

Rhea County High School

Student Handbook



2025–2026

Revised 01.06.2026

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Our Mission

The Rhea County School System strives to foster a community of life-long learners committed to providing a safe, academically rich, and creative environment empowering all students to attain their personal best while demonstrating the life skills that will enable them to reach for and attain their dreams.

Contact Information

Administrative Team

Ansley Massengill, Principal

John Walker, Assistant Principal

Mai-Li Miller, Assistant Principal

Wiley Brackett, Assistant Principal

Dedra Sims, CTE Director

Jill Davis, Special Programs Coordinator

Kim Sutton, Teacher on Patrol

School Information

Rhea County High School

885 Eagle Lane

Evansville, TN 37332

School Phone: (423) 285-6833


School Fax: (423) 285-6709

All offices at Rhea County High School may be contacted by using the above numbers.

 rchs.rheacounty.org (RCHS website)

 wiki.rheacounty.org (This handbook, online)

 rchseagl.es/schedules (RCHS bell schedules)

 rchseagl.es/calendar (RCHS academic calendar)

Transportation

Bus Students

All students who ride buses must conduct themselves according to the rules and regulations set forth by the transportation supervisor. Those who do not follow the rules and regulations will be subject to strict disciplinary action. Continued misbehavior can result in a student not being able to ride a school bus.

Transportation Complaint Process

The following procedure will govern how students, teachers, staff, and community members shall submit bus safety complaints:

1. All complaints shall be submitted to the transportation supervisor; and
2. Forms may be submitted in person, via phone, mail, or email.
 - a. Written complaints shall be submitted on forms located on the district's website.
 - b. In the case of a complaint received via phone, the person receiving the phone call shall be responsible for filling out the form and submitting it to the transportation supervisor.
3. The transportation supervisor shall begin an investigation of all bus safety complaints within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt.
4. Within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the initial complaint, the transportation supervisor shall submit a preliminary report to the director of schools. This report shall include:
 - a. The time and date the complaint was received;
 - b. The name of the bus driver;
 - c. A copy or summary of the complaint; and
 - d. Any prior complaints or disciplinary actions taken against the driver.

5. Within sixty (60) school days of receiving the initial complaint, the transportation supervisor shall submit a final written report to the director of schools that details the investigation's findings as well as the action taken in response to the complaint.

Automobile Traffic Rules



There is no student drop off or pickup except at the main entrance at the front of the school building!

All campus parking will be regulated as follows:

1. The parking area in front of the main entrance in front of the main building is designated for student parking.
2. No private vehicle shall pass a moving bus, a bus being loaded, or a bus entering or leaving campus.
3. Do not in any way interfere with the bus traffic; the buses have the right of way at all times.
4. Speed limit is 10 miles per hour on school property.
5. All cars must have a parking permit and designated parking space.
6. Cars parked out of their designated parking spaces will be considered illegally parked, even if they have a parking sticker.
7. **THESE RULES APPLY AT ALL TIME ON SCHOOL PROPERTY.**
8. Parents dropping off students in the morning or picking up in the afternoon will do so in front of the main building, to the right (south) of the main entrance opposite the bus pick-up / drop-off area. All student pick-ups and drop-offs will take place in the front of the main building. The pick-up/drop-off area next to the covered sidewalk (north of the main entrance) is for buses only.
9. Parents can park in a vacant space in the student parking in the afternoon to pick students up after school.

10. Any inappropriate flag, sticker, or decal on students' vehicles may be subject to removal.

Students must vacate their cars immediately upon arrival at school.

No loitering will be permitted around cars during school hours, including lunchtime. Students will not leave in their cars from campus without permission from the office. Students will lock their cars until school is out in the afternoon.

Failure to park properly will result in loss of driving privileges. Students needing to go to their cars during the school day should request permission from Administration. Students are not to remain in their cars during extra-curricular activities.



The school reserves the right to suspend driving privileges for infractions of rules and to remove, at the owner's expense, any vehicle violating the traffic or parking regulations of Rhea County High School.

Automobiles on school grounds are subject to search by school personnel.

Attendance & Tardies

School Hours

The school day for 2025-2026 will be from 7:55 a.m. until 2:55 p.m. School doors open at 7:00 a.m., and all students will remain in the Cafeteria, Commons, or Gym upon arrival at school. When the 7:40 a.m. bell rings, students will report to class.



Almost without exception, students with good attendance pass and go on to graduate! We cannot teach and you cannot learn unless you are here! There are 180 days of school; be here and be on time. Attendance and being on time are the first questions about student performance asked by employers. It is a big priority to us. Make it a priority to you!

Compulsory School Attendance

In order for a student to receive or maintain a driver's license they are required to have "PROPER ENROLLMENT STATUS" and "MAKE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS".

"PROPER ENROLLMENT STATUS" is defined as a student with less than ten (10) unexcused absences in a semester.

"MAKING SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS" means that a student earns a passing grade in at least three (3) full unit subjects each semester.

The Compulsory School Attendance form can be picked up in the attendance office.

Tardy Procedures

Arriving at school and class on time is vitally important to the academic success of our students. Our school day will begin promptly at 7:55 AM. Anyone entering the building after the tardy bell must report to the attendance office for a permit to enter class.

There are five (5) minutes allowed for change of classes. Students should be in their room and seated by the time the tardy bell rings. If they are detained by another teacher, they should secure a written statement from that teacher and go directly to their next class.



Students who are late to class will be disciplined by the classroom teacher. Excessive tardiness will result in the loss of student parking pass privileges.

Checking Out

Check-outs are allowed by verbal (telephone or in person) communication with a parent or legal guardian, or a note with the parent or legal guardian's phone number.



To avoid interruptions, students will be dismissed by a phone call only at the end of each class period.

When in-school activities are scheduled, students can check out only with doctor appointment cards and verbal communication with parents, or parents must come inside to check out the student.

When the student returns to school, he or she must go to the attendance office to secure an excuse. Students who turn 18 years of age and are still living at home will be subject to the same rules as other students. Students will not be allowed to check out during lunch.

Excused & Unexcused Absences

When a student returns to school following an absence, they must turn in a parent or doctor note. Only five (5) days of notes will be considered *excused* absences. All other absences will be *un-excused* unless accompanied by a doctor's excuse. Students have five (5) days to bring in notes and/or a doctor's excuse.



Excessive unexcused absences will result in the loss of student parking pass privileges.

Field Trips & Activities

No student will be allowed to miss more than six (6) days in a school year for attendance on activity/field trips. These include but are not limited to the following: field trips, athletic events, college visits, etc.

Community Field Trips

A written list of students who will be attending any community or church, etc., field trip must be given to the office one week prior to the trip. The time of departure from school must be the same for all students regardless of the group or church represented. This absence will count as one of the student's parent notes. One day not in school equals one absence.

Student Dress Code

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 to 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. All dress code offenses will require a change of clothing.



All absences resulting from dress code violation will be counted as **unexcused**.

What Not to Wear

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

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

Bottom Wear

Bottom wear must be appropriately sized and worn securely around the waist and should not be bagging or sagging.

Sweat pants, tight fitting knit pants, leggings, spandex shorts, boxer shorts, and biker shorts are not permitted.

Joggers must be a solid color.

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

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

Top Wear

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.

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 hair sprayed or dyed in unnatural colors (such as blue, pink, green, orange, etc.), spiked hair, or mohawks.

Students with an unnatural hair color will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities.

Backpacks

All backpacks are subject to be searched at any time.

Special Events

Special events include programs and events occurring outside 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 midriffs shall not be permitted
- length of dresses and skirts shall be to the top of the knee

Special Dress Days

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

Special Exceptions

If a student cannot comply with the standard 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.

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



RGHS administration reserves the right to make any decisions regarding dress code.

Student Conduct

Hall Traffic

Rhea County High School has a constantly increasing enrollment. Because of the number of students, it is very important that we conduct ourselves in an orderly manner while moving in the halls. There is to be no running, pushing or loitering in the halls at any time.

Hands-Off Policy

Public displays of affection (PDA) will not be tolerated. Students should not hug, hold hands, or kiss.

Profanity

All students will refrain from using profane language at all times. Strict disciplinary action will be taken if any student is caught not abiding by this rule.

Olweus Definition of Bullying

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

In the Classroom

Cheating

Whenever a student is guilty of cheating the teacher shall collect the student's paper, mark a zero for the work, and notify the office immediately. The parent will be notified that a second offense may result in suspension from school.

Food & Drink

The chewing of gum, eating, or drinking is not recommended during class time. However, enforcement of this recommendation is at the discretion of the individual teacher.

Hall Passes

Hall passes are used for emergencies only. Hall passes must be filled out before the student leaves the classroom. Students with a cell phone and/or without a hall pass during class time will be in violation of school policy and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Class Dismissal

Students are dismissed from the class by the teacher. The bell indicates the end of the period for the class, but students should move from their seats when the teacher dismisses the class.

Make-Up Work

Students who have an excused absence will be given an opportunity to make up work that was missed while they were absent.



It is the responsibility of the student to request make-up work from the classroom teacher.

Students will be given one day to make up work for each day the student was absent. If the student needs more time to complete work they must request additional time from the teacher before the original deadline.

Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers are to be accorded the same respect as regular classroom teachers. Any student failing to maintain a proper relationship with a substitute teacher will be dealt with according to the Rhea County High School's discipline procedures.

Wireless Communication Devices

Students may possess wireless communication devices so long as such devices are turned off and stored **during instructional time**. Such devices include any portable wireless device that has the capacity to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two (2) or more parties, such as wearable technology, cell phones, laptops, tablets, and gaming devices.



To abide by TN State Law and protect instructional time, students will store cell phones/personal electronic devices in designated storage containers in all classrooms at RCHS during scheduled class time.

A student may, however, be permitted to utilize a wireless communication device under the following circumstances:

1. In case of emergency;
2. When authorized by a teacher;

3. To manage the student's health, as documented in the student's individual healthcare plan;
4. When the possession and use is required by the student's individual education program, 504 plan, or individual learning plan; or
5. When the device is being used by a student with a disability for the operation of assistive technology to increase, maintain, or improve the student's functional capabilities.



Cell phones and other recording devices are prohibited in all bathrooms and locker rooms.

Penalties

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

Emergency Communication Plan

In the event of an emergency or possible emergency occurring at school, parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be alerted by Bright Arrow.



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.

School & Personal Property

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, and furniture supplied by the school. Students who disfigure or vandalize school or personal property will be required to either pay for the damage or replace the item. Students should limit items brought to school to those necessary for school activities.



The administration is NOT responsible for unnecessary items brought to school which are lost or stolen. Thefts should be reported to the office to aid in recovery.

Students and parents are responsible for any textbooks and electronic devices provided by the Rhea County Department of Education. Lost or stolen devices or textbooks must be paid for before credit for the course can be given.

Illness or Injury Procedure

Any student who is injured or becomes ill must report the problem to the nearest teacher or administrator. The student will then be sent to the school nurse for evaluation.

Students who are ill or injured **MUST NOT**:

- ✗ Go to the bathroom and stay
- ✗ Leave the school grounds and go to the parking lot without approval from the principals.
- ✗ Take medication from anyone.



Teachers are not allowed to give aspirin or any other type of medication.

Student Suspension/Alternative Placement

Acceptable student behavior is a necessity in the orderly operation of an environment conducive to learning. The authority to control student behavior extends to all activities of the school whether at Rhea County High School or at another school.

A student that has been suspended must have his/her parent return to school for a conference with the school administrator before re-admittance. Any principal or his designee is authorized to suspend a pupil after due process from admittance to school, including school sponsored activities or from riding a bus for good and sufficient reasons.

Good and sufficient reasons include but are not limited to:

- ♦ Truancy-the principal is required to notify the attendance teacher and an in-depth study be made;
- ♦ Immoral or disreputable conduct or vulgar or profane language;
- ♦ Violence or threatened violence against the person or any person attending or assigned to any public school;
- ♦ Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of said school or the property of any person attending or assigned to any public school;
- ♦ Marking, defacing or destroying school property;
- ♦ Possession of a knife or other dangerous weapons as defined by state law on school property;
- ♦ Obscene or threatening language;
- ♦ Any other conduct detrimental to good order or discipline in any public school;
- ♦ Inciting, advising or counseling others to engage in any of the acts therein before enumerated;
- ♦ Repeated violation of any school rules.

There are also things that according to the policies of this school and/or The Rhea County Board of Education can result in suspension:

- Students who engage in fighting on school property or during a school sponsored event, will be suspended from school for a minimum of five (5) days;
- More than one incident in a school year could result in transfer to Alternative School;
- Leaving school without permission of school authorities and parents;
- Gambling;
- Any other major misbehavior that is unbecoming of a student



No student will be permitted to run for or be elected to a class office or superlative if he/she has been suspended out of school in the last calendar year.



Student Life

Cafeteria & Lunch

Students are not to be in the cafeteria except during lunch or before school.

Library



The library is open from 7:40 a.m. until 3:10 p.m. every day, and is available to students during lunch.

In the library, these basic rules are strictly enforced:

- Food and drinks are not permitted.
- When visiting the library, students must remain seated in a chair or on a couch.
- Library furniture must not be rearranged.

Chronic discipline problems will be sent to the office.

There will be a 5¢ per day fine charged on overdue books. If a student has overdue material, he/she cannot check out more material until the overdue material has been returned to the library.

Lockers

Lockers are assigned at the beginning of the school year. Students are strongly encouraged to purchase a personal lock to secure their lockers.

Prom

Our prom is provided for RCHS students who are in the junior or senior class. Students desiring to bring guests to the prom must have permission from the principal. Students will only be allowed to bring one guest to the prom. Students in the freshman or sophomore class will not be allowed to attend the prom. The principal will strictly monitor this policy. The final decision of approval will be made at the discretion of the principal.



All prom attendees must be a junior or senior enrolled at Rhea County High School. All out-of-school guests must be a junior or senior in good standing at their high school. Out-of-school guests may not be over 20 years old, and must provide proof of graduation.



To be eligible for prom attendance, students must be passing more classes than they are failing. Any negative student behaviors throughout the school year

can affect the student's eligibility to attend prom.

Posters, Signs, and Announcements

All posters and signs to be displayed at Rhea County High School must first be approved by an administrator. The individual posting the item is responsible for removing them.

Information concerning a school organization that needs to be announced over the intercom must be emailed to Mrs. Brooks (brooksd@rheacounty.org) or turned in to the office before 7:30 each morning. Announcements will be made for school-related organizations only.

Balloons, Floral Arrangements & Gifts

The sending / receiving of flowers, balloons, bouquets or any other gifts to students at school is not allowed.

Messages

Students will be notified of messages in case of emergency. We will not relay messages from employers or friends.

Visitors

All visitors must be approved by one of the school administrators before being allowed onto school property and/or being allowed to sign in for a visit.

Curriculum

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

RCHS Counseling Department

The School Counseling Department exists to assist students to reach their goal of obtaining a high school diploma.



Students and parents may make an appointment with a Counselor by coming to the Guidance Department between classes or calling (423) 285-6709.

2025–2026 Counseling Assignments

9th grade—**Ann Barnett** (barnetta@rheacounty.org)

10th grade—**Heather Dye** (dye@rheacounty.org), *Lead Counselor*

11th grade—**Amy Wood** (wooda@rheacounty.org)

12th grade—**Connie Bexell** (bexellc@rheacounty.org)

Ginger Boothe (bootheg@rheacounty.org), *Department Secretary*

Nicole Hunt (huntn@rheacounty.org), *Registrar & Student Records*

Requirements for Graduation



The graduation ceremony is reserved only for students who have completed all credit requirements by the date of graduation.

The Tennessee Diploma Project requirements for graduation include a total of **at least 22 credits** required in the following areas:

English: 4 credits

Math: 4 credits

A math course must be taken each year including Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and a senior math course.

Science: 3 credits

This includes either Chemistry or Physics.

Wellness: 1 credit — or 3 credits in JROTC

World History: 1 credit

US History: 1 credit

Economics: ½ credit

US Government: ½ credit — or 3 credits in JROTC

Personal Finance: ½ credit — or 3 credits in JROTC

Physical Education: ½ credit

This could also be met with band, sports, or 3 credits in JROTC.

Foreign Language: 2 credits in the same language

Fine Art: 1 credit



Some core academic courses have testing requirements called “End of Course Tests” or EOCs.

These tests will be given during the last 10 days of the course and will determine 15% of the student’s final second semester grade in that class.

In addition, *after graduation requirements are met*, 3 credits must be completed in one of the following Elective Focus Areas:

Career Technical Education (CTE)

Humanities

Math and Science

Fine Arts

JROTC



Students entering the 9th grade during the 2024-2025 school year are required to complete a Computer Science credit.



The ACT college entrance test will be given free of charge to all 11th graders each Spring. Taking the ACT multiple times is encouraged to help improve students' scores. Research indicates that scores improve 1 to 3 points each time a student repeats the ACT.

Career Technical Education – CTE

Students who elect to take CTE classes as their Elective Focus can earn various dual credits and certifications. Choices made at the end of the 9th grade year continue for the next three years.

Welding: Dual credit + AWS certification

Nursing Services: Dual enrollment + CNA certification in Nursing from TCAT

Engineering: Dual credit + SolidWorks certification

Culinary Arts: Dual credit + ServeSafe food handler and management certifications

Criminal Justice: Dual credit

Maintenance & Light Repair: Dual credit + ASE certification

MEPS Electrical Systems & Structural Systems: Dual credit + NCCER certification

Digital Art: Dual credit + Adobe Photoshop certification



OSHA 10 & OSHA 30 certifications are available to all qualified students.

Notes for Athletes



Students participating in sports or cheerleading must have passed ten (10) unit credits the previous year and be enrolled in five (5) credits the semester in which they are participating.

Any student who has a goal of playing athletics at a NCAA Division I university needs to be aware of these academic requirements:

English, 4 years

Mathematics, 3 years (Algebra I or higher)

Natural/Physical Science, 2 years (one must be a lab science)

Social Studies, 2 years

1 year of additional **English, Math** or **Science**

4 years of **additional core courses** (from any area listed above or from Foreign Language, non-doctrinal Religion or Philosophy)



It is the responsibility of the athlete and his or her parents to make sure these requirements are met.

Grading

This scale is the standard set by the Tennessee State Department of Education:

90—100	A
80—89	B
70—79	C
60—69	D
Below 60	F

Students graduating May 2015 or later will fall under the weighted GPA scale.

Standard classes will calculate a grade point on a 4.0 scale: A = 4.0, B = 3.0, C = 2.0, D = 1.0, F = 0

Honors and/or Dual Enrollment classes will calculate a grade point on a 5.0 scale: A = 5.0, B = 3.75, C = 2.5, D = 1.25, F = 0



Honors/DE students could potentially exceed a 4.0 overall GPA.

All Honors classes will be weighted by 3 points at the end of each semester.

Dual Credit classes and Capstone Industry Certification aligned courses will be weighted by 4 points when dual credit or certification is achieved at the end of each semester.

All Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses will be weighted by 5 points at the end of each semester.



To be eligible for class Valedictorian you must take a minimum of one honors/dual enrollment class each year for a minimum of 4 classes.



Grade cards will be distributed every nine weeks. Second semester grades cannot bring up a first semester failing grade. Each semester stands alone.

RCAC & Other Honors

To be a member of Rhea County Academic Champions (RCAC) requires a 95.0 numeric grade average (NGA) or above. Transcripts will be reviewed in January of your Junior year.

Tassel Requirements

Gold: Must graduate with Honors AND Distinction

White: Must graduate with Distinction

Blue: Must graduate with Honors

Graduating with Honors:

Students must achieve a 3.0 GPA and meet all ACT Benchmarks below:

- ♦ English 18
- ♦ Math 22
- ♦ Reading 22
- ♦ Science 23

Graduating with Distinction:

Students must achieve a 3.0 GPA and meet at least one of the following:

- ♦ Participate in a Tennessee Governor's School
- ♦ Be a National Merit Finalist or Semifinalist
- ♦ Receive a 31 or better on the ACT

- ♦ Earn 12 or more dual enrollment credit hours
 - ♦ Receive an Industrial Certification
 - ♦ Participate in one of the state's All State musical organizations
 - ♦ Attain a score of 3 or higher on at least two (2) Advanced Placement exams
-

Drug, Tobacco, & Weapon Policies

Medicines

If, under exceptional circumstances, a child is required to take non-prescription or prescription medication during school hours and the parent cannot be at school to administer the medication, only the principal or the principal's designee will assist in self-administration of the medication if the student is competent to self-administer medicine with assistance in compliance with the following regulations:

Written instructions signed by the parent will be required and will include:

1. Child's name;
2. Name of medication;
3. Name of physician;
4. Time to be self-administered;
5. Dosage and directions for self-administered (non-prescription medicines must have a label direction);
6. Possible side effects, if known; and
7. Termination date for self-administration of the medicine.

The medication must be delivered to the nurse's office in person by the parent or guardian of the student unless the medication must be

retained by the student for immediate self-administration (e.g. students with asthma).



Volunteer personnel, trained by a registered nurse, may administer glucagon in emergency situations to a student based on that student's Individual Health Plan (IHP).

The administrator/designee:

- will inform appropriate school personnel of the medication to be self-administered;
- will keep written instructions from the parent in the student's record;
- will keep an accurate record of the self-administration of the medicine;
- will keep all medication in a locked cabinet except medication retained by a student per physician's orders;
- will return unused prescription to the parent or guardian only; and
- will ensure that all guidelines developed by the Department of Health and the Department of Education are followed.

The parent or guardian is responsible for informing the designated official of any change in the student's health or change in medication. A copy of this policy shall be provided to a parent or guardian upon receipt of a request for long-term administration of medication.

Blood Glucose Self-Checks

Upon written request of a parent/guardian and if included in the student's medical management plan and in the Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP), a student with diabetes shall be permitted to perform a blood glucose check or administer insulin using any necessary diabetes monitoring and treatment supplies, including sharps. The student shall be permitted to perform the testing in any area of the school or school grounds at any time necessary.

Sharps shall be stored in a secure, but accessible location, including the student's person, until use of such sharps is appropriate.

Use and disposal of sharps shall be in compliance with the guidelines set forth by the Tennessee Occupational Safety and Health Administration (TOSHA).

Students with Pancreatic Insufficiency or Cystic Fibrosis

Students diagnosed with pancreatic insufficiency or cystic fibrosis shall be permitted to self-manage their prescribed medication in a manner directed by a licensed health care provider without additional assistance or direction. The Director of Schools shall develop procedures for the development of an IHP for every student that wishes to self-administer.

Students with Adrenal Insufficiency

The parent/guardian of a student diagnosed with adrenal insufficiency shall notify the school district of the student's diagnosis. Once notified, the district shall observe the following guidelines:

1. The district shall train school personnel who will be responsible for administering the medication for the treatment of adrenal insufficiency and any who volunteer to administer the medication;
2. The district shall maintain a record of all school personnel who have completed this training; and
3. If a student is suffering from an adrenal crisis, a school nurse or other licensed health care professional may administer the prescribed medication to the student. If a school nurse or other licensed healthcare professional is not immediately available, trained school personnel may administer the prescribed medication.

The Director of Schools shall develop procedures on the administration of medications that treat adrenal insufficiency, including the treatment of an adrenal crisis while on school transportation and during activities such as field trips, and recordkeeping per state law.

Drug Policy

No student shall use or be under the influence of any narcotic, amphetamines, barbiturates, hallucinogenic drugs, marijuana, alcoholic beverages or intoxicant of any kind, specifically at the following locations:

1. on school grounds during and immediately before or immediately after school hours;
2. on school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school group;
3. off the school grounds at any school sponsored event.

Students who are found to have violated this policy shall be subject to suspension for a period of up to one (1) year. The Director of Schools shall have the authority to modify this suspension requirement on a case by case basis.

Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician shall not be considered a violation.

Students taking prescription and over-the-counter drugs must leave medicine in the Nurse's office at the school. All prescriptions shall 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 abuse of prescribed drugs shall be considered in the same manner as intoxication from illegally obtained substances.

Smoking, Vaping, & Tobacco Use

Possession or use of vapes, tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes and associated paraphernalia, is not permitted while on school property, while participating in a school sponsored event, or while on a bus going to and from school or a school sponsored event.

Students found using or in possession of any of the above products will be in violation and dealt with accordingly.

Weapons

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 purpose of this policy shall include, but are not limited to "...any firearm, explosive, explosive weapon, bowie knife, Hawkbill knife, ice pick, dagger, slingshot, switchblade knife, blackjack, knuckles..." [Ref.: TN Code § 39-17-1309 (2021)]

Students who are found to have violated this policy shall be subject to suspension for a period of not less than one (1) year. The director of schools shall have the authority to modify this suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis. [Ref.: 20 USC § 8921]

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. [Ref.: TN Code § 49-6-4209 (2021)]



State law prescribes a maximum penalty of five (5) years imprisonment and a fine not to exceed \$2500.00 for carrying weapons on school property.

Knives

Knives can be considered a dangerous weapon. Therefore, students are not permitted to carry knives. They will be taken up and disciplinary action will be taken.

Additional Information

Teacher Qualification Information

To all parents: As a parent of a student attending Rhea County High School, 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 if you ask for it.

Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about your child's classroom 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 teachers' aids 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 Dr. Amie Lonas, Director of Schools at (423) 775-7813.

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

School Board Meetings

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.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Rhea County High School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Rhea County High School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless

you have advised the school to the contrary in accordance with school procedures.

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Rhea County High School to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- ♦ A playbill showing your student's role in a drama production;
- ♦ The annual yearbook;
- ♦ Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- ♦ Graduation programs;
- ♦ Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks.

In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories—names, addresses, and telephone listings— unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.*

Rhea County High School has designated the following information as directory information:

- ♦ Student's name;
- ♦ Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- ♦ Address;
- ♦ Telephone listing;

- ♦ Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- ♦ Photograph;
- ♦ Degrees, honors, and awards received;
- ♦ Date and place of birth;
- ♦ Major field of study;
- ♦ Dates of attendance;
- ♦ Grade level;
- ♦ The most recent educational agency or institution attended



If you do not want Rhea County High School to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the school in writing by September of that current school year.

* These laws are: Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 7908), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110), the education bill, and 10 U.S.C. 503, as assembled by section 544, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (P.L. 107-107), the legislation that provides funding for the Nation's Armed Forces.

Social-Emotional Screening Notice

Parents:

Three times during the school year your child's teacher will complete a social-emotional screener on your child. The screener is the Student Risk Screening Scale-Internalizing and Externalizing (SSRS-IE). It is a brief screening tool that takes a teacher an estimate of thirty minutes per class (not per student). The SSRS-IE is a universal screening tool used to identify students who may be at risk for challenging, antisocial behavior. It is conducted to better inform classroom instruction. The screener is used to select appropriate support for students. Teachers who have regular contact with students are ideally suited to complete

the SRSS-IE, as they have the opportunity to observe students in the classroom.

Universal social-emotional screening is the systematic assessment of all students on academic, behavior, and social emotional indicators for the purpose of identifying students who are at risk and may require support that varies in terms of level, intensity, and duration.

Screening is a key component in prevention efforts. This is similar to universal screening for vision and hearing. Early detection of students potentially at risk and connecting students with appropriate resources when needed has increasingly become a standard practice in light of increases in school violence.

If you do not want your student to participate in this screening, please sign below and return it to your student's teacher. Any questions can be directed to your school's principal.

Sincerely,

Amie W. Lonas, Ed.D., Director of Schools

Email: lonasa@rheacounty.org



A copy of this letter can be accessed at this link for printing: <https://rchseagl.es/screening-notice>.

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;
- In cars, parks, public places, bus or train stations, abandoned buildings;

- ♦ Migratory children living in these conditions

Homeless students face multiple challenges and barriers to success 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:

Dedra Sims

Rhea County Dept. of Education
1385 Broadway Street
Dayton, TN 37321
Phone: (423) 775-7863
Fax: (423) 775-7831
simsd@rheacounty.org

Non-Discrimination Disclosure

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

Dedra Sims

Titles II, VI, IX, and Age Discrimination Act

Rhea County Department of Education
Levensgood Educational Center
1385 Broadway Street
Dayton, TN 37321
(423) 775-7813

Ray Fugate

504 Contact

Rhea County Department of Education

Levengood Educational Center
1385 Broadway Street
Dayton, TN 37321
(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 Dedra Sims at (423) 775-7813.

Internet Acceptable Use Agreement

Internet access is now available to students and teachers in the Rhea County System. We are very pleased to bring this access to the System and believe the Internet offers vast and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing the service to teachers and students is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual subscribers. Students and teachers have access to:

1. Electronic mail (e-mail) communication with people all over the world;
2. Information and news from NASA as well as the opportunity to correspond with the scientists at NASA and other research institutions;

3. Public domain software and graphics of all types for school use;
4. Discussion groups on a plethora of topics ranging from Chinese culture to the environment to music to politics;
5. Access to many University Library catalogs, the Library of Congress, and ERIC, a large collection of relevant information to educators and students;
6. Graphical access to the World Wide Web, the newest and most exciting access tool on the internet.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. The System has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. However, on a global network it is impossible to control all materials, and an industrious user may discover controversial information.

The System firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the System. Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, and regional and state networks.

In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users, who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that you are aware of the responsibilities you are about to acquire. In general, this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of the network resources.

If a System user violates any of these provisions, his or her account may be terminated and future access could be denied.

The signature(s) at the end of this document is (are) legally binding and indicates) the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully and understand(s) their significance.

Internet—Terms and Conditions of Use

Acceptable Use— The purpose of the backbone networks making up the Internet is to support research and education in and among academic institutions by providing access to unique resources and the opportunity for collaborative work. The use of your access must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the System. Use of another organization's network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any national or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.

Privileges— The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. (Each student or teacher who receives access will be part of a discussion with a System staff member pertaining to the proper use of the network.) The System Technology Coordinators will deem what is inappropriate use. Also, the System Technology Coordinators may restrict access at any time as required. The administration, faculty, and staff of the System may request the System Technology Coordinators to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts or access.

The privilege of using the Rhea County Department of Education network comes with the responsibility to verify that usage relates to educational activities, and not for personal gain. Software packages such as Napster, BearShare, Morpheus, or LimeWire, that are designed for filesharing through Gnutella or other networks are strictly prohibited due to the heavy bandwidth drain and high security risk they cause. Downloading music and video files for the purpose of copying via CD burners or Zip drives is also prohibited.

The loading of AOL or similar 3rd party internet access programs on school computers is prohibited as it offers a breach of security while also compromising the Internet filtering software.

Network Etiquette— You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Be polite. Do not get abusive in your messages to others;
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden;
3. Do not reveal your personal address or phone number, or those of other students or colleagues;
4. Note that electronic mail (email) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities;
5. Do not use the network in such a way that you would disrupt the use of the network for other users; and
6. Remember that copyrighted material is private property.

The System makes no warranty of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The System will not be responsible for any damage you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at your own risk. The System specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

Security— Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on the Internet, you must notify one of the System Technology Coordinators. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log on to the Internet as

a System Technology Coordinator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to school computers.

Vandalism— Vandalism will result in cancellation of computer use privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet, or any of the above-listed agencies or other networks that are connected to any of the Internet backbones. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses. This also includes, but is not limited to, the hardware and software used to access the Internet. Destruction or theft of any part of a computer or network will result in cancellation of privileges, and may carry other consequences.

Implementing Procedures in Support of Watts Bar Nuclear Plant

In the event that an evacuation is necessary due to an accident at Watts Bar Nuclear plant when Rhea County High School is in session, our Rhea County High School students will be evacuated to Soddy Daisy High School by school buses. Rhea County High School Students who drive to school will be allowed to leave the campus by car, but they will be instructed to go to Soddy Daisy High School.



Calendar & Bell Schedules

2025–2026 Academic Calendar: Important Dates

School begins – August 1, 2025 (Freshman Orientation)

First full day – August 4, 2025

School Ends – May 21, 2026 (Report Card pick-up)

Holidays

September 1, 2025 — Labor Day

October 6-10, 2025 — Fall Break

November 26-28, 2025 — Thanksgiving Break

December 22, 2025 - January 3, 2026 — Christmas Break
(School will dismiss at 11:30 a.m. on December 19, 2025)

January 19, 2026 — MLK Day

February 16, 2026 — President's Day

March 16-20, 2026 — Spring Break

April 3-6, 2026 — Easter

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Wednesday, October 22, 2025 — all schools

Wednesday, January 28, 2026 — all schools

Professional Development Days

(No school for students)

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

Wednesday, October 22, 2025

Monday, January 5, 2026

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Wednesday, May 20, 2026

9 Weeks Terms

1st 9 weeks — ends October 3, report cards October 17

2nd 9 weeks — ends December 19, report cards January 9

3rd 9 weeks — ends March 13, report cards March 27
4th 9 weeks — ends May 21, report cards May 21

Regular Bell Schedule

7:40	First bell	
7:55–8:50	1st period	
8:55–9:45	2nd period	
9:50–10:40	3rd period	
10:45–11:35	4th period	
11:40–1:05	5th period	
	1st lunch	11:40–12:05
	2nd lunch	12:10–12:35
	3rd lunch	12:40–1:05
1:10–2:00	6th period	
2:05–2:55	7th period	

2-Hour Delay Bell Schedule

In the event that schools must be on a two-hour delay, this schedule will be followed— Teachers should be in their classrooms by 9:40 a.m.; the tardy bell will ring at 9:55 a.m.

9:40	First bell	
9:55–10:25	1st period	
10:30–11:00	2nd period	
11:05–11:35	3rd period	
11:40–1:05	5th period*	
	1st lunch	11:40–12:05
	2nd lunch	12:10–12:35
	3rd lunch	12:40–1:05
1:10–1:45	4th period*	
1:50–2:20	6th period	
2:25–2:55	7th period	