

SCSS

Support Staff Handbook



2023-2024

**SUPPORT STAFF HANDBOOK
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2023-2024**

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Stewart County Schools has implemented a ***Drug Free Workplace*** in compliance with federal regulations.

STEWART COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

SUPPORT STAFF HANDBOOK

2023-24

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT

No person shall be denied employment, re-employment, or advancement, nor shall be evaluated on the basis of sex, marital status, race, color, creed, or national origin. Age shall be considered only with respect to minimums set by law and retirement as specified by the State or policies of the Board of Education.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

It shall be the policy of the Stewart County School System to assist all of its personnel in every way possible to adjust to their positions and to perform their duties satisfactorily. Every reasonable effort shall be made to avoid situations that might warrant reprimanding, suspending, or removing personnel from their positions.

SUBSTITUTE/TEACHER ASSISTANT COURSE

All new employees are required to take and pass the App-Garden University training course. This course provides training in the following areas: classroom management, diversity, learning styles, characteristic and considerations for different age groups, discipline, tips and techniques for the classroom, behavior, effective strategies for the classroom and professionalism.

BACKGROUND CHECK

All new employees are required to submit to a background check performed by the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Every new employee to the system shall be required to successfully complete a six (6) month probationary period. This period of employment shall be utilized for the most effective adjustment of a new employee and for elimination of employees whose performance does not meet required standards.

During this period, the employee will be closely observed and evaluated. Only those employees who meet an acceptable standard of work during this time shall be retained.

A new employee may be subject to dismissal at any time during the probationary period, when in the judgment of the immediate supervisor, the quality of his/her work is not such as to merit continuation in the service.

MANDATORY ANNUAL TRAINING

Annual training requirements are housed on mybenefitschannel.com. Once logged in, an employee can navigate to required training by clicking on the Education & Training icon.

EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF

During the first year of employment, each employee shall be evaluated prior to the completion of one half of his/her normal work year. If the evaluation is deemed unsatisfactory, the employee shall be recommended for dismissal to the Director of Stewart County Schools. A satisfactory evaluation shall be the basis of continuing employment with an increase to the first salary step of the appropriate classification grade. The evaluation document can be found on pages 11-13.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Any claim by an employee of the Stewart County Board of Education that there has been a violation, misrepresentation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of the terms of employment, or his right to fair treatment, or any established policy or practice of the Board, or pertinent state and federal law shall be a grievance.

The parties hereto acknowledge that it is usually most desirable for an employee and his immediately involved supervisor to resolve problems through free and informal communications. The parties shall seek to adjust the difficulty at the point of origin.

When requested by an employee, an employee's representative may accompany the employee to assist in the informal resolution of the employee and a grievance exists, the formal procedure is invoked. A grievance will then be processed as follows:

Step 1

The employee or employee's representative shall present the grievance in writing to the immediate supervisor or the building Principal. If the immediate supervisor receives the grievance, they will arrange for a meeting to take place within four (4) days after receipt of the grievance. If the supervisor or Principal receives the grievance, they will provide a copy of the grievance to the Director and arrange a meeting with the employee and supervisor or Principal within five (5) working days. The employee shall, and the employee's representative may, be present for the meeting. Within three (3) days

after the meeting, the employee shall be provided with a written response from the recipient of the original complaint stating the decision.

Step 2

If the grievance is not resolved at Step 1 or the time limits expire without issuance of the written reply, then the employee or representative, at the employee's request, may refer the grievance to the Director of Schools or his official designee within six (6) days after receipt of the Step 1 answer or within eight (8) days after Step 1 meeting, whichever is the later. The Director of Schools shall arrange with the employee and/or employee's representative for a meeting to take place within five (5) days of the Director's receipt of the appeal. Each party shall have the right to include in its representation such witnesses and counsel, as it deems necessary. Within four (4) days of the meeting, the employee shall be provided with the Director's written response, including the reasons for the decision.

Step 3

If the grievance is not resolved at Step 2 or the time limits expire within the issuance of the Director's written reply, the employee and employee's representative may request a review by the Board of Education within seven (7) days after the time limits for Step 2 have expired. The request shall be made in writing through the Director of Schools, who shall attach all related documents and forward the request to the Board of Education.

All time limits consist of school days, except that when a grievance is submitted fewer than ten (10) days before the close of the current school term, time limits shall consist of all workdays. It is the mutual intent of the Board of Education and school administration to resolve all grievances at the earliest possible steps in the grievance procedure. If time limits expire at any one step the grievance will automatically proceed to the next step.

When a grievance involves more than one employee, the group of employees may submit a collective grievance at the appropriate level.

All parties will cooperate toward a solution of the grievance. The formal step procedures will be followed.

No reprisals shall be taken by anyone against anyone because of his participation in a grievance.

Should the processing of any grievance require that an employee or representative be released from their regular assignment, they shall be released without loss of pay or benefits, by mutual agreement.

All records related to a grievance shall be filed separately from the personnel files of the participants.

A grievance may be withdrawn by the aggrieved party at any level without establishing precedent.

SUPPORT PERSONNEL AGREEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT

Each employee will have an agreement providing the following:

- number of workdays
- number of paid holidays
- number of professional development days

The agreement will state the employees pay rate and total compensation. The agreement will be signed and dated for the current school year and does not guarantee employment beyond one school year.

ABSENCES DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

Unless the Director of Schools announces the Central Office and other departments of the school system are closed, personnel employed on a twelve (12) month basis traveling to and from work in snow, other inclement weather, or other emergencies become a personal decision on the part of the employee as to the safety and feasibility in regard to travel. Employee absence resulting from the above stated reason will be handled in the following manner: Absence shall be charged against the employee's annual vacation time or personal leave, or absence shall be charged as leave without pay.

Absence shall be indicated on the form for reporting personnel absence and submitted to the Payroll Office with the time sheet. In the event the Director of Schools announces that the Central Office and other departments will close because of inclement weather or other emergencies, personnel required to work shall be given time off in the future equal to the time worked.

TIME SHEETS

All hourly employees will maintain daily time sheets. **Time sheets will report actual hours worked daily.** Holiday, sick leave, no pay leave days etc. are to be recorded accurately on time sheets. Individual time sheets will run from the 11th of the previous month to the 10th of the current month. Immediate supervisors are responsible for collecting and verifying time sheets. Falsification of timesheets will result in immediate dismissal.

PAY DATES

All employees will be paid on the 20th of each month. When a holiday or weekend coincides with the 20th, the payday will be the last working day prior to the 20th.

JURY DUTY

Employees will be paid at their regular rate per day for jury duty, minus what you earn for each day of jury service. Employees should attach a copy of the check stub from the court to their timesheet.

ACCIDENTS

All accidents should be reported, in writing on the appropriate form, to your supervisor immediately so that the insurance company can be notified within 24 hours. The supervisor will give you information needed to complete all necessary forms. All completed reports will be filed at the central office payroll clerk.

OFF DUTY EMPLOYMENT

An employee's time outside the workday should not be utilized in a manner that would interfere with the performance of their duties. Employees are to have no financial interest in any firm that does business with the Stewart County Schools.

Positive Behavior Support

The purpose of the Stewart County District Wide Positive Behavior Support Initiative is to establish and maintain safe and effective school environments that maximize the academic achievement and behavior competence of all learners in Stewart County.

Positive Behavior Support...

**Aims to build effective environments in which positive behavior is more effective than problem behavior.*

**Is a collaborative, assessment-based approach to developing effective interventions for problem behavior.*

**Emphasizes the use of preventive teaching, and reinforcement-based strategies to achieve meaningful and durable behavior and lifestyle outcomes.*

**Stewart County
Board of Education**
P. O. Box 433, Dover, TN 37058
931-232-5176

www.stewartcountyschools.net

For more information about Stewart County Positive Behavior Support, please go to the Stewart County Schools web site and click on the link to Positive Behavior Support.

SUPPORT STAFF EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each support staff will be evaluated once a year based on this evaluation criteria:

- Attendance-** employees will be on the job as scheduled; completes a full work day with limited early releases.
- Attitude-** accepts procedures, is discrete in speech and action, is enthusiastic, exhibits a sense of loyalty.
- Confidentiality-** discussion of student progress, conduct, family, etc. is to be confidential to school staff. Student information is not to be discussed outside of the school environment or to others not associated with the students.
- Cooperative-** works well with other employees; takes direction from supervisory personnel; directs complaints to their supervisor.
- Dependable-** is honest and reliable in carrying out instructions, observes personnel policies, complies with established working hours.
- Dress** is appropriate for all ages, sets a tone for the school, and an example for all students.
- Flexible-** accepts change in schedules without complaint; performs duties as assigned.
- Initiative-** is a self starter, makes decisions when required, initiates action.
- Safety Conscience-** maintains a cautious environment for students, yourself, other employees, and community, secures working environment.

PART A. EMPLOYEE COMMENTS

How do you feel about what you have accomplished during this evaluation period?

Can you recommend any changes which would help you do your job?

Do you possess any skills and aptitudes which are not fully utilized in your present position which would be a valuable resource for the community?

What training and development do you need in order to do a better job in your current position?

STEWART COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Dover, Tennessee 37058

Equal Opportunity **Nondiscrimination Policy**

It is the policy of the Stewart County School System not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national creed, age, marital status or disability in its educational programs, activities or employment policies as required by Title VI and VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments, and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

It is also the policy of the district that the curriculum materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States and the variety of careers, roles, and lifestyles open to women as well as men in our society. One of the objectives of the total curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and eliminate bias on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, and disability. The curriculum should foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a pluralistic society.

Inquiries regarding compliance with the Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, and Section 504 may be directed to:

Stewart County Central Office 232-5176

Mike Craig, Director of Schools
Ben Duncan, Title VI
Robyn Crain, Title VII and Section 504
Ben Duncan, Title IX

TITLE IX POLICIES & PROCEDURES

SCSS is committed to providing a working and learning environment that is free from discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. The district does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education or employment programs or activities. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), its regulations, and certain other federal and state laws prohibit discrimination in such a manner. Under Title IX, discrimination on the basis of sex includes sexual harassment.

Title IX's requirement not to discriminate in any of the District's education programs or activities applies to both students and employees and extends to both admission and employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX and its regulations to the District may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education, or both:

Title IX Coordinator
Ben Duncan
1031 Spring Street
Dover, TN 37058
benduncan@stewartcountyschools.org
931-232-5176

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, to the Title IX Coordinator, regardless of whether the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment.

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

State law specifies that every citizen has a duty to report suspected brutality, abuse, neglect or child sexual abuse. **Accordingly, any school system employee who suspects child abuse must report that suspicion directly to the Department of Children's Services (DCS) and law enforcement.** As permitted by Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) 37-2-403(b), the school system has specific procedures for reporting suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

Persons who make a report of suspected child abuse or neglect are presumed to be acting in good faith and are immune from any liability, civil or criminal, that may be brought in a state court action. Such a person's identity will remain confidential except when the juvenile court in which the investigation report is filed determines the testimony of the person reporting to be material to an indictment or conviction. Their name will not be released to any person other than DCS and school administrators on a need to know basis as required by state law and that may be needed to "Protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals."

Each building is assigned a trained child abuse coordinator and alternate coordinator.

Acceptable Use Policy for the Stewart County Schools Computer Network

The Stewart County Schools (SCS) offers Internet access for faculty and student use. This document contains the Acceptable Use Policy for users of the SCS Computer Network and Internet resources.

Educational Purpose

- The SCS Computer Network has been established for a limited educational purpose. The term “educational purpose” includes classroom activities, career development and limited high-quality self-discovery activities.
- The SCS Computer Network has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. SCS has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material you access or post through the system. You are also expected to follow the rules set forth in the SCS Disciplinary Code and the law in your use of the SCS Computer Network.
- You may not use the SCS Computer for commercial purposes. This means you may not offer, provide or purchase products or services through the SCS Network.
- You may not use the SCS Computer Network for political lobbying. But you may use the system to communicate with elected representatives and to express your opinion on political issues.

Student Access

- Written parental consent shall be required prior to a student being granted access to electronic media involving district technological resources.
- The required permission agreement form, which shall specify acceptable uses, rules of on-line behavior, access privileges and penalties for policy/procedural violations, must be signed by the parent/legal guardian of minor students and also by the student.
- The permission agreement shall be executed each year and shall be valid only in the school year in which it was signed unless parent(s) provide written notice that consent is withdrawn.
- All students will have access to Internet World Wide Web information resources through their classroom, library or school computer lab with permission of parent or guardian.
- At the time, e-mail accounts and personal web pages are not being issued to students. If and when these resources are allowed, additional conditions will be added to the Student Acceptable Use Policy to address the additional responsibilities, which accompany these items.

Internet Safety Instruction

- Students will be given appropriate instruction in internet safety as part of any instruction utilizing computer resources.
- Students will be made aware of the Acceptable Use Policy prior to accessing system resources.

Unacceptable Uses

The following uses of the SCS Computer Network are considered unacceptable:

Illegal Activities

- You will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the SCS Computer Network or to any other computer system through the SCS Computer Network or go beyond your authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another person’s account or access another person’s files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of “browsing”.
- You will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are illegal.

- You will not use the SCS Computer Network to engage in any other illegal act, such as arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol. Engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of person, etc.

System Security

- You are responsible for your individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use your account. Under no conditions should you provide your password to another person.
- You will immediately notify a teacher or the system administrator if you have identified a possible security problem. Do not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
- You will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the District virus protection procedures if you download software.

Inappropriate Language

- Restrictions against Inappropriate Language apply to public messages, private messages, and material posted on Web pages using system resources.
- You will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language.
- You will not post information that could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
- You will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- You will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If you are told by a person to stop sending them messages, then you must stop.
- You will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.

Respect for Privacy

- You will not repost a message that was sent to you privately without permission of the person who sent you the message.
- You will not post private information about another person.

Respecting Resource Limits

- You will use the system only for educational and career development activities and limited, high-quality, self-discovery activities. There is no limit on use for education and career development activities.
- You will not download large files unless absolutely necessary. If necessary, you will download the file at a time when the system is not being heavily used and immediately remove the file from the system computer to your personal computer.
- You will not post chain letters or engage in “spamming”. Spamming is sending an annoying or unnecessary message to a large number of people.
- The installation of any file-sharing program is prohibited without approval of Technology Coordinator.

Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

- You will not plagiarize works that you find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours.
- You will respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when you inappropriately reproduce a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, you should follow the expressed requirements. If you are unsure whether or not you can use a work, you should request permission from the copyright owner. Copyright law can be very confusing. If you have questions, ask a teacher.

Access to Inappropriate Material

- You will not use the SCS Computer Network to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other

people (hate literature). A special exception may be made for hate literature if the purpose of your access is to conduct research for approved classroom activities.

Your Rights

Search and Seizure

- You should expect only limited privacy in the contents of your personal files on the SCS Computer Network.
- Routine maintenance and monitoring of SCS Computer Network may lead to discovery that you have violated this Policy, the SCS Disciplinary Code, or the law.
- An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that you have violated this Policy or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.

Due Process

- The District will cooperate fully with local, state or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the SCS Network.
- In the event there is a claim that you have violated this Policy the matter will be addressed in accordance with the employment policies of the Stewart County Board of Education.

Limitation of Liability

- The District makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the District system will be error-free or without defect. The District will not be responsible for any damage you may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The District is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The District will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.

E-Mail

- Users with network access shall not utilize network resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system.
- All data including e-mail communications stored or transmitted on school system computers shall be monitored. Employees have no expectation of privacy with regard to such data.
- Email correspondence transmitted on school system resources may be a public record under the public records law and may be subject to public inspection.

Web Pages

- Only those pages maintained in accordance with Board policy and established procedures shall recognized as official representations of the district or individual schools.
- All information on a district web page must accurately reflect the mission, goals, policies, programs and activities of the school and district.
- The web page must have a purpose which falls within at least one of three categories:
 - Support of curriculum and instruction- intended to provide links to internet resources for students, parents and staff in the district.
 - Public information- intended to communicate information about the schools and district to students, staff, parents, community and the world at large.
 - District technology support- intended to provide and respond to instructional and administrative technology needs of students and staff.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Stewart County School's Employee Handbook. I understand that no information in this document shall be viewed as an offer, expressed or implied, or as a guarantee of any employment of any duration. I understand that any rules, policies, practices, or procedures described in the Handbook may be modified, varied, or deleted by the Administration at any time. I understand that this Handbook contains references to Board policies which may be accessed in entirety through the System's website. All employees of Stewart County Schools are responsible for adhering to the expectations set forth in the Stewart County Employee Handbook.

Failure to read these expectations does not exclude an employee from his/her responsibilities outlined within.

Acceptable Use Policy for the Stewart County Schools Computer Network Acknowledgement

I have received a copy of the Acceptable Use Policy and understand the terms and conditions will apply to all use of the Stewart County Schools Computer Network.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____