

Robert E. Ellis Middle School

Student Handbook



2017-2018

Robert E. Ellis Middle School (est. 1994) is a community of students, parents, and teachers where students have authentic learning experiences to grow academically, socially, and as citizens with responsibilities to our community and one another.

ROBERT ELLIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

100 Indian Lake Road
Hendersonville, TN 37075
615-264-6093
2016 – 2017

School – <http://ems.sumnerschools.org>

County – www.sumnerschools.org

Transportation – www.sumnerbus.com

Office Hours – 7:00 – 3:00

Faculty Hours – 7:15 – 2:45

Student Hours – 7:30 – 2:30

Our Vision:

Robert E. Ellis Middle School (est. 1994) is a community of students, parents, and teachers where students have authentic learning experiences to grow academically, socially, and as citizens with responsibilities to our community and one another.

Our Mission:

To provide a **collaborative school community** where students receive **quality instruction** by exemplary **leadership** and staff and are supported by **shared resources**.

Our Beliefs:

A **collaborative culture** at Ellis Middle School is--

- created by supportive relationships among students, parents, teachers, and the community, and
- maintained by working as a team, involving and inviting different thoughts and opinions, and engaging in active problem solving.

Shared resources at Ellis Middle School are--

- sought after and utilized so that students have full access to relevant learning experiences,
- protected so that teachers are given time and research-based materials to work with students, and
- appreciated so that our community sees an inviting campus seeking to represent the needs and values of our students and parents.

Quality instruction at Ellis Middle School is--

- evident by structured learning environments of students who are actively engaged in a variety of activities, tasks, and
- planned by exemplary teachers focused on goals relevant to each student's future.

Leadership at Ellis Middle School is--

- the collective work of students, parents, teachers, and staff taking pride and ownership in the responsibility and success of the school through
- communicating with mutual respect and
- student-focused and always by example.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS AT ELLIS MIDDLE

Art Club	Chess Club	History Team
Athletics	Chorus	Honor Society
Awards Assembly	Dances	Math Club
Band	Drama Club	Orchestra
Diversity Club	Dress-Up Days	Spelling/Geography Bee
Book Club	FCA	Student Council
Cheerleading/Pep Squad	Game Club	Talent Show
		Writing Club

SOME OF THE AWARDS AT YEAR'S END

Academic Awards	Service Awards	Performance Awards
All A's for the Year	Citizenship	Band
Art	Club Officers	Chorus
Duke TIP Talent Search	Library	Computer
Language Arts	Principal's Service	History Team
Math		Math Team
Presidential Academics		Perfect Attendance
Science		Technology
Social Studies		Teen Living

ARRIVAL PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS

Note: Upon arriving at school, whether by bus or self-transport, students should report to the gym if prior to 7:23. Students are not allowed to leave campus. Failure to comply will be disciplined as skipping school. 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 extra help from a teacher in the mornings before classes. A pass is needed in order to meet the teacher in the classroom.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Tennessee Compulsory School Attendance Law:

T.C.A. 49-6-3001. Every parent, guardian, or other person residing within the state of Tennessee, having control or charge of any child or children between the ages of six (6) and seventeen (17) years, both inclusive*, shall cause such child or children to attend public or nonpublic school, and in event of failure to do so, shall be subject to the penalties hereinafter provided.

***The meaning of the word "inclusive" is that the child must attend school from six (6) until eighteen (18) years of age.**

Penalty for Violation

Any parent, guardian, or other person who has control of a child or children, and who shall violate the provisions of this part shall be guilty of a Class C misdemeanor. Each day's unlawful absence shall constitute a separate misdemeanor. Special Education Students: Any decision concerning attendance of a special education student shall be an IEP-Team decision and shall be in accordance with controlling law.

Absences Defined

Present: means a student being in attendance at the school or class to which he/she is assigned. For truancy purposes and perfect attendance, present shall mean attending for a full school day. *****PERFECT ATTENDANCE RECOGNITION IS BASED UPON BEING PRESENT FOR THE FULL SCHOOL DAY WITH NO EARLY DISMISSALS AND NO TARDIES IN SCHOOL.**

Absent: means a student not being in attendance at the school or in the class to which he is assigned. There are two categories of absences which follow:

Excused absences: Absences tolerated by the school system under the law because of the cause and benefits of the absence to the student as verified by proof outweigh the benefits which would have been achieved by attending school. For absences of a full day or part day to be considered excused, a written note from the

parent, guardian, or a doctor must be provided. After an accumulation of five days of excused absences, the parent/guardian must file more formal documentation with the principal to assure classification as an excused absence.

Adequate reasons for absences include the following:

1. Student's personal illness, medical appointment, or hospitalization verified by a licensed physician, dentist or health agency. If the illness or hospitalization is to exceed ten (10) consecutive days, the parent or guardian should apply for homebound instruction after the first five (5) days of consecutive absences.
2. Death of a family member. Death of a non-family person if approved by the principal.
3. Special recognized religious holidays regularly observed by a particular faith. A parent note must be submitted to the school principal prior to the student being absent for a religious holiday.
4. Required court appearances. Verification of a court appearance times from appropriate authorities must be provided.
5. Approved school related activities. Prior approval by the principal is required.
6. Other extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student. For such absences to be excused, they must be approved by the principal or his/her designee.

All notes, letters, and other pertinent information related to absences shall be maintained for one (1) year in a file at the school. Students shall makeup work missed during excused absences. See section on Makeup Work.

Unexcused absences: absences which are not verified or which do not meet valid reasons for absences.

****Per SCBOE Attendance Policy JB, students will be allowed to request and complete make-up work upon their return from an absence. Work will not be given in advance of an absence. Absences due to personal athletic competitions, family vacations, or other absences not outlined above will be considered unexcused. All out-of-school suspensions are unexcused.**

Reporting Procedures

Schools shall make every reasonable effort to make daily contact with parents/guardians regarding student absences whether excused or unexcused. These efforts shall be documented in writing. Each teacher is responsible for keeping an accurate attendance record on each student enrolled in his/her class. For those students who have five unexcused absences, an attendance review meeting must be scheduled with an administrator and an attendance contract signed. Excessive absences at the elementary and middle school levels could subject a student to possible retention.

Procedure To Follow When Absent:

1. The student must bring a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian. A note from a doctor is very important if a visit has been made.
2. The student must receive an admit slip before entering class. This pass is to be obtained from the attendance area in the office.
3. The student who does not have a note from home must report to the attendance area before 7:30 am.

All absentee notes must include the following:

- A. Student's first and last name
 - B. Reason for absence
 - C. Date of absence(s) – Please indicate if the absence is a full day or if the absence is for coming in late or leaving early.
 - D. Parent or legal guardian's full name (signature).
4. The student has a maximum of three (3) school days to bring in 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 the class begins or after the class ends. All work must be completed prior to the next grading period.
 6. Please do not call the office for make-up work unless the student has been absent at least three (3) consecutive days. On the third day, the parent must call the office no later than 7:45 am if they wish to pick up a student's work that afternoon. Make-up work may be picked up in the office after 2:30 pm and until 3:00 pm. The school office hours are 7:00 am – 3:00 pm.

MAKEUP WORK

Work missed during excused absences must be made up within 3 school days of the student's return to school. It is the student's responsibility to request work when returning from an absence. Under extenuating circumstances, the due date for this work shall be adjusted at the discretion of the principal. Schoolwork missed during days of suspension is expected to be made up within three school days when the student returns to school.

TARDY POLICY

Students late to school with a "**Verified**" tardy, (for a dental or medical appointment), must present a note from the dentist/doctor upon arrival. All other tardies will be **unexcused**. Students must serve an extended day on the third tardy to school or class period without an excused/verified note. A pattern of tardy to school or class could result in a referral to the attendance officer or major infraction referrals leading to ISS/OSS. This policy is in effect for the entire school year. See the full tardy progression below:

EMS Tardy Progression (per semester)

Purpose – The primary purpose of the EMS tardy progression is to protect instructional time for each individual student and to ensure that all students understand the importance of punctuality as an essential professional trait for college and career success.

Tardy Intervention – Teachers will work with students to establish efficient transitional practices to support being on time to class. Adjustment time will be given at the beginning of the school year.

Tardy Defined – Students will be counted as tardy if they are not fully in a classroom and moving in the direction of their seat as the bell sounds.

Tardy Passes – Students will receive tardy passes from faculty and staff members if official school business has prevented them from being on time to a class. Tardies to school must be verified.

Extended Day Defined – Extended day is an assigned period of 30 minutes in which a student must stay after school to continue instructional work assignments. This will take place on Wednesday afternoons.

1st Tardy – Students will sign the tardy record in the classroom.

2nd Tardy – Students will sign the tardy record in the classroom. The tardy policy will be sent home and must be signed by the parent/guardian.

3rd Tardy – Student will sign the tardy record in the classroom. A parent will be contacted by a school administrator. Student will serve an extended day.

4th Tardy – Student will sign the tardy record in the classroom. A parent will be contacted by a school administrator. Student will serve an extended day.

5th Tardy – Student will sign the tardy record in the classroom. Student will be issued a major referral. Detention will be assigned.

6th Tardy – Student will sign the tardy record in the classroom. Student will be issued a major referral. Detention will be assigned.

7th Tardy – Student will sign the tardy record in the classroom. Student will be issued a major referral. One day of ISS will be assigned.

This policy applies to unexcused tardies to school as it has a significant impact to 1st period and a student's mindset for the school day. Additional truancy actions may occur related to unexcused tardies to school. Please review the attendance expectations in the student handbook.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Permission to be dismissed from school must be obtained from the office before 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. 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 to the office and be seen by the nurse. Students who leave without securing official permission will be considered truant and subject to disciplinary action. It is a state and county regulation that students are not to be released during school hours unless they are actually delivered into the custody of the child's parents or designated individual and that any request for release of the child contrary to these regulations will not be honored. We will not release students to walk to medical appointments during the school day. Parents are to report to the office should their child have to leave school

prior to dismissal. Parents are not to pick up at the bus exit during the 2:30 pm dismissal. They must arrange to pick up their child at the front of the school. Car rider and bus traffic areas are separate

DRESS AND GROOMING POLICY

When, in the opinion of the administration and staff, a student is not dressed appropriately or exhibits grooming which is considered detrimental to the educational environment, appropriate action may be taken. EMS promotes age-appropriate modesty and will not apologize for asking a student to change their attire.

1. Girls are expected to keep dresses and skirts at the specified lengths. The skirt length or slits in the skirt must not be higher than **3 inches** from the bend of the back of the knee.
2. Apparel considered revealing will not be permitted. Low cut shirts, tight shorts, pajama pants, lounge pants, yoga pants, jeggings, form fitting or body conforming clothes, tank tops, mesh shirts, mini-skirts, body suits, halter tops, spandex shorts, etc. are not allowed.
3. Leggings may be worn **ONLY with appropriate length skirt/dress** (3 inches from the bend of the knee). A student's clothing must cover the midriff at all times. The shirt needs to cover the entire middle portion of the body at all times. Underclothing is not to be seen at any time.
4. Both male and female students are allowed to wear walking length shorts to school (no stretchy or tight shorts). Shorts must not be higher than **3 inches** from the bend of the back of the knee. No cut-offs.
5. No holes, frayed or torn clothing may be worn.
6. Shirts, blouses, and dresses must have **sleeves** that cover the end of the shoulder.
7. Students are not allowed to wear head apparel, such as hats, bandanas, etc., inside the building.
8. Students may not wear clothing that mentions drugs, vulgar captions, cigarettes, alcohol or any other obscene suggestive, provocative, or disruptive apparel. Shorts and/or pants are not to have writing on/or across the back or front of the clothing. Students may not wear clothing or articles related to gangs or weapons.
9. Shoes must be worn at all times. Cleated shoes and retractable roller shoes (i.e. heelys) are not allowed.
10. Sunglasses are not to be worn inside the building except when prescribed by a doctor.
11. The belt line of all garments must fall at or above the tops of the hips. Underwear may never show.
12. No body piercing jewelry except earrings in the ear may be worn during the school hours or at after school sponsored events.
13. Jewelry must not be distracting/disruptive or unsafe.
14. Valuable clothes and jewelry are discouraged.
15. Tattoos or body art is not allowed and must be covered up or washed off. This includes drawing on hands/arms using markers or pens.
16. Excessive, distracting, make-up or extreme unnatural hair color is not allowed.
17. Students may not wear saggy, sagging or dragging pants.

Note: Any student in violation of the dress code will be sent to the office and will have to change into appropriate clothing before returning to class. Continued refusal to adhere to dress code may result in ISS.

COUGAR CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Learning can only take place in a safe, orderly, and respectful environment. Therefore, the Ellis Middle Code of Discipline aligns with 3 non-negotiable expectations:

Be Safe

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

Choices and behaviors that do not match these expectations will not be tolerated. In addition to the Sumner County Board policies that govern student discipline (JC, JCB, JCC), Ellis will use our "Cougar Code of Conduct" to 1) secure the student's attention; 2) provide feedback about the misconduct; and 3) effect change or correct the behavior through intervention and/or consequences, thereby creating a better learning atmosphere for the entire class. The disciplinary action must relate to the student's misconduct and the development of the student's more appropriate behavior. **See the expectations chart on the Ellis website:**

DISCIPLINE

We expect our students to behave in a manner that shows responsible, safe, and respectful actions towards teachers, other students, and the school environment. Students will be provided clear examples of the expectations using the charts on page 8. All behaviors that do not meet the expectations will be documented as minor or major infractions. Teachers and staff will issue infractions for minor offenses (examples: chewing gum, unprepared for class, minor horseplay, etc.). More restrictive consequences will be issued for serious offenses that significantly disrupt instruction and the safety of others (examples: inappropriate language or contact, disrespect, defiance, damage to property, truancy, theft, harassment, etc.) Students will receive due process when found to be in violation of a school expectation and given the opportunity to give an account. Teachers will be responsible for notifying parents at the 2nd infraction for a minor offense. Parents will also be notified by an administrator at the 3rd and 4th minor infractions, at which time the student will be assigned to an after school detention. Detention will be scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays. At the 5th minor infraction, the student is assigned to 1 day ISS. Students suspected to be in violation of any major infractions will be referred immediately to an administrator in most situations. Some major infractions can be managed by the classroom teacher. Consequences for major infractions include: restitution, detention, ISS, OSS, or a referral to a disciplinary hearing authority. Student discipline records are secured at the school and can be reviewed by a parent upon request. A student's record of minor infractions revert to zero at each semester. Major infractions will revert to zero only after a student has accomplished 5 infraction free months. See the full discipline progression below:

Discipline Progression

Classroom teachers and the school administration will make every effort to create clear and consistent expectations, environmental routines and procedures to maintain safety, and behavioral interventions to support individual needs. As students fail to meet these expectations after prompting and interventions, students will be issued minor and major infractions. See the below progression of consequences.

Minor Infractions (per semester)

- 1st Minor Offense – Teacher conferences with student about expectations and may issue a classroom intervention or consequence.
- 2nd Minor Offense – Teacher conferences with student about expectations, issues conduct intervention session, and contacts parent.
- 3rd Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues detention, and contacts parent.
- 4th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues detention and conduct intervention session, and contacts parent.
- 5th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues 1 day ISS, works with parent/teacher team to develop behavioral contract, and contacts parent.
- 6th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues 2 days of ISS, and contacts parent. Student will lose extracurricular privileges for the remainder of the semester or 2 months whichever is longer.
- 7th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues 1 day of OSS, adjusts behavior plan, and contacts parent.
- 8th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues 3 days of OSS, and contacts parent. Student loses extracurricular privileges for the remainder of the school year.
- 9th Minor Offense – Administrator conference with student and parent about expectations, issues 5 days of OSS.
- 10th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student and parent about expectations, issues 10 days OSS, and schedules disciplinary hearing.

Major Infractions

- 1st Major Offense – Administrator or teacher conferences with student about expectations and issues detention/restitution. Parent will be contacted
- 2nd Major Offense – Administrator or teacher conferences with student about expectations and issues detention or restitution and a behavioral intervention session. Parent will be contacted.

- 3rd Major Offense – Administrator or teacher conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 2 days ISS, works with parent/teacher team to develop behavioral contract, and contacts parent. Student will lose extracurricular privileges for the remainder of the semester or 2 months whichever is longer.
- 4th Major Offense - Administrator or teacher conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 2 days OSS, and contacts parent. Student loses extracurricular privileges for the remainder of the school year.
- 5th Major Offense - Administrator or teacher conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 5 days OSS, and contacts parent.
- 5th Major Offense - Administrator or teacher conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 10 days OSS, schedules disciplinary hearing, and contacts parent.

Conduct Intervention Session

A conduct intervention session will be assigned to students that consistently demonstrate behaviors below expectations. These sessions will focus on the identification of improved behaviors and the process that a student must go through to make appropriate choices. Conduct intervention sessions will last up to one class period and will occur during a students related arts class. Specific grade level teachers will conduct these intervention sessions.

Detention

A student may be assigned to an after school detention by an administrator or teacher for major infractions or the buildup of minor infractions. Detention is served for 1 hour on Tuesdays or Thursdays, from 2:30-3:30, and will be supervised by an administrator or designee. Failure to serve a detention within a reasonable time frame (usually 3-4 school days) will result in ISS. Students serving a detention must arrange their own transportation promptly at 3:30. Alternative detention times may be scheduled in the morning for unique situations.

In School Suspension (ISS)

In an attempt to provide a more constructive program and as an alternative to corporal punishment or out-of-school suspension, students will be assigned “in school suspension”. 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. Any student who has to be removed from in school suspension, will be changed to out of school suspension and may not be assigned to ISS for the remainder of that semester. Any willful and persistent violation of school rules may result in a disciplinary hearing. Students receiving multiple incidences of ISS may not attend field trips, school dances, athletic events, or extracurricular activities and clubs for the remainder of that semester or 2 school months, whichever is longer. ***Students receiving multiple incidences of ISS in the 2nd semester may not participate in end of year grade activities.**

OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION (OSS): [TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED 49-6-3401, 49-2-203(a)(8), 49-6-4216 (Suspension of Students)]

Any principal or Principal-Teacher of any public school in this state is authorized to suspend a pupil from attendance at such school, including its sponsored activities, or from riding a school bus, for good and sufficient reasons. Good and sufficient reasons for such suspension may include, but shall not be limited to (1) Willful and persistent violation of the rules of the school or truancy; (2) Immoral or disreputable conduct or 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 any person attending or assigned to said school; (5) Inciting, advising or counseling of others to engage in any of the acts hereinbefore enumerated; (6) Marking, defacing or destroying school property; (7) Possession of a pistol, gun, or firearm on school property; (8) Possession of a knife, etc., as defined in Section 39-17-1301 on school property; (9) Assaulting a Principal or Teacher with vulgar, obscene or threatening language; (10) Unlawful use or possession of barbitol or legend drugs; (11) Any other conduct prejudicial to good order or discipline in any public school. Any principal or principal-teacher may suspend any pupil from attendance at the school pursuant to an in-school suspension policy adopted by the local board of education. Good and sufficient reasons for such in-school suspension shall include, but not 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.

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, however, 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.

BUS CONDUCT

The principal of the student transported shall be informed by the bus driver of any serious discipline problems and may be called upon to assist if necessary. A student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if determined by the principal that the student's behavior is such as to cause disruption on the bus, or when the student disobeys state or local rules and regulations pertaining to student transportation. Parents/students must provide transportation to and from school if they are denied transportation because of bus suspension. Any student who gets off the bus at any point between the pick-up point and school must present the bus driver with a note of authorization from the parent and signed by the principal of the school that the student attends. Any student wishing to ride a bus other than the student's designated bus must have written parental permission and approved by the principal or designee prior to boarding the bus. If your child's bus is late arriving, please call 452-1520 for information. The website provides bus assignment information (www.sumnerbus.com).

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 may receive a "0" for the work and a parent will be notified. Further disciplinary action may be required by the administration.

FIGHTING

There is no place for fighting at Ellis Middle School. Fighting will result in stern disciplinary action not only because we want our school to be a safe learning environment but also because we want 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, 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 will almost always result for both parties: ISS for pushing-shoving fights, OSS if punches are thrown. In addition, any student who actively encourages the fight or contributes to its developing stages may also be disciplined. Repeat fighting will result in notification of the Hendersonville Police Department for arrest, the filing of a petition in Juvenile Court for unruly behavior, and referral to the School Board Disciplinary Committee for a hearing.

OTHER GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Students will be present to class by being completely in the classroom and moving in the direction of their seat. Loitering in the classroom is not permitted.
2. Students are not permitted to leave school grounds at any time without office permission. A student who leaves campus and then returns to catch a bus will be considered skipping school.
3. Students are not to leave class without permission from the teacher. Doing so will be considered skipping class and/or defiance.
4. Students are not to buy, sell or trade articles at school. Any student who violates this regulation is personally responsible for the consequences, and disciplinary action will be taken.
5. Students are not to chew gum in school and to eat/drink in classes or hallways.
6. Loitering in hallways and rest rooms is not permitted. Students are expected to remain in assigned areas as determined by grade.

7. Toys, music players, cell phones, iPods, video games, laser pointers, and any other personal property that is judged disruptive to the educational process are not allowed at school and will be confiscated. The school will not assume any responsibility for personal property (including money). In accordance with Board policy, cell phones are to be turned off, and kept in the student's locker or in the office. If this expectation is not followed, the student will not be allowed to bring a cell phone to school. A written policy for cell phones and electronic devices will be given to each student and signed by each parent at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment. See the policy below.
8. Skates and/or skateboards are not to be brought to school or ridden on the school campus at any time.
9. 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. This includes school buses. Failure to comply within two (2) weeks will subject parents or guardians to prosecution.
10. Gambling in school is prohibited.
11. Any stealing or destruction of a fellow student's property may result in a suspension from school. Full reimbursement/restitution will be required.
12. Obscene or distasteful literature, illustrations, or inappropriate jokes, language, comments, or gestures that others may see or hear are not allowed.
13. Shanking (pulling down pants/shorts) will result in out of school suspension.
14. Students will abide by all Board and local policies regarding technology and internet use.

POLICY ON ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Handheld electronic devices – including but not limited to: cell phones, smart watches, iPods, MP3/Music players, video games, Gameboys, Personal game devices, etc.

All electronic devices **must be turned off and put away** when students enter the building each morning. They **must remain off** until the 2:30 pm bell rings. Phones should be off and kept in lockers.

1st Unintentional Offense – If a cell phone rings inside a student's pocket or backpack without any intentional use, it will be removed and the parent will pick it up in the office. All other unintentional offenses will be treated by the below progression.

1st Offense – Item taken up and sent to office. Teacher issues minor infraction. Parent must pick up item from office and initial minor infraction notice. Parent will receive a copy of this policy.

2nd Offense – Item taken up and sent to office. Administration issues major infraction. Detention assigned. Parent must pick up item from office and initial the major infraction notice.

3rd Offense – Item taken up and sent to office. Administration issues major infraction. One day ISS assigned. Student may not bring item back to school. Parent must pick up item from office and initial the major infraction notice.

4th Offense – Item taken up and sent to office. Administration issues major infraction. One day OSS assigned. Student may not bring item back to school. Parent must pick up item from office and initial the major infraction notice. Student loses extracurricular privileges for the remainder of the semester or 2 months whichever is longer.

5th Offense – Item taken up and sent to office. Administration issues major infraction. 3 days OSS assigned. Student may not bring item back to school. Parent must pick up item from office and initial the major infraction notice.

6th Offense – Item taken up and sent to office. Administration issues major infraction. 10 days OSS assigned and disciplinary hearing scheduled. Parent must pick up item from office and initial the major infraction notice.

Additional note: Students using cameras, camera phones or video recording devices in bathrooms, locker rooms, or in any other manner to cause a school disruption may be suspended out of school on the first offense.

PROCEDURAL DUE PROCESS

Before school authorities shall administer disciplinary measures, reasonable inquiry shall be made to determine the truth of what happened. The nature of this inquiry will vary in degree with the seriousness of the offense and the consequence attached thereto. For minor offenses where corrective measures are taken by the classroom teacher, no formal procedure is required. An inquiry into the incident shall be conducted to ensure that the offender is accurately identified, that he understands the nature of the offense, and that he knew the consequences of the offense for which he is accused. Students will be given an opportunity to provide a statement. In case of severe offenses where there is a possibility of suspension, the student shall be advised of the nature of his misconduct, questioned about it, and allowed to give a detailed explanation. Parents will be contacted. If the principal determines that the offense is of such nature that the student's continued presence would be detrimental to the school or persons within the school, he shall refer the case to the disciplinary hearing authority.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements may be made twice a day (1st and 7th periods only). All messages must be sent in prior to announcements. Students are responsible for any announcement that is made and must be quiet in order to hear them. Classroom instruction will not be interrupted for message delivery.

ATHLETICS

At Ellis Middle School, interscholastic athletics can play an important role for the students. We strive to mentor our students through competitive athletics, emphasizing teamwork, setting goals, and sportsmanship. All our student-athletes abide by TMSSA guidelines as well as maintain exemplary academic performance. A set of athletic policies and guidelines has been established and is available from the principal upon request. This includes tryout information and eligibility standards.

CAFETERIA- PHONE 615-264-6096

Lunch payments may be made on-line at www.mypaymentsplus.com using your child's student I.D. # or in the cafeteria by check or cash only. Checks should be made payable to EMS Cafeteria. Your child's first and last name, their student I.D. #, and a phone number must be on the check for proper processing. Sumner County's School Nutrition Program is now using Nexcheck as the service provider for collection of insufficient fund checks. The fee is \$30.00 in addition to the amount of the check. Also, counter checks will not be accepted. Student payments for lunch will be maintained in the cafeteria computer. No change will be given on \$20, \$50, or \$100 bills or checks. Any student having financial issues should see the Principal or Assistant Principal. Parents should check their child out if they would like to eat lunch with them. 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, beverages, utensils or straws out of the cafeteria. Glass containers are not allowed. Students are expected to remain seated at all times. Scuffling, breaking line or throwing drinks or food will be strictly disciplined, possibly resulting in out-of-school suspension.

CONFERENCES

Parents wishing to schedule a conference with a teacher should contact that teacher via email or phone call. Appointments are to be made with teachers before or after school or during their planning time by calling the office. Please make appointments a day or two in advance. A teacher will not be called out of a class for phone calls. Parents wishing to call an IEP meeting should contact the Special Education case manager assigned to the student.

EXAMS

Exams will not be given early. Any student absent (unexcused) will receive an "F" on the exam. Per Board Policy, final exams will count as 10% of Term 2.

GIFT DELIVERY

Ellis 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

Report cards will be sent home with the students the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grading periods. Report cards for the 4th marking period will be mailed home. In addition, Progress Reports will be sent home with the students at the 4½ week period. If your son or daughter does not bring these reports home, the office should be notified immediately. Grade portal is available for parents to electronically monitor their child's progress. We expect middle school students to be responsible for getting information to their parents.

A=93-100 B=85-92 C=75-84 D=70-74 F=0-69

GUIDANCE SERVICES

The middle school guidance program is directed toward providing counseling to all students. The counselor is 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. Each student should be accompanied by a buddy assigned by the teacher at all times.

HOMEWORK

Time is allotted during the school day to complete most assignments, but often the student will find it necessary to work some time each evening on tasks they were unable to complete during the school day. Students should spend at least 60 minutes on homework or reading each evening. Acceptance of late work is at the discretion of the teacher.

ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS

Any student who becomes ill or injured must report to the office to see the nurse, if available. If necessary, students must use the office phone when calling about an illness. Students should not use their personal phone to call. The primary phone will be tried first, work phone second, and the emergency phone number will be called last. This procedure makes it imperative that your primary, office, and emergency numbers are current. The parent is expected to come in and sign his/her child out when they are too ill to remain at school. A parent who is aware of any serious illness, such as epilepsy or diabetes, whether chronic or acute, should notify the office. 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. The appropriate reports and communication will be completed.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to TN state law, all students entering 7th grade must submit the immunization certificate showing they have received both a tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis booster (Tdap), and a second dose of varicella vaccine (a vaccine against chickenpox) if they have never had chickenpox or a documented history of chickenpox. *****Students will NOT be allowed to attend class unless the Official Immunization Certificate showing the required immunizations has been provided to the school.** All new students enrolled for the first time must submit an up-to-date immunization certificate. Exemptions are allowed only for religious or medical reasons; exemption requests must be submitted on the official form

LIBRARY

Library hours are 7:20 am – 2:30 pm. Students must have a pass from their teacher to come to the library during school hours. Orientation will be provided for students at their first library visit. Books may be checked out for a two week period, with one renewal. Overdue books are assessed a fine of \$0.05 a day. Additional books may not be checked out until the fine is paid and books are returned. The price of a lost book is determined by the current replacement value based on retail prices. Library computers are to be used for academic purposes.

LOCKERS

A locker will be issued to each student. The lockers are the property of Ellis Middle School and are subject to inspection by authorized school personnel. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Lockers offer minimal security and items of unusual value should not be placed in the locker. **It is the student's responsibility to keep his/her own locker and not share it or the combination with others.** Any student using a locker that is the property of the school system has no right of privacy in that locker or its contents. All lockers or other storage areas provided for student use on school premises remain the property of the school system and are provided for the use of students subject to inspection, access for maintenance, and search. Rigging, altering/adjusting the lock/locker to bypass the combination lock will forfeit use of their locker and the student will be responsible for cost of repair. If your locker is damaged or needs repair, report it to the office immediately. ***Students are never allowed to switch lockers without permission from the administration. Notice shall be posted in each school that lockers and other storage areas are school property and are subject to search.

MEDICATION

All non-prescription drugs given in school shall:

- a. Be brought in with the original label listing the ingredients, dose schedule, and child's name affixed to the container
- b. Require a written parent/guardian request which shall include:
 - Child's Name
 - Name and Address of Parent/Guardian
 - Name of Medication, Dose, Route, Time of Administration, Discontinuation Date
 - Reason medication is needed
 - Current Parent's/Guardian's Phone Number in Case of Emergency
- c. Products containing aspirin or narcotics are not allowed to be administered by school personnel

For all **prescription and non-prescription** drugs a written request shall be obtained from the parent(s) or guardian requesting that medication be given during school hours. **The request must include the parent's or guardian's name and phone number in case of emergency. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to ensure that the written request and medication are brought to the school.** The parent or guardian must state that the child is competent to self-administer the medication with assistance. Local school board policies related to "Zero Tolerance" may require all medications, prescription and non-prescription, be brought to school and delivered to appropriate or designated school personnel by a responsible adult. **Students with asthma must have reliever inhaler available for immediate use.** The parent or guardian shall be responsible at the end of the treatment regimen for removing any unused medication from the school. When the duration of medication is complete or out of date, the parent/guardian shall be advised to pick up the medication. After notification attempts per local school system policy, if not picked up in 14 days, the medication shall be destroyed by the school nurse, documented and witnessed by at least one other school staff person.

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.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to dress out for physical education class wearing a plain gray t-shirt, dark colored shorts or sweat pants, and athletic shoes. Students should keep valuables locked in their school locker and not in the P.E. locker room. The school and P.E. teachers are not responsible for valuables left in the locker room. A physician's note is needed if the student has limited physical activity. The P.E. teacher will assign alternate assignments when a student has limited physical activity. The P.E. teachers need to be made aware if the student suffers from any medical or physical disabilities that would hinder him/her in the P.E. class. Grades will be derived from participation, dressing out, and sportsmanship. If a note is on file from the doctor limiting physical education activities, that student may not try out for any athletic team, event, or cheerleading until the restriction is lifted.

SAFETY DRILLS – FIRE – TORNADO – EMERGENCY

FIRE ALARMS

Fire alarms are located throughout 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 automatically suspended from school for five (5) days and referred to the State Fire Marshal for prosecution.

When a drill is conducted, we expect our students to move in a quiet and orderly manner. Drill plans for evacuation or lock down 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 issues involved, it is critical that every student give 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 teacher. That teacher will provide you with the necessary instructions.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

A School Resource Officer (SRO) is a law enforcement officer who is assigned to either an elementary, middle, or high school. The Sumner County Board of Education has entered into an agreement with the Sumner County Sheriff's Office to have a Certified Deputy at these schools full-time during the school year. *The SRO performs all law enforcement related duties and can investigate all criminal activity that occurs on campus. He/She is also responsible for the overall safety and security of the school.*

SRO's are not just "cops" on campus. They educate the students by teaching law related classes and other related subjects in the classrooms and are available to counsel students, parents, and staff on various topics. The intent is that the positive experiences students have with the SRO will bridge the gap between juveniles and law enforcement, and in doing so, help prevent juvenile crime.

SELLING ITEMS AT SCHOOL

Students are not allowed to sell or solicit any items at school or during school events unless it is part of a school sanctioned fundraiser. Approval for fundraisers requires prior written permission of the principal.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Ellis Middle School follows the assessment schedule provided by the state board of education as well as the Sumner County Central Office. Assessment dates will be announced and published as soon as they are released from those entities.

STUDENT RECORDS/ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

Within the first three weeks of each school year, the school system will notify parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of students and eligible students of each student's privacy rights. For students enrolling after the above period, this information will be given to the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s), or the eligible student at the time of enrollment. The notice will include the right of the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or the eligible students to:

1. Inspect and review the student's education records.
2. Seek correction of items in the record which are believed to be inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's rights, including the right to a hearing upon request.
3. File a complaint with the appropriate state or federal officials when the school system violates laws and regulations relative to student records.
4. Obtain a copy of this policy and a copy of such educational records.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Programs for students with disabilities are available. Intervention is provided in accordance to the State of Tennessee RTI program mandate. Please contact the school for specific information about your child's needs.

GIFTED: Programs (Scholar Seminar) for academically talented students certified as gifted under the State of Tennessee criteria are supported in the classroom to extend learning opportunities. A gifted education teacher coordinates a variety of activities appropriate to the needs of the gifted student and services under each IEP.

SECTION 504 OF THE HANDICAPPED ACT OF 1973

The Sumner County School District complies with all federal requirements for pursuing ~ non-discriminatory practices toward individuals with qualifying handicapping conditions, both in employment and in student participation in school activities. Section 504 is the part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which applies to persons with disabilities. Section 504 is a civil rights act protecting civil and constitutional rights of persons with disabilities. Section 504 states "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability...shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to any discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Our school adheres to a "HANDS OFF" policy for student relationships. Any public display of affection or aggression is not appropriate at school and will be considered a disciplinary infraction. The hands-off policy also includes horseplay between students, which many times lead to physical or verbal altercations. When there is a major violation, the parents will be contacted and they may be required to come to school for a conference concerning the problem. The penalty will be referred to the administration for disciplinary action and parent notification.

TELEPHONE

The school telephone is for business purposes only. A call will be made by the student for the following two reasons: (1) child is sick or (2) needs to have lunch money. 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 with teacher permission between classes or during their lunch time using the office telephones.

CELLPHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones and electronic devices are not permitted for use during the school day. The detailed policy/consequences will be signed by student and parents at the beginning of each year. The policy is provided in detail on page 12 of this student handbook.

TEXTBOOKS

Books are issued for use by students, and the student is responsible for the book issued. Students are not to mark or damage books in any way, and the assigned numbers are not be changed. Books that are lost or damaged must be paid for by the student.

VISITORS

All parents, interested adult citizens, and professional staff from other schools are welcomed and encouraged to visit our school. Please call the school and schedule an appointment. We require that you come to the office, sign in and wear a name tag while visiting. Students from other schools or school systems are not allowed to visit during school hours, including lunch and after school activities. Tours of the school are scheduled after school hours by appointment only.

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 to the receiving school if there are any outstanding school debts (i.e. textbooks, library books, school equipment or lunch charges).

ADDITIONAL SUMNER COUNTY BOARD POLICY

CONTINUOUS NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

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 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. Shawn Curtis (if adults are involved), Assistant Director for Human Resources, 695 East Main Street, Gallatin, TN 37066, 615-451-5226, shawn.curtis@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

SUMNER COUNTY SCHOOLS CONTACT INFORMATION

Norma Dam, ADA Coordinator - 615-451-5200

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Division of Special Education, Tennessee Department of Education - 615-741-2851

Answers to many questions and helpful information may be obtained from the State Department of Education by calling 1-888-212-3162 or visiting

<http://www.state.tn.us/education/speced/index.htm>

CHILD ADVOCACY GROUP CONTACT INFORMATION

In addition to the state and local resources available to parents and children, there are many agencies and organizations that offer support, information, training, and help in advocating for persons with disabilities in Tennessee. A few of these organizations are listed below:

The ARC of Tennessee is on the internet at <http://www.thearctn.org>

44 Vantage Way, Suite 550

Nashville, TN 37228

Phone: 615-248-5878 Toll free: 1-800-835-7077

Fax: 615-248-5879

Email: pcooper@thearctn.org

Support and Training for Exceptional Parents (STEP) is on the internet at <http://www.tnstep.org>

712 Professional Plaza

Greenville, TN 37745

West Tennessee: 901-756-4332

jeness.roth@tnstep.org

Middle Tennessee: 615-463-2310

information@tnstep.org

East Tennessee: 423-639-2464

karen.harrison@tnstep.org

Tennessee Protection and Advocacy (TP&A) is on the internet at <http://www.tpainc.org>

416 21st Avenue South

Nashville, TN 37212

1-800-287-9636 or 615-298-1080

615-298-2471 (TTY)

615-298-2046 (FAX)

Tennessee Voices for Children is on the internet at <http://www.tnvoices.org/main.htm>

West Tennessee (Jackson area) 731-660-6365 Fax: 731-660-6372

Middle Tennessee: 1315 8th Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203

615-269-7751 Fax: 615-269-8914 TN Toll Free: 1-800-670-9882

Email: TVC@tnvoices.org

East Tennessee (Knoxville area) 865-609-2490 Fax: 865-609-2543

These are but a few of the organizations available to help with information, training, and advocacy. For a more extensive list visit the Tennessee Disability Services Disability Pathfinder Database:<http://mingus.kc.vanderbilt.edu/tidir/dbsearch.asp> On

the web page, select your "county" and the "service" you desire from the drop down lists and click "submit". This information is provided as a service to individuals seeking additional avenues for help and information. The Department of Education does not intend this as an endorsement or recommendation for any individual, organization, or service represented on this page.

ALCOHOL/DRUG POLICY

Possession or use of alcoholic beverages on school property is illegal. Any student who unlawfully uses, possess, sells or otherwise furnishes alcoholic beverages while on school grounds or during an activity off school grounds related to school attendance will be referred to the principal for administrative action.

1. **Alcoholic Beverage** includes alcohol, spirits, liquor, wine, beer, and every liquid or solid containing alcohol, spirits, wine, beer and which is fit for beverage.
2. **Use** shall mean the introduction of action or behavior that such introduction has taken place.
3. **Possession** will mean either having illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcoholic beverages on the person, or in the immediate vicinity of the person, or among the student's personal possessions (locker, car, etc.)

Whenever the local school determines that satisfactory evidence exists that a student used or possessed alcoholic beverages at any Sumner County school-sponsored activity or used legal drugs in inappropriate amounts for other than appropriate medical purposes, the principal will suspend the student. The principal may, if the severity of the offense is such, refer the student to the Board of Education for further action.

The Board of Education and the Administrative Staff of Sumner County Schools intend to deal firmly with drug offenders. Drugs have no place on the school campus. **Illegal drugs** include controlled substances, prescriptions not intended for the possessor or user, over-the-counter substances, substances used as an intoxicating inhalant, or any other substance which is portrayed as one of the above.

Students will not use, possess, distribute or be under the influence of illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, 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. Students will not market or distribute any substance that is represented to be or is substantially similar in color, shape, size or markings to a controlled substance 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.

Upon receiving information that a student is suspected of violating this policy, the principal of the school shall be notified as soon as feasible. If it is determined that Board policy has been violated, the principal or appropriate designee shall notify the student's parent or guardian and, if necessary, local law enforcement officials, as soon as feasible, and the student shall be subject to suspension for such policy violation. The Director of Schools shall have the authority to modify this suspension for requirement on a case-by-case basis as detailed in Board Policy JCCC. Certain offenses may be eligible for appeal to the full Board of Education. The violator is also subject to existing city, state and federal narcotic and legend drug laws.

SEARCHES

Any principal or principal 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). A student's pockets, purse, and other containers may be required to be emptied. Student lockers are school property and are subject to search at any time.

TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Students shall not use or possess tobacco products in any form 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 three (3) day suspension from school. On the second offense, the student shall automatically be given a five (5) day suspension from school. On the third offense, the student shall be required to appear before the Disciplinary Hearing Authority. Any student found in an area where smoking is taking place on school property may be

punished for condoning smoking. This includes other nicotine delivery devices that are smoke-free. Students are not at any time to have matches or lighters in their possession. On the first offense, the student will be warned. On the second and subsequent offenses, the student may receive suspension.

WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS

The Sumner County Board of Education has 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 immediately removed from the general student population at the discretion of the administration and could be subject to suspension from Sumner County schools for a minimum period of one (1) calendar year. The Director of Schools may modify the suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis where appropriate. The Director must report each case to the Board at its next regular meeting. Where appropriate, criminal charges may be brought. When a student is determined to be a Special Education student, an IEP 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, of any dangerous instrument will be immediately removed from the general student population. Within five school days, a disciplinary committee shall recommend the disposition, including suspension, 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 of weapons including water guns will be suspended as determined by the principal. The principal may refer a student possessing a toy weapon or facsimile to the disciplinary committee (see item 15 below) 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:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Knives/pocket knives | 6. Pellet/Air Soft Guns | 11. Spikes/studs on wristband |
| 2. Box cutters | 7. BB guns or replicas | 12. Any object that could be considered dangerous |
| 3. Razor blades | 8. Brass knuckles | 13. Any explosive device, including fireworks |
| 4. Clubs | 9. Chains | 14. Any firearm |
| 5. Paintball guns | 10. Any item that could be used as a weapon | 15. Any item which could be perceived to be a dangerous instrument |

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. An employee found to possess a weapon on school property shall be disciplined up to and including dismissal. Criminal charges may be 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 the authority of a governmental law enforcement agency shall be exempted.

HARASSMENT

Physical and/or sexual harassment will not be tolerated in any form. Harassment can be either physical or verbal in nature. Any student using threatening or inappropriate language toward another person may be guilty of harassment. Any student who feels they are 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 phrases "I was just kidding..., I was only teasing..., I didn't mean it..., I was just joking..., We were only playing around..., " are not acceptable excuses at any time and will not be considered when determining consequences for offenders.

Sumner County Board of Education Policy: It is the Sumner County School Board policy that all Students and Employees shall not be subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation. It is committed to safeguarding the right of all Students and Employees within the school system, on school campuses, at school events, and on school buses to learn and work in an environment that is free from all forms of discrimination,

sexual harassment and harassment. Accordingly, we will promote learning and working environments free from all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation, and insist that all Students and Employees be treated with dignity, respect and courtesy. Harassment, either intentional or unintentional, has no place within the school system or work environment. The Sumner County School Board prohibits not only actions which are sufficiently severe to be unlawful, it also prohibits conduct and comments which are not severe enough to violate state, federal or local law but which are still inappropriate in our schools and workplace. Discrimination, harassment or retaliation occurring in the school system and workplace or in connection with student activities or work in violation of this policy, is counterproductive to the Sumner County School System and will not be tolerated.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require school districts to have officially adopted policy statements of nondiscrimination on the basis of sex, disability, national origin and race.

Discrimination general involves treating one Student, Employee, or applicant differently from another in connection with terms or conditions, educational programs or activities, employment issues such as hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation, and training because of that Student's, Employee's, or applicant's gender, color, race, age, national origin, pregnancy, ancestry, marital status, veteran status, disability, handicap, religion, creed, citizenship status or other legally protected status where there is no bona fide educational, occupational qualification or legitimate business reason for the differing treatment. It also could involve a failure to make a reasonable accommodation in certain circumstances and where doing so would not involve an undue burden. Any Student or Employee of this school system shall be disciplined for infractions of this policy as provided herein.

- A. Sexual harassment** is defined as unwelcome or unwanted sexual advances, behavior or conduct whether verbal, physical or visual that is based on a person's gender or interferes unreasonably with student activities, work performance or creates a hostile learning or working environment. Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or other conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:
 - 1. Submission to the conduct or communication is made (implicitly or explicitly) a term or condition of obtaining or retaining employment; or of obtaining an education
 - 2. Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment or education
 - 3. That conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment or education, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment or education environment. Any sexual harassment as defined when perpetrated on any student or employee will be treated as sexual harassment under this policy.
- B. Sexual harassment** may include but is not limited to:
 - 1. Physical contact, such as hugging, kissing, grabbing, pinching, patting, brushing against, touching or blocking one's path or egress;
 - 2. Implicit or explicit sexual propositions, requests, demands or other forms of pressure for sexual favors or dates; especially when accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status;
 - 3. Sexually suggestive or degrading remarks, including sexual innuendoes, jokes, kidding or teasing or name-calling
 - 4. Unwelcome verbal or physical flirtation, sexual gestures or comments, or comments about another person's body or appearance; including touching oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activities in front of others;
 - 5. Vulgar or obscene language;
 - 6. Display of sexually explicit or offensive printed or visual material, including but not limited to photographs, calendars, graffiti, cartoons, e-mails, drawings or notes including making and playing sexually explicit audio/video tapes;
 - 7. Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or educational status;
 - 8. Spreading rumors about or rating other individuals as to sexual activity performance

Other Forms of Harassment based on a Student's or Employee's gender, color, race, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, handicap, marital status, pregnancy, religion, or other legally protected status, and either affects tangible job benefits; or unreasonably interferes with a Student's learning environment or an Employee's work performance; or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment is also expressly prohibited. This includes but is not limited to the following: unwelcome conduct, whether written, verbal, physical, or visual. Examples of harassment based upon gender, color, race, age, national origin, ancestry, disability, handicap, marital status, veteran status, pregnancy, religion, or other legally protected status include: (a) Epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, disparaging remarks or intimidating acts based on any of the protected categories listed above; (b) Telling or forwarding jokes directed to someone's protected status, such as racial or ethnic jokes, regardless of whether "everyone tells them back and forth"; (c) Posting, forwarding, showing or displaying in any manner cartoons that make fun of any group, religious belief, sex or individual because of his or her protected status; (d) Forwarding offensive e-mails, printing them out or displaying them in any manner.

Prevention/Reporting Procedures – Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of discrimination, sexual harassment or harassment as defined in section II-IV of this policy by a Student or an Employee of the school system, or any third person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute discrimination, sexual harassment or harassment should report the alleged act(s) immediately to the appropriate school system official as designated by this policy. All Students and Employees should not assume The Sumner County School System is aware of his/her concern. In order to allow the School System to prevent and correct harassing and discriminatory conduct, it is essential that all Students and Employees use this reporting procedure and that the Sumner County School System receives information about every instance of such conduct in a timely manner.

Accordingly, every Student and Employee should understand that under no circumstances should a Student or Employee believe that he or she cannot or should not report any discrimination, harassment or retaliation. The Student or Employee is not to allow an inappropriate or unlawful situation to continue by not reporting it, regardless of who is creating that situation. No person in the Sumner County School System, not even the Director of Schools, is exempt from this policy.

In Each School – The school principal is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of discrimination, harassment or sexual harassment at the school level. Upon receipt of a report, the principal must notify the Director of Student and Employee Relations (as appointed by the Director of Schools) immediately. A written report will be forwarded simultaneously to the Director of Schools. If the report was given verbally, the principal shall reduce it to written form within 24 hours and forward it to the Director of Student and Employee Relations.

Parents need to be aware that there are times that students use websites or social media applications for inappropriate reasons. Some of those reasons might be to make reference to the school they attend, mention by name – students/teachers/administrators, inserting pictures of the people associated with our school and creating bogus sites with identifying information linked to the school. Students that violate the privacy or defame the character of others while on school grounds or at events will be disciplined according to the policies that are violated and may be prosecuted by law enforcement for "cyber-bullying" laws. In addition, the school may consider these actions as a form of bullying which falls under the harassment policy of the Sumner County Board of Education. In almost all circumstances, Ellis Middle will not investigate arguments between students that are part of social media that happen outside of the school day off campus. Parents will be notified of these "off-campus" conflicts if reported to school personnel to help minimize the impact that may occur to instruction during the school day.

Any school rule in this handbook may be amended by the principal during the school year in the best interest of the educational process.