posted in Skyward after each grading period. In addition, Progress Reports will be posted at the midpoint of each marking period. Refer to the school year calendar provided in this handbook for approximate dates that signal the end of the marking period. The Sumner County Board of Education has set the following grading scale for use by all middle schools:

A	100-90	D	69-60
B	89-80	F	59 and below
C	79-70		

GUIDANCE SERVICES

The middle school guidance program is directed toward providing counseling to all students. Our counselors are available to help parents and students. These services are focused on the following needs of the students: personal, social, educational, and vocational. The service is provided in an atmosphere of friendship, cooperation, and confidentiality. Students may stop by between classes to sign up for an individual session with the counselor. The student must then be on time for class and wait for the counselor to call him/her to guidance. **Do not wait in the office for the counselor**, who may be in a classroom conducting a class. Parents and teachers may refer a student to the counselor. The guidance counselor works with students individually, in small groups, and in the classroom.

HALL PRIVILEGES

Any student in the hall must have a hall pass from the teacher to whose classroom he/she is assigned during the period. During class change transitions students should move from one classroom to another in a timely and orderly fashion. No gum, candy, chips, snacks, or food or any type should be consumed in the hallway during transitions or during the school day.

HARASSING / INTIMIDATION POLICY

Students caught hazing, harassing, or involved in any intimidation of another student will be dealt with accordingly. Each older student is expected to assist new and younger students in a helpful and friendly manner.

HARRASSMENT / SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Any harassment towards any student or teacher will result in stern disciplinary action. Any student who is a victim of any form of harassment should report the incident to their teacher, guidance counselor, principal, or assistant principal as soon as possible. The nature of the punishment will be determined by the severity of the harassment.

HOMEWORK

Time is allotted during the school day to complete most assignments, but often the student will find it necessary to work each evening on tasks they were unable to complete during the school day. Students should familiarize themselves with each of their teacher's homework policies. We also encourage you to limit TV and video game play on school nights.

HONOR ROLL

Students must have made an “A” in all subjects for the nine weeks to be placed on the “A” Honor Roll. The “AB” Honor Roll will include all students who have no grade lower than a “B” for the nine weeks.

HORSEPLAY/ HANDS OFF

Our school adheres to a “HANDS OFF” policy for our students. Students should refrain from putting hands on each other, examples include but are not limited to: PDA, play fighting, necking, pushing, shoving, running, chasing, kicking, etc.. When the policy is violated, the parents will be contacted, and we may require a conference. Have respect for yourself and your fellow students. Penalties will include: minimal first offense-warning, second offense detention and parent notification, third offense punishment that could include ISS or OSS.

ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS

Any student who becomes ill or injured must report to the office. If necessary, the nurse will make every effort to contact the parents. The home phone will be tried first, work phone second, and the emergency phone number will be called last. This procedure makes it imperative that your home, office, and emergency numbers are current. The student is not to make his/her own call. The parent is required to come in and sign his/her child out when they are too ill to remain at school. A parent who is aware of a serious illness, such as asthma, epilepsy, or diabetes, should notify the office **each year** and ensure that any vital treatment such as an inhaler is **on hand in the nurse's office** in the event of an emergency. Every accident in the school building, on the school grounds, at practice sessions, or at any athletic event sponsored by the school must be reported immediately to the person in charge and to the school office.

LOCKERS

Lockers will be assigned to all students. Access to lockers will be limited to three times during the day; before 1st block, after 2nd block, and after 4th block. Students who choose to utilize a locker will not be given additional transition time to access that locker, and they will need to manage their time accordingly. The lockers are the property of Rucker-Stewart Middle School and are subject to inspection by authorized school personnel. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. All lockers or other storage areas provided for student use on school premises remain the property of the school system and are subject to inspection, access for maintenance, and search. If your locker is damaged or in need of repair, report it to the office immediately.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items should be turned in or claimed in the office.

MEDICATION

Student medication should be administered by the parent at home whenever feasible. With written request of the parent and approval of the family physician and school administration, medication may be self-administered by the student in the presence of school office personnel. In such cases, medication should be brought to the office at the beginning of the school day to be self-administered by the student in our presence at the proper time. Whether prescription or otherwise, medication must be brought to school in its original container. (Pharmacies will give you a second labeled container for school if you ask.) A Consent for Medication Administration form must be completed and signed before we will accept or dispense any medications for your student. If the medication will be given routinely, send the proper amount to last one week. Students should arrange to take their medicine during the class changes and lunch break. At no time may any student be in

possession of any medication outside of the above regulations. Inhalers may be carried by students only in extreme cases and with the expressed consent of the principal based on the written orders of a physician.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

State law requires that we begin every day with a moment of silence. During this time all talking and movement shall cease. Any students in the hall are expected to stop movement and be quiet until the moment is over. Anyone failing to comply may be subject to disciplinary action.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

At Rucker-Stewart Middle School, the Sumner County award for perfect attendance, if awarded, shall be given only to those students who have not been absent from school, have not had a single tardy to school, and have not had a single early dismissal. In this case perfect shall mean perfect.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN ACTIONS

You will be held responsible for the things only YOU do or fail to do. What others do or do not do is of little importance in determining whether you have accepted your responsibility as a student/citizen of Rucker-Stewart Middle School. Your first responsibility is to decide how you should conduct yourself while you are at school. Your second responsibility is to be prepared to accept the privileges and consequences of your actions.

RESTROOMS

Students are expected to help keep restrooms clean, safe, graffiti free, and tobacco-free. If a student is caught vandalizing the restrooms, administration will assign discipline in relation to the severity of the act. Only one person at a time is allowed in a stall, if utilized outside of this expectation, discipline can be given. Restrooms generally should not be used when classes are in session. Students are to use the restroom that has been assigned to that area. **When an emergency arises that necessitates a student leaving class, a hall pass is required.**

SCHOOL BUS REGULATIONS

The bus drivers are in charge of all students who ride their buses. Any student who misbehaves on the bus may be suspended from riding the bus. Any student wishing to ride a bus other than his/her designated bus must have written parental permission and approval by the Principal or his designee and transportation. Any student who gets off the bus at any point between pick-up point and school must present the bus driver with a note of authorization from the principal or designee of the school. When a bus is used to transport students to any away event, those students are expected to ride that bus to and from the event. The privilege of riding a Sumner County School bus is conditioned on the student's behavior and observance of the rules that are posted in each bus. Any student who violates any of these rules will be reported to the Principal and are subject to suspension from the bus along with other potential disciplinary action. Bus suspensions are considered a serious matter and will be reported to the Director of Transportation and the School Board.

SELLING ITEMS AT SCHOOL

Soliciting and/or sales are not permitted. School clubs and organizations must secure permission from the administration to sell items of any type. Failure to do this will result in the confiscation of the merchandise. The merchandise will be returned to the parents upon their request. Other disciplinary action may also be taken against the student.

TARDY POLICY

Students arriving late to school in the morning must report to the office before going into the rest of the building. Students may present a parent note with legitimate reason for being late or the parent may come into the office and sign the child in. The student will be given an excused note to class. Students late without a note or parent to sign them in will be given an unexcused pass to class. A pattern of tardy to school will result in a referral to the attendance officer or other disciplinary action taken. Students tardy to any other class during the day may receive consequences determined by the classroom teacher. A pattern of tardy behavior to class will result in a student's referral to an administrator for further disciplinary action. It is important to be responsible and to demonstrate good work habits by being in your seat ready to work when it is time to start class.

PHONE

The office telephone is for business purposes only. Callers are asked to leave a message since students will not be called to the phone. Only emergency calls will be delivered during a class period. If the student needs to call home, he/she may do so between classes. A student who is sick is to come to the office where school personnel will contact a parent or guardian.

TEXTBOOKS

Each student is responsible for the book issued to him/her. Students are not to mark or damage books in any way, and the numbers are not to be changed. The student must pay for books that are lost or damaged. Additional textbooks will not be issued until the lost or damaged book has been paid for.

TORNADO AND SEVERE WEATHER DRILLS

The signal for a Severe Weather Drill will be given over the intercom system. The adult in charge will instruct students where to go. Remember to sit on the floor, cover the head, be silent, and listen for instructions. Because of the safety issues involved, it is critical that every student gives total cooperation to the school or emergency officials on the scene.

VISITORS

All parents, as well as professional staff from other schools, are welcomed and encouraged to visit our school. We do require that guests come to the office, sign in, and wear a name tag while visiting. Strangers without visitor name tags should be reported immediately. Students from other schools or school systems are not allowed to visit during school hours, including lunch. For safety reasons, never open an outside door for a visitor. Doing so could result in discipline being assigned for a security violation. All visitors must enter the building from the front doors.

WITHDRAWALS OR TRANSFERS

If a student is moving to another school during the year, he/she should notify the guidance office at least one day prior to the final day at school in order to secure the proper clearances for a transfer. Records will not be sent if any obligations remain.

Daily Bell Schedule

Schedule A – Regular Schedule

Bell Schedule for 2023-2024

1st Block – 7:45 – 9:15

1st Period – 7:45 – 8:29

2nd Period – 8:31 – 9:15

2nd Block – 9:18 – 10:48

3rd Period – 9:18 – 10:02

4th Period – 10:04 – 10:48

3rd Block – 10:50 – 1:10

5th Period (6th & 7th grade only) - 11:10 – 12:23

8th Grade – 11:10 – 11:58

6th Period (6th & 7th grade only) - 12:25 – 1:10

8th Grade – 12:00 – 1:10

4th Block – 1:13 – 2:45

7th Period – 1:13 – 1:58

8th Period – 2:00 – 2:45

*Warning bells will ring one min before the blocks start at – 7:44, 9:17, 10:49, and 1:12

*A bell will ring for the start and dismissal of the blocks.

*A different tone will be used for the dismissal of 1st period, 3rd period, 5th period, & 7th period.

*No tardy bell will be used for the start of 2nd period, 4th period, 6th period, & 8th period.

*5th period will have two bells – 6th & 7th grade will dismiss at 12:23

8th grade will dismiss at 11:58

Schedule B - Assembly Schedule

1st Period – 7:45 – 8:25

2nd Period – 8:27 – 9:07

3rd Period – 9:09 – 10:49

4th Period – 9:51 – 10:31

6th grade - Lunch - 10:33 - 11:03 5th - 11:03 - 11:43 6th - 11:45 - 12:25	7th grade - Lunch - 11:03 - 11:33 5th - 10:33 - 11:43 (Part 1-10:32-11:03/Part 2-11:33-11:43) 6th - 11:45- 12:25	8th grade - Lunch - 11:33 - 12:03 5th - 10:33 - 11:13 6th - 11:15- 12:25 (Part 1-11:15-11:33/Part 2-12:03-12:25)
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7th Period – 12:27 – 1:08

8th Period – 1:09 – 1:48

Dismiss to the pep rally by the announcements at 1:50

Dismiss from Pep Rally 2:30

Students will return to 8th period for dismissal

2-hour Delay Schedule

9:30 dismissal Bell

9:40 warning bell

1st Period 9:45-10:17

2nd Period 10:19 – 10:51

10:53 = late bell for lunch/start of 3rd

3rd & 4th Period / Lunch 10:53 – 12:25

3rd Period (6th & 7th only) 10:53 - 11:50

4th Period (6th & 7th only) 11:53 - 12:25

8th Grade: 10:53 - 11:25

8th Grade: 11:28 - 12:25

5th Period 12:28 – 1:00

6th Period 1:03 – 1:35

7th Period 1:38 – 2:10

8th Period 2:13 – 2:45

Important Dates 24-25 SY

9/2/24 - Labor Day – Schools Closed

9/23/24 - Parent-Teacher Conferences – No Students

10/4/24 - End of Quarter 1 (45 days)

10/7/24 - 10/11/24 - Fall Break – Schools Closed

11/5/24 -Principal Discretion PL Day 4 – No Students (Election Day)

11/25/24 - 11/29/24 - Thanksgiving Break – Schools Closed

12/20/24 - End of Quarter 2 (44 day) / Semester 1 – Abbreviated Day

12/23/24 - 1/2/25 - Winter Break – Schools Closed

1/3/25 - Instructional Focus Day 4 – No Students

1/6/25 - Administrative Day 4 - No Students

1/7/25 - First Day of Second Semester for Students

1/20/25 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No Students

2/17/24 - President's Day - Principal Discretion PL Day 5 – No Students

3/7/25 - End of 3rd Quarter (43 days)

3/10/25 – 3/14/25 - Spring Break – Schools Closed

4/18/25 – School Closed

5/21/25 - Last Day of School for Students

5/22/25 - Administrative Day 5 - No Students

5/23/25 - Abbreviated Day - End of Quarter 4/End of Semester/ End of School Year - (No Students)

CONTINUOUS NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Sumner County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs or activities; and provides equal access to all programs and youth groups. The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Title VI/IX Coordinators:

Ms. Katie Brown (if student to student), Safe Schools, Healthy Students Coordinator, 695 East Main Street, Gallatin, TN 37066, 615-451- 6500, katie.brown@sumnerschools.org

Mr. Craig Ott (if adults are involved), Assistant Director for Human Resources. 695 East Main Street, Gallatin, TN 37066, 615-451- 5226, craig.ott@sumnerschools.org

504 Coordinator:

Ms. Selena Elmore, SCS Section 504 District Coordinator, 695 East Main Street, Gallatin, TN 37066, 615-451-6598, selena.elmore@sumnerschools.org

Notes