

Robert E. Ellis Middle School

Student Handbook

2021-2022



ONE ELLIS

EMS MISSION

Robert E. Ellis Middle School serves all students through high quality instruction, collaboration, and authentic problem-solving experiences in a safe and empowering environment.

ROBERT ELLIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Student and Parent Verification Page

Student _____

Teacher _____

I have read these policies and understand what they expect and require of students. A staff member from my school was available for a verbal explanation to answer questions about these policies.

NOTE: MY SIGNATURE INDICATES I HAVE READ THESE POLICIES AND UNDERSTAND THEM. MY SIGNATURE ALSO INDICATES THAT I WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DISCUSSING THESE POLICIES WITH MY PARENT/GUARDIAN. MY SIGNATURE DOES NOT NECESSARILY INDICATE THAT I AGREE WITH THESE POLICIES. BY MY SIGNATURE, I AM INDICATING THAT I UNDERSTAND THAT I MUST COMPLY WITH THESE POLICIES.

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Date

(Please sign and return to the teacher during the first week of school)

ROBERT ELLIS MIDDLE SCHOOL
100 Indian Lake Road
Hendersonville, TN 37075
Phone - 615-264-6093
Fax – 615-264-5800

School – <http://ems.sumnerschools.org>
Twitter - @ellis_school
Instagram - @ellismiddleschoolcougars
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

EMS Vision:

Robert E. Ellis Middle School (est.1994) is a community of students, parents, and teachers who engage in authentic problem-solving experiences to grow academically, socially, and civically.

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.

SAMPLE PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

Athletics

Fall

Football
Boys/Girls Cross-Country
Girls Club Soccer (Club Sport)
Girls Club Volleyball (Club Sport)
Cheerleading
Dance (Club Sport)

Winter

Boys/Girls Basketball
6th Boys/Girls Basketball (Club)
Cheerleading
Dance (Club)

Spring

Boys Club Soccer (Club)
Boys/Girls Club Golf (Club)
Boys/Girls Club Swimming (Club)

Clubs and Activities

Art Club
Book Club
Drama Club
Fellowship of Christian Athletes
Geography Club
Cougar Chronicle
Game Club
Chess Club
Debate Club
Student Council
Creative Writing Club
Talent Show
Yearbook Staff
School Dances

Academic/ Arts

Geography Bee
Spelling Bee
National Junior Honor Society
Beta Club
Math Competition Team
Band
Jazz Band
Orchestra
Chorus

EXAMPLE AWARDS AT YEAR'S END

Academic Awards

All A's for the Year
Art
Duke TIP Talent Search
Language Arts
Math
Presidential Academics
Science
Social Studies

Service Awards

Citizenship
Club Officers
Library
Office

Performance Awards

Band
Chorus
Computer
History Team
Math Team
Perfect Attendance
Technology
Teen Living

Procedures, Practices, and Policies

**These procedures, practices, and policies are subject to change to support the needs of our students, teachers, and community. Communication will be transparent as changes are made.*

Arrival Procedures for Students

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 considered 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 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 excused by the school system because of the cause and benefits of the absence to the student, as verified with 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. These absences will be excused as parent notes. **After an accumulation of five excused absences per a parent note during a semester, the parent/guardian must provide more formal documentation with the principal to verify the absence. Additional parent notes will not be provided.**

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 designee.
- **Unexcused absences:** Absences which are not verified, or which do not meet valid reasons for excused absences. Absences due to personal athletic competitions, family vacations, or other absences not outlined above will be considered excused with prior approval from the principal as a part of the five parent-note excused absences per semester. Additional excused absences for vacations or other events will not be provided. 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 three unexcused absences, an attendance review discussion will occur with recommended interventions. An attendance contract will be signed after the 5th unexcused absence. 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 according to the makeup policy.
It is the responsibility of the student to contact the teacher concerning makeup work. This should be done before the class begins or after the class ends. All work must be completed within 3 days upon return. Additional make up days will be considered by the school principal due to exceptional circumstances.
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. Work will not be provided in advance for planned absences. Parents/Guardians may request work after the 3rd day of a student being absent due to illness.

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 4th tardy to school without an excused/verified note. A pattern of tardy to school could result in a referral to the attendance officer or major infraction referrals leading to ISS/OSS. See the full tardy progression below:

EMS Tardy to School 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.

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. The extended day is from 2:30 to 3:00.

1st Tardy - Student will sign the tardy record in the office.

2nd Tardy - Student will sign the tardy record in the office.

3rd Tardy - Student will sign the tardy record in the office. The tardy policy will be sent home and must be signed by the parent/guardian.

4th Tardy - Student will sign the tardy record in the office. 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 office. Student will be issued a minor infraction. Detention will be assigned.

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

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

EMS Tardy to Class Progression (per semester)

Purpose – The primary purpose of the EMS tardy policy 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 and administrators will work with students to establish efficient transitional practices to support being on time to class.

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 – All students will receive 2 tardy passes per semester from their 1st period teacher.

Excuse Note - Students will receive an excuse note from faculty and staff members if official school business has prevented them from being on time to a class.

1st Tardy – Student will sign the tardy record in the classroom and be reminded of the expectation.

2nd Tardy – Student will sign the tardy record in the classroom and be reminded of the expectation.

Additional Tardies – Student will receive a minor infraction for each additional tardy per semester.

Early Dismissals

Students are not to be released during school hours unless they are provided into the custody of the child's parents or designated individual. The student is expected to return to school as soon as possible after a doctor's appointment or other verified purpose. 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. 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.

EMS Dress Code and Grooming Policy

The appearance of our students reflects the quality of the school and influences student conduct and performance. Students shall observe modesty, appropriateness, and neatness in clothing and personal appearance. The following is the Standardized Dress Code adopted by the Sumner County Board of Education. Consequences for dress code violations will begin with an opportunity to change clothing. Repeated offenses will be addressed by minors and majors according to the discipline progression.

- Extreme or unnatural hair color is not permitted.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses (front and back) must not be higher than 3 inches from the bend of the back of the knee. Shorts worn during physical education must not be higher than 5 inches from the bend of the back of the knee.
- Apparel considered revealing will not be permitted including tops with revealing neck lines and body conforming clothes.
- Spandex pants, including leggings and yoga pants may be worn ONLY with appropriate length skirt/dress or shirt (5 inches from the bend of the knee).
- Students may not wear sagging or dragging pants. Underclothing is not to be seen at any time.
- A student's clothing must cover the midriff at all times. Underclothing is not to be seen at any time.
- No clothing with holes, frays, or tears may be worn unless they are completely backed by material under the hole, fray, or tear. Excessive holes, frays, or tears will not be permitted even with material backing.
- Tops must have sleeves that cover the end of the shoulder. Tank tops, muscle shirts, mesh shirts will not be permitted.
- Students are not allowed to wear head apparel, such as hats, bandanas, etc., inside the building.
- Students may not wear clothing that mentions drugs, vulgar captions, cigarettes, alcohol or any other obscene suggestive, provocative, or disruptive apparel. Students may not wear clothing or articles related to gangs or weapons.
- Shorts and/or pants are not to have writing on/or across the back or front of the clothing.
- Shoes must be worn at all times. Cleated shoes, roller shoes, or house slippers are not permitted.
- Sunglasses are not to be worn inside the building except when prescribed by a doctor.
- No body piercing jewelry except earrings in the ear may be worn during the school hours or at after school sponsored events.
- Jewelry must not be distracting, disruptive, or unsafe (Examples: excessive chains, locks, spikes, or collar-like jewelry)
- Valuable clothes and jewelry are discouraged.
- 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.
- Excessive, distracting, make-up is not allowed.

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 next page:



ROBERT E. ELLIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

SCHOOL-WIDE EXPECTATIONS



Location	Responsible	Safe	Respectful
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to be on time by being completely in the classroom and ready to learn at the bell. Students are to follow the expected procedure as they enter the classroom. Students are expected to be prepared for class with materials and assignments. Students are expected to refrain from having gum, food, sugary drinks, or candy in classrooms. Only water in a sealed container will be permitted. Students are expected to help keep rooms clean and orderly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to walk inside the classroom. Students are expected to remain in their seats unless instructed otherwise by the teacher. Students will use classroom materials as designed. Students are expected to remain at their seats and will be dismissed by their teacher from the classroom. Students are expected to leave backpacks in their locker except during 7th/8th period. Cinch sacks are allowed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to follow the direction of the classroom teacher without arguing or negotiating. Students are expected to wait for the teacher to acknowledge them before speaking in class. Students are expected to respect the feelings of others through positive conversations. Students are expected to respect the personal space of others by not touching others and their property.
Hallways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to walk directly to class (lockers and restrooms only exception) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to refrain from touching others. Students are expected to walk at all times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to keep volume to a conversation level. Students are expected to respect the work of other students outside of classrooms.
Bathrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to use the restroom and exit immediately. Students are expected to wash hands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to refrain from touching others. Students are expected to use the restroom equipment as intended. Students are expected to wash hands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to help keep restrooms clean and in good condition and to report problems to a teacher. Students are expected to respect the privacy of others.
Assemblies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to transition to assemblies escorted by the teacher sitting by class (except for pep-rallies). Students are expected to sit in the area directed by the classroom teacher. Students are expected to dismiss from assemblies in an orderly manner by row directed by teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to walk to all assemblies and pep-rallies escorted by the classroom teacher. Students are expected to refrain from touching others or throwing objects. Students are expected to remain in their seat or stand as directed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to use positive or intended conversation during assemblies. Students are expected to use the appropriate volume and only speak when prompted by the presenter. Students are expected to respect the personal space of others.

Location	Responsible	Safe	Respectful
Gym in Morning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to walk directly to the gym through the designated entrance. Students will not be allowed to go to classrooms, lockers, or restrooms without permission. Students are expected to sit in the designated area per grade level. Students are expected to keep all electronics, food, candy, or drink items in their backpack. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to select one seat and stay seated until the bell rings. Students are expected to refrain from touching others or throwing objects. Students are expected to exit orderly as directed and through the appropriate door. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to respect the feelings of others while in the gym. Students are expected to respect the authority of the gym monitors.
School Bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to follow the direction of the bus driver. Students are expected to obey all bus rules create by the SCBOE. Students are expected to walk directly to the bus exit when dismissed by the classroom teacher. Students are expected to refrain from having gum, food, sugary drinks, or candy. Only water will be permitted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to walk directly to their bus and to their seat as directed by the bus driver. Students are expected to refrain from touching others or throwing objects. Students are expected to obey all bus rules create by the SCBOE. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to respect the feelings and personal space of others while on the school bus. Students are expected to respect the authority of the bus driver. Students are expected to obey all bus rules create by the SCBOE.
Recess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to transition to and from recess escorted by the teacher. Running ahead is not permitted. Students are expected to stay in the areas directed by the classroom teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to remain safe by careful and controlled physical activity. Students are expected to refrain from touching others or throwing objects not designated as play items. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to respect the feelings of others and personal space of others. Students are expected to respect the authority of the classroom teacher. Students are expected to leave the recess area immediately on the teacher's command.
Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to transition quietly to and from lunch escorted by the teacher. Running ahead is not permitted. Students are expected to go directly to the kitchen or their seat and get everything that is needed. Students are expected to keep their tables and surrounding area clean. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to select one seat and stay seated until dismissed. Students are expected to refrain from touching others or throwing objects. Students are expected to raise their hand for assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are expected to respect the feelings of others. Students are expected to respect the personal space of others. Students are expected to respect the authority of the lunch supervisors. Students are expected to keep their tables and surrounding area clean.

ONE ELLIS CODE

(anti-bullying/harassment, anti-violence, and anti-defiance)

The ONE ELLIS CODE provides a higher level of emphasis for our students to refrain from using behaviors that include bullying/harassment, violence/promotion of, and defiance. Maintaining a school environment and culture with the highest level of safety, security, and emotional support is a top priority at EMS. The ONE ELLIS CODE has been implemented to minimize the occurrence of such behaviors. See the code below:

1. I will protect my school community by avoiding behaviors that bully, embarrass, or discriminate against other students in person or online.
2. I will protect my school community by avoiding behaviors that promote or participate in violence of any kind.
3. I will protect my school community by avoiding defiant behaviors that disrupt learning and hinder the school's ability to maintain a safe and secure environment.

****Consequence – A combined use of in-school suspensions, parent conferencing, and counseling services will be used as students violate the ONE ELLIS CODE.**

Standard Discipline Plan

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: persistently 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. Students suspected to be in violation of any major infractions will be referred immediately to an administrator in most situations. 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 reverts to zero at each semester. Major infractions will revert to zero in the second semester if the student accomplishes 2 major 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 contacts parent. The teacher may issue a classroom intervention or consequence.
- 2nd Minor Offense – Teacher conferences with student about expectations and contacts parent. A conduct intervention session will be scheduled for the student.
- 3rd Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues detention, and contacts parent.
- 4th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues 2 days detention, and contacts parent.
- 5th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues 1 day ISS and contacts parent. A meeting with a school counselor is scheduled.
- 6th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues 2 days of ISS, and contacts parent. ***Student will lose extracurricular privileges/field trips for the remainder of the semester or 2 months whichever is longer.***
- 7th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues 3 days of ISS, and contacts parent. A parent conference is scheduled to discuss a behavior plan.
- 8th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, issues 1 day of OSS, and contacts parent to review behavior plan. ***Student loses extracurricular privileges/field trip for the remainder of the school year.***
- 9th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student and parent about expectations, issues 3 days of OSS, and reviews behavior plan.

- 10th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student and parent about expectations, issues 5 days OSS and discusses possibility of behavior hearing.
- 11th Minor Offense – Administrator conferences with student and parent about expectations, issues 10 days OSS, and schedules disciplinary hearing.

Major Infractions (clears during 2nd semester after 30 school days major free)

- 1st Major Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations and issues detention/restitution. Parent is contacted.
- 2nd Major Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations and issues 2 days of detention. A meeting with a school counselor is scheduled. Parent will be contacted.
- 3rd Major Offense – Administrator conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 2 days ISS, and contacts parent.
- 4th Major Offense - Administrator conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 3 days ISS, and contacts parent. A parent conference is scheduled to discuss possible behavior plan. ***Student will lose extracurricular privileges/field trips for the remainder of the semester or 2 months whichever is longer***
- 5th Major Offense - Administrator conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 1 day OSS, and contacts parent. ***Student loses extracurricular privileges/field trips for the remainder of the school year.***
- 6th Major Offense - Administrator conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 3 days OSS, contacts parent, and reviews behavior plan.
- 7th Major Offense - Administrator conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 5 days OSS, contacts parent, reviews behavior plan, and discusses behavior hearing possibility.
- 8th Major Offense - Administrator conferences with student about expectations, administrator issues 10 days OSS, contacts parent, and schedules a disciplinary board hearing.

*****Students receiving a combined number of 12 minors and majors in one semester may be suspended out of school pending a Sumner County Schools Disciplinary Board Hearing***

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 student’s related arts class. Specific grade level teachers will conduct these intervention sessions.

Student Celebrations

Student celebrations for conduct and academic achievement are built in quarterly. This includes both individual celebrations through plans and school-wide celebrations. Some past examples include: Cougar Concessions Celebration, Lunch Reward Celebrations, and Recess Extended Celebrations.

Detention

A student may be assigned to an after-school detention by an administrator for major infractions or the buildup of minor infractions. After school detention is served for 1 hour 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 must 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. ***Students receiving OSS due to multiple minor or major infractions will not attend field trips, school dances, athletic events, or extracurricular activities and clubs for the remainder of the school year. *Extracurricular activities for students that receive OSS from a single incident will be handled on an individual case-by-case basis based on the facts of the incident.**

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 or catches a student of cheating to earn a grade, then that teacher shall consider an alternative test or measure. Further disciplinary action will be considered by the teacher and/or 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. The School

Resource Officer will be involved as necessary based on the degree of physical contact/battery. Students may be arrested and charged for fighting. Repeated fighting will result in a referral to the School Board Disciplinary Committee for a hearing.

Tobacco Products, Vaping, or other Nicotine Devices

Students shall not use or possess tobacco products, vapes, or other devices 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.

Other General Expectations

1. Students are not to buy, sell, gamble, or trade articles at school. Any student who violates this regulation is personally responsible for the consequences, and disciplinary action will be taken.
2. Loitering in hallways and rest rooms is not permitted. Students are expected to remain in assigned areas as determined by grade.
3. 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).
4. Skates and/or skateboards are not to be brought to school or ridden on the school campus at any time.
5. 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.
6. Any stealing or destruction of a fellow student's property may result in a suspension from school. Full reimbursement/restitution will be required.
7. Obscene or distasteful literature, illustrations, or inappropriate jokes, language, comments, or gestures that others may see or hear are not allowed.
8. Shanking (pulling down pants/shorts) will result in out of school suspension.
9. Students will abide by all Board and local policies regarding technology and internet use.

Electronic Devices Policy

Handheld electronic devices – including but not limited to: cell phones, smart watches, iPod, MP3/music players, video games, game devices, etc.

Appropriate Use – Electronic devices are strictly prohibited to approved communication only. Approved communication includes arranging transportation or equipment needs for extracurricular activities before and after school. All electronic devices **must be turned off and put away in lockers or backpacks** when students enter the building each morning. They **must remain off** and away from the student's immediate possession once entering the building and until the student exits the school in the identified dismissal vehicle. This includes the car rider area while students wait.

Progression of Electronic Violations

Minor Violation of Policy - Students will be issued a minor infraction and devices will be sent to the office for student pick-up at dismissal for the following:

- Repeated reminders to place device in backpack or locker.
- Device rings or notification sounds in classroom or other areas in the school building.

Major Violation of Policy – Student will be issued a major infraction and device will be sent to the office for parent pick-up for the following:

- Taking pictures or videos of other students.
- Posting or communicating through social media or device to device.

Additional Notices:

- Students will be prohibited from having a device on school property after the 3rd violation (minor or major).
- Severe violations that bully/harass, invade privacy, or other harmful actions may equal students being suspended in or 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/she understands the nature of the offense, and that he/she 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/she 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

Breakfast and lunch will remain free for students during the 2021-2022 school year. Payments for extra items 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. 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. Lunch guests are not allowed due to available space in the 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, beverages, or utensils out of the cafeteria. Glass containers are not allowed. Students are expected to remain seated at all times and must request permission to use the restroom or purchase additional items in the kitchen area.

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 case manager assigned to the student.

Exams

Mid-term and final exams will occur at the end of each semester. Exams can also be conducted in the form of a PBL project. Exams will not be given early. Make-up exams can be arranged with the principal for excused absences only. 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.

Grading and Report Cards

The purpose of grading is to provide feedback and communicate levels of progress or mastery to students, parents, and other appropriate stakeholders. Assessments will be weighted more heavily than practice or effort-based grades. Report cards may be accessed on Skyward on a specified date after each grading period. In addition, Progress Reports will be available on Skyward at the 4½ week period. Skyward is available for parents to electronically monitor their child's progress.

Grading Scale

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 or notify their classroom teacher to arrange 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. Students are expected to travel directly to the location in which permission was given and then return to the classroom. Cameras will be used to determine if students are abusing hallway privileges. A buddy system may be used as necessary to limit abuse.

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. Students that repeatedly fail to complete classwork/homework as expected will be provided additional opportunities through lunch and learn, extended days, and other strategies to ensure that the proper practice occurs.

Illness and Accidents

Any student who becomes ill or injured must report symptoms to the teacher and be sent to the office to see the nurse. The school nurse or office clerk will make the appropriate calls to the parent/guardian if necessary. **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. Parents/guardians are expected to follow the “send home, stay home” guidelines provided by the school nurse. Students that return to school before the criteria is met will be sent home.

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; students must also follow sign-in and sign-out procedures when entering and leaving the library. Orientation will be provided for students at their first library visit. Books may be checked out for a two-week period; additional books may not be checked out until previous books are returned. While fines will not be assessed for overdue books, a student will be expected to replace any lost material; the price of a lost book is determined by the current replacement value based on retail prices. Lost books will be assessed at the end of each quarter. Library computers are to be used for academic purposes, and students must have a pass from a teacher to use a computer.

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. Locks are not provided by the school. Students may bring their own lock and must provide a key or combination to the school administration. 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. 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. Students that tamper or alter/adjust the lock/locker to bypass a lock will forfeit use of their locker and the student will be responsible for consequences and 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

Parents/guardians should review the Sumner County Schools Medication Administration Protocol on the Student Health Information Form. All medication must be stored with the school nurse and administered in the clinic. This includes prescription and non-prescription medication. Additional health plans can be created in collaboration with the school nurse beginning during registration. Severe disciplinary consequences may be issued for students that are in possession of medication.

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 sweatpants, and athletic shoes. Shorts must be at least 5 inches from the knee. Students should keep valuables 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 (weather, fire, intruder, AED)

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 Assessments

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 Services

Programs and services for students with an IEP are available. Interventions are provided and data is collected in accordance to the State of Tennessee RTI program. Please contact the school for specific information about your child's needs and referrals for special education services.

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 for Student Disabilities

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. Calls will primarily be made by students for the following three reasons: (1) illness (2) needs to have lunch money (3) to confirm transportation. 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.

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

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 and 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

Please Review full SCS Handbook for Complete Policy/Procedure Understanding

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

Ms. Naomi Aitchison (if adults are involved), Assistant Director for Human Resources, 695 East Main Street, Gallatin, TN 37066, 615-451-5226, naomi.aitchison@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

Special Education Contacts:

SUMNER COUNTY SCHOOLS CONTACT INFORMATION

Norma Dam, ADA Coordinator - 615-451-5200, norma.dam@sumnerschools.org

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) in on the internet at <http://www.tnstep.org>

712 Professional Plaza

Greenville, TN 37745

West Tennessee: 901-756-4332

Middle Tennessee: 615-463-2310

East Tennessee: 423-639-2464

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/tdir/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.

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 for disposition as determined by the committee. The term weapon shall be defined as any dangerous instrument. **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.