

2024-2025

Principal: Rhonda Freeman

Vice Principal: Rebecca Millard

Welcome to Rhea Central. We, the faculty and staff, hope this will be the best year of your educational career. This online handbook will provide you with an understanding of the policies and expectations of our school. These have been established with the help of teachers, parents, students, and administrators working together. We ask that you and your parents become familiar with it. If at any time you do not understand the policies of the school, please contact the office for assistance.

Clinic

Rhea Central has a clinic staffed by a nurse. Any student who is too sick to remain at school will be sent to the school nurse. Parents will be contacted to come and sign the child out.

Medication

If it becomes necessary for a student to take any form of medication at school, a signed note from a parent with directions must be presented to the nurse. Students taking prescribed medication are requested to identify themselves to the proper authorities in the school. All prescriptions should bear the name of the drug or medication, directions to be followed, and also the name of the pharmacy where the prescription was filled. Intoxication from over abuse of prescribed drugs shall be considered in the same manner as intoxication from illegally obtained substances. Use of drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician shall not be considered a violation of Rhea Central drug policies. All prescription medication must be registered with the school nurse. Anyone who has any kind of medication that has not been registered by the school nurse will be subject to strict disciplinary action. We will need a medical form on any medication that is to be given on a daily basis. All medication will be kept and dispensed by the nurse.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Conferences between teachers and parents are encouraged. They must be set up by appointment to ensure that teachers are not interrupted while they are teaching students. Call the school office to set up an appointment for a conference.

Posters

No posters or notices are to be posted anywhere in the building without approval of the administration.

School Closures

Knowing early dismissals may occur due to emergency situations, please inform your child what he/she needs to do about arrangements to get home. With our large student population, it is impossible to call every parent to ask what a child needs to do. **MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD KNOWS WHAT TO DO.** In the event of inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, school may be closed or starting time delayed. The same conditions may also necessitate early dismissal. School closing, delayed starting time, or early dismissal will be announced through a school cast, local media, or the information on the internet at <http://www.rheacounty.org/>. **PLEASE HAVE A PLAN FOR YOUR CHILD TO FOLLOW IN CASE WE DISMISS EARLY!** If a bus does not run in the morning, please make plans to pick your child up in the afternoon.

Telephone

Messages and deliveries from home should be left in the office. Students will be called out of class only in an emergency. Students may use the telephone in the school office, with permission, if it is absolutely necessary. Students will be required to state their reason for needing to use the phone. **MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS SHOULD BE CALLED IN BY 2:00 PM. ALL STUDENT MESSAGES WILL BE GIVEN AT THE END OF THE DAY.**

Visitors

Parents and other citizens are welcome to visit our school. We must, however, for the welfare of our students, insist on the following: **ALL VISITORS MUST GO TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE BEFORE MAKING A VISIT AND IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AND THE REASON FOR**

THEIR VISIT. THEY MUST SIGN IN AND GET A VISITOR'S PASS TO GO INTO THE BUILDING TO A SPECIFIC AREA ONLY.

*Students from other schools may not be visitors in classrooms because of overcrowded conditions and possible disruptions.

Attendance

Regular attendance is not only very important for the good scholarship, but it is also enforced by law. A student cannot receive full benefit from his/her classes if his/her attendance is irregular. STUDENTS ARE GIVEN A CERTIFICATE OF AWARD FOR PERFECT ATTENDANCE EACH YEAR. Should an absence occur, the parent should call the school before 10:00 am. When the student returns to school, he/she should bring a note from his/her parents to the attendance clerk with the following information included: student's name, date(s) of absence, specific reason for the absence, parent's signature, and the phone number where the parent may be reached. Notes from the doctor or dentist should be attached. Excuses are written in the front lobby between 7:30 and 8:00 am. Students should pick up excuses as they enter the building. Students are allowed to miss five days per school year for personal illness.

*Excused absences according to School Board Policy:

1. Personal illness (5 parent notes)
2. Medical excuse must be turned in within 5 days of absence.
3. Death in the family
4. Religious observances
5. Extreme weather
6. Principal's approval

Students who show a pattern of excessive absences will be referred to juvenile court.

MAKE-UP WORK- Students are expected to do make-up work for absences. It is the student's responsibility to see the teacher to get make-up assignments. Parents may call the school office prior to 10:00 a.m. to have make-up assignments prepared to be picked up, but only after the child has been out two days.

*Unexcused absences: Absences for other reasons than those listed under excused will be counted unexcused.

*Tardiness: Students arriving at school after 8:00 a.m. are tardy. They should go directly to the office to obtain an admission slip to class. Students who show a pattern of excessive tardiness may be treated as truant and referred to juvenile court.

*Early dismissal: Students are not to leave the campus for any reason without permission from the office. Permission may be granted for reasons such as prearranged appointments.

*Leaving early for prearranged appointments- Preferably medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. When this is impossible, arrangements may be made to leave early with the approval of the school administration. If the child receives approval for early dismissal, the child should show a note to his/her teacher at the time appointed to leave; the child must report to the office to be signed out before leaving campus. Students may leave with a parent, guardian, or persons listed on the registration form. In the event someone other than those people listed will be picking up the student, prior approval is required. NO ONE WILL BE ALLOWED TO CHECK OUT AFTER 2:15 P.M. On early dismissal, no one will be allowed to check fifteen minutes prior to dismissal.

*Withdrawals- If a student is moving out of our school, it is necessary for the parent to withdraw the child from school. Parents should call the office at least two days before the child is to withdraw to obtain instructions for proper procedures.

*Truancy- Skipping school, skipping class, or leaving the school grounds without permission is strictly prohibited and will be dealt with as truancy. Truancy is a suspension offense if deemed necessary by the principal. Truancy can also lead to the student being taken to juvenile court. Excessive absenteeism and tardiness will result in disciplinary action.

Before School

School doors will open at 7:20 a.m. Students will report to either the cafeteria for breakfast or their assigned bus duty area. PARENTS MAY ACCOMPANY KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS DURING THE WEEKS OF PHASE IN. AFTER THE PHASE IN, ALL KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS WILL REPORT TO THEIR DESIGNATED AREA WITHOUT PARENTS. NO STUDENT WILL WAIT IN THE FOYER BEFORE GOING TO HIS/HER CLASSROOM.

School Dismissal

Car rider bell will ring at 3:00 p.m. Parents picking up car riders must have a tag provided by the school in the vehicle to precede in the car pick up line. Failure to have this tag will result in having to go to the office to pick up the child and show identification. Bus riders will be dismissed when buses arrive from the middle and high school. No teachers will be on duty after 3:30 p.m.

Student pickup/drop off

Parents may pick up and drop off riders in the designated areas only. Do NOT pick up or drop off students in areas restricted for buses only or teachers' parking.

Bus Behavior

From the time a student boards a bus until he/she is dropped off in the afternoon, he/she is under the supervision of the school system. While on the bus, he/she will comply with the bus driver's wishes. The following rules should be observed regarding transportation by bus to and from school:

*Obey the driver. He/She may assign seats if needed.

*Observe the same good conduct as in the classroom.

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 or the principal of the school that the student attends. Any student wishing to ride a bus other than his/her designated bus must have written parental permission and the approval of the principal or his/her designee. No more than five written permissions per bus allowed per day.

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.

IF A DISCIPLINE PROBLEM CALLS FOR LOSS OF BUS PRIVILEGES, THE PROCEDURE WILL BE:

5 DAYS 1ST OFFENSE

10 DAYS 2ND OFFENSE

BALANCE OF YEAR 3RD OFFENSE

Conduct

All students are expected to display consideration for others and their feelings. Treat others with the respect you would like directed toward yourself, respect the property of others, and practice self-restraint (both verbal and physical). Your conduct reflects on the school. We want and expect you to reflect a "positive" image for Rhea Central; this includes athletic games, trips, and any/all school-sponsored activities. Students may be excluded from field trips for prior behavioral problems. Rhea Central has three school-wide rules which are designed to provide a safe and comfortable environment for all students:

(1) NO RUNNING

(2) KEEP HANDS AND FEET TO YOURSELF

(3) NO PROFANITY (WRITTEN OR SPOKEN)

Violation of these rules will result in disciplinary action. Fighting, threatening, harassing, stealing, vandalism, use of tobacco products, extortion, vulgarity (written or spoken), drugs, alcohol, pornography, and willful defiance of the authority of teachers have no place in school. Students who engage in such activities are subject to disciplinary action. Once the student is let off of the school bus or let out of his/her parent's car, he/she may not leave the school grounds without written permission from the office. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension, which will be served during field trips or other school activities, will not be allowed to participate in the activities during the period of suspension.

Dress Code for: Bottom Wear (waist and below: pants, skirts, shorts, skirts)

Bottom wear may be any color or style pants of appropriate size and length worn securely around the waist with NO SAGGING, BAGGING, OR HOLES. Spandex shorts, boxer shorts, and biker shorts are not permitted. Short skirts, short shorts or short skorts will not be permitted. Undergarments cannot be worn as outer garments.

Dress Code for: 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 hair in unnatural colors (such as blue, pink, green, orange, etc.)

Dress Code for: Head Wear

No hats, bandannas, hoods, sweatbands, or sunglasses will be worn in the building. Dress Code for: Jewelry Students are not to wear jewelry, ornaments, or accessories which distract from the educational process, such as excessively noisy jewelry and/or belts. No body-piercing jewelry is allowed except in the ears. No heavy metal chains! Students may not wear metal-spiked apparel or similar accessories.

Dress Code for: Shoes

Shoes must be worn at all times. No heelys (shoes with wheels) or cleats may be worn at school.

Dress Code for: Special Dress Days

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

Dress Code for: Special Situations

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

Dress Code for: Sweaters

Any size appropriate long sleeve crewneck sweater, v-neck sweater/vest may be worn.

Dress Code for: Sweatshirts

Sweatshirts may be worn as long as the writing meets the guidelines for shirts.

Dress Code for: Top Wear (waist and above)

Shirts of any color with sleeves may be worn as long as there are not messages promoting alcohol, tobacco, drugs, satanic beliefs or displaying obscene, crude, vulgar or sexual logos. Additionally, any logo or message which is offensive to an ethnic or religious group will not be permitted. Halter tops, mesh and sheer tops are not permitted. Shirts and pants or skirts must meet. No bare midriffs. All shirts must be size appropriate.

Illegal or Non-allowed Items

Any student found in possession of drugs, alcohol, razor blades, knives, guns, or other weapons will be suspended from school for a period of up to one year. Any student in possession of tobacco products will also be suspended. Radios, iPods, MP3 players, Walkmans, chewing gum, ink pens, toys, beepers, and cards of any type (baseball, football, etc.) are not permitted at school. These will be taken up by teachers, and turned in to the office, and will not be returned. Disciplinary measures could result.

Note

Messages on all apparel must adhere to the guidelines for shirts. The final decision as to what is appropriate or acceptable for dress at school will be made by the principal or designee.

Personal Relationships

Students will refrain from public displays of affection (kissing, holding hands, hugging, etc.) during school hours or at school sponsored activities.

School Deliveries

School board policy prohibits students from receiving flowers and gifts at school. Please do not send deliveries to school.

Textbooks

Textbooks, library books, and other school material assigned to a student are the responsibility of that student and must be returned or replaced if lost or damaged.

Students will not receive grade cards at the end of the school year if they owe for textbooks, library books, etc.

Vandalism and Property Damage

Parents/Guardians will be held responsible for any damage the student might do to the furniture, books, and other property of the school system. If students willfully destroy school property, suspension and subsequent expulsion may be necessary. If a student should happen to damage something by accident, it should be reported to a teacher or the office immediately. Students are expected to take care of all school property, the building, the grounds, and help protect the school by discouraging or reporting vandalism or property damage by others.

Violent Crime

Should your child be the victim of a violent crime, he/she has the right to transfer schools.

Drug Policy

No student shall use or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, hallucinogen, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. This includes:

On the school grounds during and immediately before or immediately after school hours;

- On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school group;
- Off the school grounds at a school activity, function, or event.

Any student who violates this policy shall be suspended immediately with resulting loss of credit. School Board dictates a minimum of ten days suspension. Additionally, the violation must be reported to the police. Prior to the student's return to school, the student and his/her parents may be required to appear before the Board of Education and request admittance.

Any student in violation of the drug/alcohol policy more than once may be recommended for expulsion. Any student who possesses, sells, or transmits, on school grounds or at a school function, any narcotic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, hallucinogenic drug, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind shall be reported to the proper law enforcement authorities, and such student shall be suspended indefinitely pending the results of the legal investigation and adjudication of the case if applicable. If a student is convicted of the drug control laws, the student shall be subject to permanent expulsion.

Smoking and Tobacco Use Policy

Students shall not be allowed to use any tobacco product, including smoking, dipping, chewing, while on school property, while participating in a school-sponsored event, or while on school buses to and from school or to and from school sponsored events.

Awards

Awards Day is held at the end of the school year to give special recognition to students. Awards are given for perfect attendance and to top students in the academic areas.

Cafeteria

All students will receive breakfast and lunch at no cost.

Grading System and Report Cards

Grade cards will be sent out four times a year at approximately forty-five day intervals. An internet parent portal is available for parents to access student's grades and monitor progress. Please contact the school for this information. Parent conferences with your child's teacher are welcome. If you have questions or concerns about your child's work, please call the school office for an appointment. The grading scale is as follows:

A: 90-100

B: 80-89

C: 70-79

D: 60-69

F: 0-59

Lost & Found Items

Found items are to be placed in the lost and found cabinet in the band room hallway. They will be held for a two-week period. Any items left for over two weeks will be removed. Students who have lost items are to check in the lost and found cabinet in the band room hallway between 7:45 and 8:00 a.m.

Physical Education

All students must take physical education unless excused in writing by a licensed physician. Sale of Non-School Related Items. All students must take physical education unless excused in writing by a licensed physician.

Staff

School personnel are certified and meet requirements set forth by federal mandates.

Talent Pool

This pool is composed of students who obtain certain scores on their academic achievement tests or certain grade point levels in their class work. Students will be contacted by the Talent Pool coordinator concerning participation.

Title I

Rhea Central Elementary has school-wide status in the Title 1 program.

Closing Remarks

If you have any questions about the policies in this handbook or any item which might not have been covered, please feel free to call the school office at 775-7842. THE ADMINISTRATION HAS THE RIGHT TO CHANGE, BY ADDING OR DELETING, ANY RULE OR REGULATION BY NOTIFICATION IN A WRITTEN OR VERBAL COMMUNICATION TO STUDENTS.

Discrimination 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. Inquiries or completed grievance forms should be referred to the Title VI/Title IX Coordinator, 1385 Broadway Street, Dayton, Tennessee 37321 (423-775-7812).

Homeless Education

A homeless individual is someone who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes anyone who, due to lack of housing, lives: *In emergency or transitional shelters. *In motels, hotels, trailer parks, campgrounds, abandoned in hospitals, awaiting foster care. *Migratory children living in these conditions. Homeless students face multiple challenges and barriers to succeed in school. The Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program provides resources and technical assistance to ensure homeless students are enrolled in school and have the supports and resources necessary for success. If you have questions related to the education of homeless children and youth, or would like additional information, please contact:

Name: Dedra Sims

Organization: Rhea County Dept. of Education

Address: 1385 Broadway Street Dayton, TN 37321

Phone: 423-775-7813

E-Mail: simsd@rheacounty.org

Lockers and Locks

Students in grades fourth and fifth will be assigned lockers by their homeroom teachers. Students need to use the locker assigned to them exclusively. Lockers and other storage areas are school property and are subject to search.

Parents Rights to Know Professional Qualifications

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 teacher(s), and requires us to give you this information in a timely manner if you ask for it. Specifically, you have the right to ask for: *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 teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

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 educational 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. The County Executive is the coordinator of Section 504 Activities (423-775-7801).