

Spring City Middle School

Student/Parent Handbook
2025-26



751 Wassom Memorial Hwy
Spring City, Tennessee 37381
Phone: (423) 365-9105 Fax: (423) 365-9102

This handbook belongs to:

Name: _____

Homeroom: _____



Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow

SCMS Students and Family:

On behalf of the staff at Spring City Middle School, I am happy to welcome you to the 2024-25 school year! We are excited about participating in a productive partnership with you to ensure our children achieve to their highest potential, both academically and socially. As partners, we share the responsibility for your child's success and we want you to know that we value, above all else, the well-being of all of our children. We ask that you guide and support your child's learning by ensuring that he/she:

- 1) Attends school daily and arrives on time, ready to learn.
- 2) Completes all homework assignments.
- 3) Reads daily to develop a love for reading and in order to improve literacy skills.
- 4) Shares school experiences with you so that you are aware of his/her school life.
- 5) Knows that you expect him/her to succeed in school.
- 6) Follows the rules/guidelines as addressed in this handbook which follow Rhea County School Board Policy (SBP).

The following pages contain information about SCMS that will prove helpful throughout the year. All necessary information pertaining to the school's operations are included in the handbook along with the discipline procedures, cafeteria information and other helpful information related to the successful function of our school.

Please read this handbook and discuss all necessary materials with your children. Parents and students must sign the policy form at the end of this handbook stating you have read the material and understand the procedures. Please feel free to contact me or your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding school policies or procedures at 365-9105.

The Spring City Middle Staff and I feel honored to be a part of this school family and we thank you for your support throughout the school year.

Respectfully,

Ashlee Brackett, Principal

OUR VISION

In partnership with our families and community, we are creating a culture of college and career readiness, where everyone is a learner and everyone is a leader!

OUR MISSION

The mission of Spring City Middle School is to create a positive learning environment where all students are valued, motivated, and challenged to achieve academically to their highest potential while demonstrating responsible citizenship. Ultimately, our children will be our future problem solvers who must work collaboratively to find solutions to ever changing problems in our local and global communities.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Spring City Middle welcomes your requests for conferences. Please schedule all conferences by calling the office at 423-365-9105. The secretary will assist you in arranging a conference with your child's teacher. Two parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for this year. Scheduling appointments will begin two weeks prior to the conference dates. Appointments are also available as needed with each teacher.

Fall Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2025

Spring Date: Wednesday, January 28, 2026

PROTECTION OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

We have limited time to ensure that your child is progressing toward mastery of state mandated academic skills. It is imperative for your child to be in school each day and for the faculty and staff of SCMS to make sure the time we are with your child is protected. We will make it a priority to limit interruptions and events that create a disruption to classroom instructional time. Visitors will not be allowed to meet with teachers without scheduled conferences. These conferences need to occur during the planning period of the designated teacher. Your help and support in this matter would be greatly appreciated, as we all work together to optimize instructional time.

CHARACTER EDUCATION

Recognizing that character is very important, SCMS is committed to working with the parents and community in promoting character development of all students. Each month one student from each class will be selected as the person who best exemplifies the character trait of that month. This student will be recognized quarterly at our Celebration Assembly, in the local newspaper and on specific bulletin boards throughout our school.

PARENT PORTAL

In order to obtain access to your child's daily grades you must see our school secretary to obtain a permission form. Due to the confidentiality of student information this form can only be obtained in person, with proper identification. **PLEASE take advantage of this communication by visiting our school secretary.**

WITHDRAWAL

If a student is transferring out of our school, it is necessary for the parent or guardian to withdraw the child from school. Parents should call the school at least one day before the child is to withdraw to obtain instructions for proper withdrawing procedure.

SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event of inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, school may start late, dismiss early or close. These changes will be announced using various media outlets, please follow us on Facebook, *Spring City Middle School*. A Bright Arrow message will also be sent out, notifying all parents and students of the situation. You will need to keep your phone number up to date with our secretary to receive these messages. Please make sure you and your child have a plan for early dismissal.

SCHOOL HOURS

During normal operation, the school day begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:58 p.m. The first bell will ring at 7:50 a.m. and the tardy bell will ring at 8:00 a.m. If a student arrives after the tardy bell, they must get a pass from the front office before being admitted to their classroom.

CAR RIDERS: MORNING DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

Students who are car riders in the morning are to be unloaded in the front of the school in the drive-thru area **ONLY**. The early duty faculty and staff will begin receiving students at 7:25 a.m. each morning; therefore, no students should be dropped off prior to 7:25 a.m. Students should be prepared to exit the car immediately having already gathered up any necessary materials. All students **MUST** exit the car on the passenger side onto the sidewalk. Traffic is one way around the school during student drop off. **IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR THE SAFETY OF OUR CHILDREN THAT NO STUDENT IS DROPPED OFF PRIOR TO 7:25 a.m.**

USE OF VIDEO CAMERAS

Video cameras are being used throughout the building and will be used to monitor student behavior in school vehicles transporting students to and from school or extracurricular activities. Video surveillance is used only to promote the order, safety and security of students, staff and property.

CHANGE OF TRANSPORTATION

In order to maintain the safety of our children, there will be no transportation changes taken over the telephone. If you need to change your child's transportation, send a note to school with your child. Your child must bring that note to the office to be signed and copied in the morning. If it is necessary for a student to ride a bus that is different from the regularly scheduled one, parents are to send a note specifically requesting that the student be permitted to ride that bus. The note is then given to the driver when boarding the bus. If a student forgets a note giving this permission, he/she will be placed on the bus that the student rides regularly. Students who normally ride a bus need a note from a parent/guardian if doing anything other than riding the bus.

SCMS administrative staff must have a note from the custodial parents any time there is a transportation change. **Please keep your child's emergency contact card updated because only individuals listed on the student emergency card will be allowed to check out your child.**

CAR RIDERS: AFTERNOON PICK-UP PROCEDURES

In an effort to ensure that all students leave the building safely, car riders will be held in the gym until the SCMS buses have left the premises. At this time, car riders will be dismissed from the gym to be picked up by their parent/guardians at the back of the school. Parents should not begin to line-up until 3 p.m. Parents and middle school students must communicate clearly and assume responsibility for who they ride home with in the afternoon. Students should never attempt to ride home with anyone without parental permission.

TEXTBOOKS

Students are responsible for the textbooks they are issued during this academic year. Textbooks should be handled with care as students will be responsible for any loss or damage to any book.

CHROMEBOOKS

Chromebooks are to be used for educational purposes only. A Student Computing Device Contract must be signed by students and parents prior to using a Chromebook. Chromebooks will not leave the building unless approved by administration.

WATER BOTTLES AND DRINKS

All student water bottles must be clear and only contain water. The clear plastic cannot be tinted. Containers must be plastic and have a sealable lid. Students may not bring metal cups or bottles. Energy drinks are never allowed at SCMS.

HOMEWORK and MAKE-UP WORK

Current studies related to middle school achievement and best educational practices have verified the importance of daily, meaningful, engaging homework. Students can expect to spend at least one hour each school night on homework.

Students are expected to complete all make-up work for absences. It is the student's responsibility to see the teacher to get their make-up assignments. Some classes will have work posted on Google Classroom. Make-up work will not be given in advance. If a student misses one day, the student is given one day to make-up their assignments. If the student is to be absent more than one day, parents may call the school prior to 10:00 a.m. on the **second** day to have make-up assignments prepared. Assignments may be picked up after 2:00 p.m. on that day. Students are given make-up time equal to the number of days missed; however, during a family crisis the teacher and administrator reserve the right to extend make-up time in order to accommodate families in crisis.

GRADING SYSTEM

Report Cards will be sent out each nine weeks (see attached schedule) and midterm reports are sent out approximately four and a half weeks into each nine week grading period. (This is subject to change due to missed days during the year.)

The grading scale per SBP is as follows:

A	100-90
B	89-80
C	79-70
D	69-60
F	59-0

HONOR ROLL

SCMS recognizes students on A/B Honor Roll and Straight A Honor Roll, during our semester Celebration Assembly. Honor roll students are also recognized via a bulletin board and in the local newspaper.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI) AND THE TIER SYSTEM

In an effort to improve reading and math achievement at Spring City Middle School, we will be utilizing a variety of strategies and approved interventions to track and document your student's progress in reading and math. The school will have an RTI Coordinator that will work with classroom teachers to give additional support to students through the Tier System. All students will receive 90 minutes of rigorous Tier I instruction and students that need additional support will receive an additional 30 minutes for Tier II and 45 minutes for Tier III. Parents will be notified regarding the Tiered instruction their child is receiving.

NATIONAL BETA CLUB

The Junior Beta Club is the junior division of the National Beta Club. The National Beta Club organization recognizes academic achievement, promotes character and develops leadership skills through school and community service projects. Membership in this club is an honor and a privilege to those students who demonstrate moral and ethical character, academic achievement and exhibit a commendable attitude. Students who are invited to join the Jr. Beta Club must maintain A/B honor roll each grading period, strive to promote the standards set forth by the organization and pay a one-time national membership fee of \$15. For more information on the National Beta Club, please call the school sponsor and/or check on the following website: www.Betaclub.org.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

DISASTER AWARENESS

In the event of any type of disaster that would require the faculty and students of Spring City Middle School to relocate, a plan has been developed and tested. Students will be taken to a designated reunification point where parents can follow check-out procedures and pick up their child. The School Cast Notification System will be used to notify parents of the reunification point and the nature of the emergency.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

In compliance with state mandates and with the safety of our children as a priority, SCMS will conduct full evacuation fire drills at least one time every 30 days with two fire drills occurring within the first days of the school year. There will also be biannual lock down drills, and biannual weather related drills. During emergency drills students are expected to explicitly follow the teacher's directions and the directions of local emergency personnel. Students who are not compliant with emergency drill instructions will be dealt with through immediate disciplinary action.

GENERAL INFORMATION

VISITORS

Visitors must be prepared to provide identification upon entering the building in the main office. All visitors will adhere to proper sign-in and sign-out procedures and conduct their business in the school promptly. At SCMS, we will reserve the right to refuse entry to anyone unable to provide proper identification or appropriate justification for visiting our school. The safety of our children is a **PRIORITY**, therefore, please be patient with us when we ask for proper identification.

ATTENDANCE

Students cannot be academically successful without adequate attendance; therefore; SCMS intends to partner with parents to ensure students do not miss school without adequate excuse.

Excused absences include: parent note (limit of 5), doctor excuses, death in the family, extreme weather conditions, religious observances, college visits, school endorsed activities, court order, or circumstances which create emergencies beyond the control of the student (SBP, 6.2).

Bright Arrow messages will be sent out when your child reaches 3, 5, 7 and 8 days of unexcused absences.

The Rhea County Attendance Policy is included in registration materials.

Rhea County District Intervention Hierarchy

In 2017, the state legislature passed a law (49-6-3007) emphasizing student school attendance and Rhea County intends to adhere to this important legislation. The following protocol has been adopted .

3rd Unexcused Absence- School notifies parents; Begins the Progressive Truancy Plan Certification.

5th Unexcused Absence- School notifies Attendance Supervisor- Tier 2 intervention begins with the County Attendance Supervisor . Meeting is scheduled with SCMS administration. At this point, Saturday School can be assigned or other community resources provided.

8th Unexcused Absence- School notifies Attendance Supervisor; Summons to Truancy-Disciplinary Board served by Attendance Supervisor

10th Unexcused Absence- Petition filed for Juvenile Court

TARDY

The tardy bell rings at 8:00 a.m. Students should be in their classroom and in their seat by the time this bell rings. If students are tardy, they must go directly to the office to sign in and receive an admission to class pass. A note explaining the reason for being late should be signed by the parent/guardian. Chronic tardiness will result in an office referral. Accumulation of five (5) tardies will cause a day of ISS to be assigned. Continued excessive tardiness to school is considered truancy and will be referred to appropriate county officials.

RELEASE DURING SCHOOL HOURS

The following procedure will be observed with regard to dismissal of students:

- 1) No student will leave school prior to regular dismissal, except with the approval of the principal and parents. Students may be dismissed prior to dismissal time only in the company of a parent, legal guardian, school employee, police officer, court officer, or a person designated in writing by the parent(s).
- 2) When dental and medical appointments cannot be scheduled outside school hours, parents must send a written request for dismissal or come get the student in person.
- 3) Students will be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child, or who is the parent or guardian registered on the school record. No principal or teacher shall permit a change in the physical custody of a child at school unless: The person seeking custody of the child presents the school official with a certified copy of a valid court order from a Tennessee court designating the person who has custody of the child; and the person seeking custody gives the school official reasonable advanced notice of his/her intent to take custody of the child at school.
- 4) No student will be checked out, just to leave ahead of the buses.

Skipping school, skipping class, or leaving the school grounds without permission is strictly prohibited and will be dealt with as truancy. In most instances, students are taken to Juvenile Detention when these occur. **Excessive tardiness, excessive early**

checkouts, or unexcused absences will be considered as truancy and may be referred to the truancy board or Juvenile Court.

Please review the Rhea County Board of Education policy (SBP, 6.200).
You can find the policy at www.rheacounty.org.

VAPING POLICY

Vape Offense Consequences

First Offense- School Citation will be issued; Not to be filed in court Student suspended for 1 day out-of-school Student & Parent must appear before Truancy-Discipline Board Student will complete the In-Depth Program on a Saturday Student will complete 10 hours of Community Service

Second Offense -School Citation will be issued; Citation filed with Juvenile Court \$50 Fine Student suspended for 3 days out-of-school Student & Parent must appear before Truancy-Discipline Board Student, along with Parent will complete the In-Depth Program on a Saturday Student will complete 20 hours of Community Service

Third Offense- School Citation will be issued; Citation filed with Juvenile Court \$50 Fine Summons Issued for Juvenile Court Appearance; Student assigned to Alternative School ;Student will complete up to 50 hours of Community Service

LOCKERS

A designated locker will be assigned to each student at the beginning of the school year. All lockers are the property of SCMS and are therefore subject to be searched and examined at any time throughout the school year.

Notice shall be posted in each school that lockers and other storage areas are school property and are subject to search. (SBP, 6.303)

Water Bottles

Student water bottles must be made clear plastic and have a screw on lid. The bottles can only contain water. Water must also be clear. Other drinks may be brought for lunch but must be kept in a lunch box and only consumed in the cafeteria.

NURSE CLINIC

Spring City Middle has a clinic staffed by a full-time nurse; however, no care beyond first aid is provided at school. If a student needs to go home due to illness or injury, our nurse will contact a person listed on the Emergency Information Card or the Health Information Request Form. In cases of a serious accident, the nurse will immediately summon a physician or an ambulance in cases when a student must be transported for health care immediately. Students must have a nurse pass when they come to the nurse. The nurse **MUST** have a Health Information Request Form on all students.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

All medication is to be kept and dispensed by the nurse. In compliance with the State Guidelines, all medications are limited to those required during school hours. Also, all non-prescription drugs given in school shall be brought in the original container, unopened with the original label (listing the ingredients, dose schedule and child's name) affixed to the container.

Prescription medication must be brought to school in the **original, pharmacy labeled container**. The container shall display: Child's name, prescription number, medication name and dosage, administration route or other directions, date, licensed prescriber's name, pharmacy name, address and phone number. The parent/guardian must complete the necessary form provided by the nurse for both prescription and non-prescription drugs. Any prescription medicine needed for long-term use will require a doctor's signature and medication form. These forms can be picked up in the school clinic.

Any medicine needed during the school year must be brought in by the parent/guardian to the nurse's clinic. Your child may not carry medicine with them with the exception of an inhaler, if the appropriate form is filled out. If a student brings any medicine to school, the medicine will not be given. Any medicine brought in without the items listed above will not be given. This is for the safety of all children.

Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician and administered by our nurse shall not be a violation of Spring City Middle School drug policies. Intoxication from abuse of prescribed drugs shall be considered in the same manner as intoxication from illegally obtained substances. **REMEMBER----****All medication must be registered with the school nurse. Anyone who has any kind of medication that has NOT been registered with the school nurse will be subject to strict disciplinary action.**

WHEN TO KEEP CHILDREN HOME FROM SCHOOL

These guidelines are from Dr. Robert Key at the Mayo Clinic. Keep your children at home if they:

- 1) Throw up two or more times in 24 hours or are not able to keep normal foods or drinks down. They should be free from vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school.
- 2) Have a fever of 100 or more. **They should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school, without fever reducing medication.** Lack of a fever is usually a good indicator the child will not spread a cold, flu or disease.
- 3) Have severe coughing or trouble breathing.
- 4) Have stomach pains that last more than two hours.
- 5) Have open sores in the mouth.
- 6) Have repeated diarrhea for at least a day.
- 7) Have an unexplained skin rash or red eye.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must have proof of immunizations that are up-to-date, or required exemption documentation.

PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE) POLICY

In compliance with SBP, 6.4031, SCMS will endeavor to minimize the risk of transmitting head lice by notifying the parent if a child has an infestation. A letter shall be sent home explaining the condition, requirements for readmission and deadlines for satisfactory completion of the treatment.

Prior to readmission evidence of treatment must be submitted to school personal that; (1) proof of treatment with a pediculosis product, or (2) satisfactory examination by a school health official. A student shall be expected to have met all requirements for treatment and return to school no later than two (2) days following exclusion for head lice. Additional days beyond the two day allowable period will result in unexcused absences.

CAFETERIA

Our cafeteria serves breakfast and lunch daily at no cost to students. Breakfast is served from 7:35-7:50 a.m. Extra items, such as extra milk, bottled water, chips, cookies and ice cream will be offered at the regular price (generally \$.50 to \$1.00). The cost of an adult breakfast will be \$2.25 and an adult lunch is \$4.00.

Menus are available on-line at www.rheacounty.org and upon request at the local school.

MEALPAY PLUS

Rhea County offers Mealpay Plus (<http://www.mealpayplus.com/>), a state-of-the-art online service that provides you the convenience and information you need to manage your student's meal account.

At no cost, Mealpay Plus allows any family to:

- Create a free, secured account to manage all of your student's account.
- Check your student's current account balance.
- Monitor the items your student has been purchasing in the cafeteria
- Create settings to receive e-mail notification when the account reaches a low balance.

For a small fee, Mealpay Plus allows any family to:

- Make a prepayment into your student's meal account using a credit card or debit card at <http://www.mealpyaplus.com/> or by calling (866)724-5797. Funds deposited through Mealpay Plus are usually available for student use within a matter of minutes. This feature eliminates the need to send a check or worry about lost or forgotten lunch money.

You also have the ability to create a setting to automatically replenish your student's account when it reaches a low balance.

Cafeteria Rules

-  Learn your cafeteria number.
-  Keep your hands to yourself at all times.
-  Get everything you need before sitting. (ex. ketchup, mustard, fork and napkin)
-  Stay seated. If assistance is needed, raise your hand and an adult will come to you. Leave the top of the table clean.
-  Leave the floor free of debris.
-  Keep voices low as you talk. Excessive noise or unbecoming conduct is not acceptable.
-  **NEW LAW REQUIRES** → Every student receiving a school lunch must take 1/2 cup fruit or 1/2 cup vegetable and 2 other additional items to be counted as a meal

The cafeteria at SCMS provides the opportunity to not only enjoy nutritional meals, but is also a place where good manners and human relations may be further developed. Each student is expected to practice appropriate table etiquette.

- 1) Under no circumstances will throwing of food or any other item be tolerated.
- 2) Treat the cafeteria workers with respect.
- 3) Each person is responsible for what he/she brings to the table, and all individuals at the table are responsible for leaving the table and floor are clean.
- 4) Students should display respect for each other in the cafeteria by waiting in line to be served, cleaning off their tables when finished and maintaining a conversational voice level.
- 5) Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
- 6) Students are to remain seated at their table until dismissal.

RETURNED CHECKS

The Rhea County Board of Education has entered into an agreement with Paylance, Inc. for the collection of all returned checks issued to all Rhea County School cafeteria locations. The Board requires that you make sure the following information is on all checks written:

- Full Name
- Street Address
- Home Phone Number

If your check is returned by your bank, it will be automatically forwarded by the Rhea County Board of Education's bank directly to Paylance after the first presentation.

CHECK PAYMENT TERMS

In consideration of merchant accepting customer's payment by check, and other good and valuable consideration, Customer agrees that if any check is returned unpaid for any reason, customer expressly authorizes merchant or it's processing agent or assignee to electronically collect or create a demand draft to collect the face amount of the check, and a \$30 return check service fee as well as any applicable bank fees and sales tax. Customer's payment by check is customer's express acceptance of the terms and shall serve as customer's authorization for the electronic collection and /or demand draft on customer's account.

SELLING/SOLICITING BY STUDENTS

Students are not permitted to sell items or to solicit pledges or donations from other students or staff during school hours, whether in the building or on the bus to and from school. Prior permission from the principal for any fund raisers must be obtained and aligned to current SBP.

MONEY IN SCHOOL

All students are strongly advised to bring only enough money to school to buy additional lunch items. Every year, there are students who bring large amounts of money and "lose" it at school. This creates a huge disruption in the educational day and is very stressful for parents and guardians. Please do not allow your child to bring excessive amounts of money to school. SCMS assumes no responsibility for "lost" money.

PAYMENTS OR FINES AND CHARGES

All money owed to SCMS should be paid as soon as possible. This includes cafeteria charges, library book replacement fees, textbook replacement fees, outstanding fund raising proceeds and other such charges.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Students are expected to be respectful, responsible and ready. Respectful behaviors include; using appropriate volume when speaking, removing hats/hoods when entering the building, keeping hands, feet, and objects to self, walking while inside the school building and treating others as you wish to be treated. Responsible behaviors include; arriving to class on time, having needed classroom assignments and materials, daily, following individual classroom rules/procedures and accepting personal responsibility for your actions. Having a positive attitude toward the school environment enables students to be “ready” to learn. **All individual classroom rules at SCMS fall under being respectful, responsible and ready.**

SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT (PBS)

The faculty at SCMS understands that we are, at all times, to model R-E-S-P-E-C-T. A team approach to teaching expectations and preventing behavior problems will also be used at SCMS to circumvent negative behaviors.

SCMS loses instructional time when distributing consequences, writing referrals, telephoning parents, parent conferences, etc., and we plan to make daily efforts to **praise positive behaviors**. Through this incentive program we hope to use less time on disseminating consequences and more time being creative and enthusiastic in our planning of engaging activities. The focus of our PBS program will be to teach through example and reward positive student behaviors/attitudes.

Students will earn in-class incentives (at teacher’s discretion) and will also participate in a quarterly incentive, within grade level. However, students who receive any office referrals which result in out of school suspension or in school suspension will **automatically be eliminated from PBS activities for that quarter**. Each grade level will also have a bi-weekly incentive. Students may be held from this for disciplinary issues, unsatisfactory attendance and/or missing work. Students may also be held out of field trips for disciplinary issues, failing grades and unsatisfactory attendance. Each grade level will send home their policy.

SCMS intends to follow the established Rhea County School Board Policy (SBP, 6.313) in addressing all discipline issues in the upcoming 2022-23 school year. School Board Policy specifically categorizes levels of misbehavior and disciplinary procedures in order to protect all members of the educational community in the exercise of their rights and duties.

SCMS MINOR/MAJOR DISCIPLINE CHART

The following is not intended to be an exhaustive list of offenses and consequences.

Minor Offenses: Handled by supervising teacher with classroom consequences. These violations may require a discipline referral to the office for repeated offenses. Teachers will follow the protocol below for minor offenses:

- 1) Warning
- 2) Parent Contacted
- 3) Office Referral if minor offenses are on-going. On-going offenses will result in S-Team (student/guardians/teachers/administrator) meeting where behavioral goals will be established and student will be required to attend morning and or after school detention as determined by team members.

Major Offenses: A discipline referral is expected for all major offenses. Student is subject to immediate removal from the classroom and a referral should be sent along with the student.

VIOLATION	MAJOR	MINOR	DEFINITION
Abusive Language / Inappropriate Symbolism / Written, Verbal, Gestured	Swearing or cursing toward anyone, gang signs, rude or inappropriate gestures (shooting birds)	Name Calling / saying stupid, ugly, shut up, etc.	Swearing or symbolism directed toward others in a demeaning or provoking manner

VIOLATION	MAJOR	MINOR	DEFINITION
Irresponsible Acts / Disrespect / Possession of Inappropriate Materials	Leaving room without permission / refusal to go to the office / overt refusal to follow instructions / pornographic materials	Not completing work, sleeping, not following directions, minor talking back, off-task, tardy	Yelling at teacher, leaving class without permission, verbal defiance, passive noncompliant acts / possession of pornographic material

Technology	Violation of Acceptable Use Policy	Violation of Board Policy concerning communication devices / Unauthorized use of electronic devices (Ipod, Games, Etc.)	Any disturbance or interference that takes away from the learning environment which may or may not cause potential harm to one's self or others
Disruption	Yelling, escalated confrontation between students, slamming books, or knocking books to the floor in anger, acts of rage	Talking, tapping items, repeated noises, blurting out, out of seat, passing gas on purpose, burping	Any disturbance or interference that takes away from the learning environment which may or may not cause potential harm to one's self or others
"Hands Off" Fighting / Physical / Personal Aggression	Punching, hitting, kicking, spitting, causing harm to another	Pushing, shoving, horse playing that does not escalate, includes Public Display of Affection (PDA)	Physical contact with the intent or outcome of causing injury or harm to others (major), no harm (minor), PDA contact included
Theft / Forgery / Cheating	Taking school, teacher's, or student's (more than \$5) property without permission, forgery, turning in someone else's work	Cheating on assignment, taking someone else's school supplies (value less than \$5)	Stealing school, teacher or student property / Signing someone else's name / Copying / Cheating on work
Harassment / Threats / Bullying	Inappropriate comment or physical contact that makes the receiver feel uncomfortable or threatened	Horseplay, actions or comments that do not make the victim feel threatened (making faces, etc.)	Bullying, verbal abuse, inappropriate touching, threats of physical harm, including threats of violence or weapons

VIOLATION	MAJOR	MINOR	DEFINITION
Weapons	Knives or guns (real or look alike), objects readily capable of causing bodily harm found on the student or in lockers, backpacks, purses, etc	Pencils, scissors, etc. when not being used correctly, but NOT intended as a weapon	Having possession of a weapon or weapon look alike capable of causing bodily harm (major) / not intended as a weapon (minor)

Property Damage	Breaking classroom materials, throwing desks, chairs, computers, destroying text books, and destruction of any building fixture or structure	Kicking or stomping floor / writing on furniture, breaking pencils, slamming lockers or doors, etc..	Intentional destruction of property belonging to the school, staff, or other students through misuse or aggressive behavior / Writing on Furniture
-----------------	--	--	--

SMOKING AND TOBACCO FREE SCHOOL POLICY (SBP, 1.803)

Students shall not be allowed to use any tobacco product, including smoking, vaping, dipping, or chewing while on school property, or while participating in or in attendance of a school-sponsored event. This includes while on school buses to and from school, to and from school-sponsored activities, or while being a spectator at a school athletic event. Students caught with any tobacco product will be subject to disciplinary action per current. Specific SBP states; *Any student who possesses tobacco products shall be issued a citation by the school principal/resource officer.* Parents will be notified of this citation.

ZERO TOLERANCE OFFENSES

Rhea County Schools Policy 6.309

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment, the following offenses shall not be tolerated:

1. Bringing to school or being in unauthorized possession of a firearm on school property;
2. Unlawful possession of any drug, including any controlled substance, controlled substance analogue, or legend drug on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event;
3. Aggravated assault;
4. Assault that results in bodily injury upon any teacher, principal, administrator, any other employee of the school, or school resource officer; or
5. Threats of mass violence on school property or at a school-related activity.

Committing any of these offenses shall result in a student being expelled from the regular school program for at least one (1) calendar year unless modified by the Director of Schools. Modification of the length of time shall be granted on a case-by-

case basis. Students that commit zero tolerance offenses may be assigned to an alternative school or program at the discretion of the Director of Schools.⁷

When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the principal shall notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system as required by law.⁸

WEAPONS AND DANGEROUS INSTRUMENTS - FIREARMS: Students shall not possess, handle, transmit, use or attempt to use any dangerous weapon in school buildings or on school grounds at any time, or in school vehicles and/or buses or off the school grounds at a school-sponsored activity, function or event. Dangerous weapons for the purposes of this policy shall include, but are not limited to a firearm or anything manifestly designed, made or adapted for the purpose of inflicting death or serious bodily injury or anything that in the manner of its use or intended use is capable of causing death or serious bodily injury. Violators of this section shall be subject to suspension and/or expulsion from school.

In accordance with state law, any student who brings or possess a firearm on school property shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The Superintendent shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

DRUGS: Students will not consume, possess, distribute, or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages in school buildings or on school grounds, in school vehicles or buses, or at any school-sponsored activity at any time, whether on or off school grounds. Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed on students who violate standards of conduct required by this policy. Such sanctions will be consistent with local, state, and federal laws, up to and including suspension/expulsion as well as referral for prosecutions. (SBP, 6.307)

In accordance with state law, any student who unlawfully possesses any drug including any controlled substance or legend drug shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The superintendent shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

ASSAULT: In accordance with state law, any student who commits assault upon any teacher, principal administrator, any other employee of the school or school resource officer shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The Superintendent shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. **Students found guilty of fighting with one another will be suspended for a period of 3-5 days . Students who record a fight may also face suspension.**

ELECTRONIC THREATS: In accordance with state law, any student who transmits by an electronic device any communication containing a credible threat to cause bodily

injury or death to another student or school employee and the transmission of such threat creates actual disruptive activity at the school that requires administrative intervention shall be expelled for a period of not less than one (1) calendar year. The Superintendent shall have the authority to modify this expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

When it is determined that a student has violated this policy, the principal of the school shall notify the student's parents or guardian and the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system as required by law.

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

Students shall be provided a learning environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/harassment. Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures or words either written or spoken of sexual, racial, ethnic or religious nature which: unreasonably interfere with the student's work or educational opportunities; or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment.

BULLYING/INTIMIDATION

Students shall be provided a safe learning environment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully, intimidate or create a hostile educational environment for another student. Bullying and intimidation are defined as either physically harming a student or damaging his/her property, or knowingly placing the student in reasonable fear of such, or creating a hostile educational environment. The policy addresses conduct taking place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or at any official school bus stop immediately before boarding and immediately following debarking. Bullying is subject to the same penalties as harassment.

Olweus Definition of Bullying:

"Bullying is when someone repeatedly and on purpose says or does mean or hurtful things to another person who has difficulty defending himself or herself."

TERRORIST THREATS

An intention to harm school personnel and/or students, either spoken or written is considered a terroristic threat. A threat against others, with or without mention of dangerous weapons, will be treated as a serious offense and is subject to administrative discipline. The SRO will be notified and charges will be filed.

CHEATING

Cheating in the middle school occurs when a student has taken another person's thoughts, writing or work and submits this work as his own. Some examples of cheating are:

- 1) Using published works bearing copyrights without giving credit to the author or publisher.
- 2) Copying another student's answers on a test.
- 3) Talking during a test.
- 4) Copying another student's homework with or without their consent.
- 5) Using written answers prepared before the test unless the test is open book or open notes.
- 6) Passing answers to other students on a test previously taken.
- 7) Making work available for someone else to copy.
- 8) Changing answers on work being corrected without permission.
- 9) Using Artificial Intelligence.

Anyone cheating or contributing toward cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment. Parents will be notified of the incident by the teacher and a report of the incident will be filed with the principal. A second cheating incident will result in an office referral, a failing grade and a parent conference.

BUS RULES AND BEHAVIOR

- 1) All school rules apply during loading, riding, and unloading of buses.
- 2) The bus driver is in charge of the bus. Obey the driver.
- 3) Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- 4) No physical or verbal abuse toward other people.
- 5) No throwing of objects inside, out of, or near the vehicle.
- 6) No littering.
- 7) No tobacco in any form is permitted. No smoking, no use of matches or lighters.
- 8) No foul language or horseplay at any time.
- 9) Never damage or tamper with the bus.
- 10) Respect your fellow riders.
- 11) Any student wishing to ride a bus other than his/her designated bus must have a written parental permission and the approval of the principal. No more than (5) written permissions per bus allowed per day.
- 12) Students who transfer from bus to bus while en route to and from school shall be expected to abide by the discipline policies adopted by the School Board and rules adopted by the staff of their terminal school.
- 13) If a discipline problem calls for loss of bus privileges, the following rules will apply:
 - 1st offense - 5 day suspension from bus.
 - 2nd offense - 10 day suspension from bus.
 - 3rd offense - Suspension from bus the remaining days of the school term.

Minor offenses will be dealt with by designated principal and major offenses will be handled by the Rhea County Transportation Director.

Students and Parents need to understand if for any reason a student is suspended from a bus, the Compulsory School Attendance Law is still in effect. Therefore, students who do not attend school without an excused reason for absence, will have those absences considered unexcused.

INTERNET POLICY

Students will receive at the beginning of school a copy of the Network/Internet Acceptable Use Policy. Parents and students must sign the Access Agreements and school personnel must certify that training has occurred before students will be permitted to use the internet. The completed forms will be kept on file.

COMPUTER BEHAVIOR

All computers in school are equipped with hardware and software that are used by all the students in the school. All students have a responsibility to respect the equipment and to use it in its intended manner. The following abuses of computer related equipment will result in school discipline:

- 1) Altering the condition of equipment, including disconnecting cables, switching keyboards or disassembling of the mouse will result in disciplinary consequences.
- 2) Intentional crashing of programs or rearrangement of the hard drive, damage to hardware or software is destruction of school property and will result in restitution of damages and disciplinary action.
- 3) Intentional destruction of another student's computer, work or disk will result in disciplinary action.
- 4) The unauthorized use of a teacher/staff computer is a serious offense. Discipline action will be taken. The purposeful search and/or viewing of inappropriate information or pictures on the Web.

Schools have a responsibility to provide a safe and orderly environment for all students. SCMS will not tolerate aggressive, threatening or violent behavior, which creates an unsafe school environment.

Intimidation or bullying, sexual harassment, planning or threatening to harm another student, racial, ethnic, or religious slurs, language (spoken or written) or gestures that provoke or lead to a physical confrontation are all considered aggressive behavior.

Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher or employee of the Rhea County Dept. of Education by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures of images, web site postings (including Blogs). All forms of cyber bullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive to the educational process of the school system, offenders shall be subject to appropriate discipline. Students who engage in any of these activities will be subject to administrative discipline.

Personal Communication Devices

Students may possess cell phones and smart watches, but they must be turned off and stored in a backpack or bag during the day. Please see the Rhea County School Board Policy below.

S.B.P. 6.312

Personal Communication Devices and other Electronic Devices can cause a disruption to the educational process. To preserve the focus and purpose of the instructional setting, the following policies are in effect regarding the use of personal communication and electronic devices in the Rhea County School System.

Students may possess personal communication devices and personal electronic devices so long as such devices are turned off and stored in backpacks, purses or personal carry-alls. Such devices include, but are not limited to, wearable technology such as eye glasses, rings, or watches that have the capability to record, live stream, or interact with wireless technology; cell phones; laptops; tablets; and mp3 players. However, a teacher may grant permission for the use of these devices to assist with instruction in his/her classroom, and teachers are encouraged to integrate the devices into their course work. The principal or his/her designee may also grant a student permission to use such a device at his/her discretion.

Unauthorized use or improper storage of a device will result in confiscation until such time as it may be released to the student's parents or guardian. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action as outlined below:

- 1) First offense, taken up until the end of the day
- 2) Second offense, taken up until parent picks up the device
- 3) Third offense, taken up until parent picks up the device and student will be given a consequence of ISS one (1) day

- 4) Further offenses- the student will be required to turn the phone in to the office each morning for a period of time.

Exceptions to this policy apply to any off campus activity such as athletic events, field trips, school related competitions, etc., when the student is being transported to and/or from the school's campus via a school bus or one secured by the county or school.

The sponsor or chaperone in charge of each activity will provide a prior principal approved directive to students and parents concerning communication and other electronic devices.

Standardized Dress Code (6-12, SBP, 6.3101)

Students shall be well groomed and appropriately dressed in a modest manner to promote an orderly educational atmosphere. Any apparel, dress, tattoo, or grooming that is potentially disruptive of the educational process will not be permitted. Students are encouraged to adhere to the dress code during school and during school sponsored events occurring within school hours.

The following shall NOT be worn at school or school sponsored events during school hours.

- Apparel with messages or pictures regarding drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and violence, and logos that are obscene, crude, vulgar, or sexual
- Clothing or accessories that denote an affiliation with any gang associated with criminal activity, safety hazards, or security risk
- Clothing with logos or messages that are offensive to an ethnic or a religious group
- Pajama type clothing
- Spaghetti straps, tank tops, halter tops, mesh and sheer tops
- Undergarments worn as outer garments
- Clothing with holes above the knee
- Trench coats
- Caps, hats, bandanas, headbands, headscarves, hoodies over the head for boys or girls
- Non-natural hair colors
- Sleeveless tops or dresses
- Bedroom slippers or "heely" shoes
- Heavy metal chains that are deemed dangerous

- Sunglasses and tinted glasses
- No Swimwear including swimming trunks
- No leggings or spandex

BOTTOM WEAR (waist & below) – Pants, skirts, shorts, skorts

Bottom wear must be appropriately sized and worn securely around the waist and should not be bagging or sagging. Wind suits, sweatpants, tight fitting knit pants, leggings, spandex shorts, boxer shorts, and biker shorts are not permitted.

Skirts, shorts, or skorts must be no shorter than mid-thigh.

Bib overalls may be worn as long as galluses and side closures are fastened.

TOP WEAR (waist & above)

All tops should have sleeves with modest necklines without revealing cleavage and should be size appropriate.

Shirts and pants or skirts must meet when elbows are raised to the height of the shoulder exposing no bare midriffs.

DRESSES & SKIRTS

Dresses and skirts may be worn provided the length is no shorter than mid-thigh. All dresses must have sleeves. Leggings can only be worn underneath dresses and skirts of appropriate length.

JEWELRY/ACCESSORIES

Students are not to wear jewelry, ornaments, or accessories which distract from the educational process, such as excessively noisy jewelry and/or belts. All body piercing jewelry outside of the ears must be studs. Students may not wear metal spiked apparel or similar accessories.

SHOES

Shoes must be worn at all times.

HAIR

All students are required to wear their hair in such a manner that is not considered unkempt, unclean, or impairing vision. Students are not to have: sprayed or dyed in unnatural colors, (such as blue, pink, green, orange, etc.) spiked hair or mohawks.

SPECIAL DRESS DAYS

Any school may develop special dress days for special occasions at the direction of the principal.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special events include programs or events occurring outside of the routine of the normal school day (award days, dances, homecoming, prom, etc.). The dress code at special events shall have additional criteria that shall be followed.

- All necklines shall be modest
- Backless dresses shall not be permitted
- Bare mid riffs shall not be permitted
- Length of dresses and skirts shall be to top of the knee

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

If a student cannot comply with the standardized dress code based on religious beliefs, his or her parent or guardian may write a letter explaining the situation to the Director of Schools with a copy to the school principal. Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis.

NOTE: The final decision as to what is appropriate or acceptable for dress at school will be made by the principal or designee.

Students violating dress code will be referred to the office and allowed to call home for a change of clothes. Multiple violations of dress code policy will result in an office referral and the potential of losing PBS privileges, student activities privileges and ISS . On-going violations of dress code could lead to OSS and possible alternative school placement.

OFFICE REFERRALS

The following guidelines will be used in dealing with warranted office referrals which result from repeated **minor offenses** as outlined in the student handbook.

- 1) The first office referral will include consequences of; parent contact, lunch detention and loss of grade level incentive.
- 2) The second referral will include; parent contact, one (1) day ISS and loss of PBS quarterly event.
- 3) The third referral for minor offenses will require a parent conference, continued loss of PBS quarterly events and out of school suspension (OSS) for one (1) day.
- 4) Continued referrals for minor offenses will require a team meeting (parents, teachers, guidance counselor, school administration), continued loss of PBS events and OSS of up to three (3) days.

The SCMS administrative team will deal with all major offenses in compliance with Rhea County SBP as described in this handbook and will reserve the right to disallow students who have repeated office referrals or major incident referrals from participating in school-sponsored activities. (SPB, 6.313, page 2)

Athletics

Regular attendance is expected of all athletes. Athletes must be in attendance for at least half of the school day to participate in a game or practice. The administration reserves the right to review absences and allow the student athlete to participate if there is, in the administration's judgement, a valid reason for absence. Attendance at all games and practices are mandatory unless excused by the coach before the competition or practice.

Due to the concerns of Average Daily Attendance, Rhea County Schools will propose procedures for athletes in extracurricular activities. In the event of a student athlete missing 10 days of unexcused absences, the student athlete will not be able to participate in any extracurricular activities. The suspension will be lifted when the student athlete attends 10 consecutive days of school. If the student athlete misses 10 days, after the first suspension and reinstatement, the 10 day rule must be followed again.

Students failing more than one class can be held out of athletics for the next nine week period after the failing grade is issued.

Reference the Rhea County Schools Athletic Handbook on the Rhea County Schools Website for the complete handbook.

RHEA COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Parents are encouraged to visit our school website at <http://scms.rheacounty.org/> and to follow us on Face Book for updated events pertaining to our school.

All Rhea County School Board meetings and workshops are open to the public. A proposed Board policy or policy change is submitted as part of the Board's agenda. Any interested party will be given the opportunity to be heard on the proposal. Meetings/workshops are announced in the local newspaper, school calendars and newsletters.

The Rhea County School System has a very informative web site, www.rheacounty.org . You may find pertinent information concerning school board policies, calendar events, etc.

The Rhea County School's course of study is the State of Tennessee Curriculum. It can be viewed at the State of Tennessee website, www.state.tn.us/education . Local facilities providing access to the state website are public libraries, schools and the Rhea County Superintendent at School's office.

DISCRIMINATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Rhea County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, handicap, age, or veteran status in provision of educational opportunities, programs, activities, or employment opportunities and benefits. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies:

Deidra Sims, Titles II, VI, IX and Age Discrimination Act Contact
Rhea County Department of Education
305 California Avenue, Dayton, TN 37321 (423) 775-7813

Ray Fugate, 504 Contact
Rhea County Department of Education
305 California Avenue, Dayton, TN 37321 (423) 775-7813

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND 504 POLICIES

It is the policy of the Rhea County Board of Education to provide a free and appropriate public education to each handicapped student within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the handicap. It is the intent of the district to ensure that students who are handicapped within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate education services. Students may be handicapped under this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Due process rights of handicapped students and their parents, under Section 504 will be enforced.

PARENTS RIGHTS TO KNOW PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

As a parent of a student attending Rhea County Schools, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teachers, and

requires us to give you this information in a timely manner when requested. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's teachers:

Whether the Tennessee State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.

Whether the Tennessee State Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.

The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and if so, the subject of the degrees.

Whether any teaching assistants or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please call Jesse Messimer, Director of Schools at (423)775-7813.

TRANSFER OPTION FOR STUDENTS VICTIMIZED BY VIOLENT CRIME AT SCHOOL

Under the Tennessee State Board of Education's Unsafe School Choice Policy, any public school student who is the victim of a violent crime as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 40-38-111(g), or the attempt to commit one of these offenses as defined under Tennessee Code Annotated 39-12-101, shall be provided an opportunity to transfer to another grade-level appropriate school within the district. Additional information regarding this option may be obtained by contacting Central Office at (423)778-7813.

HOMELESS EDUCATION

A homeless individual is someone who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. {725(2)(A)} This includes anyone who, due to lack of housing, lives:

Doubled-up: Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (economic hardship - not by choice)
Motels, hotels, campgrounds, trailer parks due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations
Emergency or transitional shelters

Homeless Definition:

Public or private place not designated for human living such as cars, parks, substandard housing, abandoned building, bus/train stations

Awaiting foster care

Abandoned in hospitals

Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above

Student Rights:

Immediate enrollment, even if lacking paperwork

Transportation to/from school of origin

Public posting of rights

School selection (school or origin/local school)

Comparable services

Prohibition of segregation

Free school meals

Title I Support

Appropriate special services (ESL, Special Education)

If you have questions related to the education of homeless children and youth or would like additional information, please contact: Deidra Sims, Rhea County Dept. of Education at (423) 775-7863.

THE ADMINISTRATION HAS THE RIGHT TO CHANGE BY ADDING OR DELETING ANY RULE OR REGULATION IF IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF OUR CHILDREN. THE STUDENTS MAY BE NOTIFIED BY WRITTEN OR ORAL COMMUNICATION OF ANY CHANGES TO THE SCMS HANDBOOK.

RHEA COUNTY EDUCATION LEADERSHIP TEAM

Director of Schools: Dr. Amie Lonas

School Board Members listed at www.rheacounty.org

**I have read, understand and intend to abide by
the school policies for Spring City Middle School.**

Date

Parent's Signature

Date

Student's Signature

Rhea County Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in programs and activities and comply with the provisions of Titles II, VI, IX, Section 504, and the Age Discrimination Act. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies:

Deidra Sims, Titles II, VI, IX, Age Discrimination Act Contact
Rhea County Department of Education
305 California Avenue
Dayton, TN 37321
423-775-7813

Ray Fugate, 504 Contact
Rhea County Department of Education

305 California Avenue
Dayton, TN 37321
423-775-7813