

Stewart County Middle School

Mission

To educate, empower, and encourage all students to achieve their maximum potential and demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary for success in high school and beyond.

Student Handbook Grades 6-8

**P.O. Box 1001
723 Spring Street
Dover, TN 37058**

Phone: (931) 232-9112



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School Telephone Directory

SCMS Main office	232-9112
SCMS Cafeteria	232-6436
Board of Education	232-5176
North Stewart Elementary	232-5505
Dover Elementary	232-5442
Stewart County High School	232-5179
Center for Teaching and Learning	232-5351

Visitors

Stewart County Middle School encourages parents to visit for conferences and other school activities. All visitors are required to report to the school office for a visitor's pass. This is to insure the safety of all students and staff. In order to prevent classroom disruptions, meetings with teachers will be scheduled during their planning time. Please call ahead to arrange meeting times. All students will be dismissed through the office. Parents are not to go to the classrooms unless they have cleared it through the office prior to the visit and are wearing a visitor's pass.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES GRADES 6-8

All absences will be marked unexcused unless the school receives a communication from the parent. The school will only mark 10 absences excused with communication from the parent. After that, every absence will be marked unexcused unless the school receives a doctor's note or if there are other extenuating circumstances (i.e. death in the family). A student with unexcused absences in excess of 10 days each year may be referred to the Truancy Review Board.

Absence from School

Parents should telephone the school or send a note by their child explaining the absence(s) upon the child's return to school. The telephone message or note should convey the following information: student's name, parent's name, date of absence, reason for absence, teacher's name or grade.

Students are responsible for making up missed assignments when absent. Incomplete assignments due to absence will result in an incomplete on the report card. Students will be given one day, for every day absent, to make up work. Only in the event that absences exceed three consecutive days will homework be collected and sent home. Following three consecutive absences, parents may call the school and request missed assignments.

Excused Absences

1. The student's personal illness or hospitalization. A physician's statement or parent conference may be required at any time should the principal or the Director of Attendance deem it necessary. If the illness or the hospitalization is to exceed ten (10) consecutive days, the parent/guardian should apply for homebound instruction.
2. An illness or incapacitating condition of a family member which requires the temporary help of a student. (A physician's statement may be required.)
3. A death in the immediate family. (family includes parent, stepparent, guardian, grandparent, brother, sister, stepbrother/sister, aunt and uncle.)

4. Recognized religious holidays/events. Parents and guardians are requested to inform the school principal prior to a student being absent from school for religious holidays/events.
5. Required court appearances. A student may be excused from school attendance for required court appearances. (Verification from appropriate authorities must be provided.)
6. Agricultural activities of the immediate household in which the student is residing.
7. Other emergency or unusual extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the student. These must be approved by the school personnel.

Students and parents have the right to appeal any attendance matter to the attendance review committee.

Unexcused Absences

Absences for reasons other than those stated above may be for reasonable cause but are considered to be “unexcused” for official school record keeping and attendance purposes.

Procedures for absences:

A guardian must notify the school by phone or note of the student’s absenteeism the day of the absence or the day he/she returns to school.

Procedures for Tardiness:

Students who are late to school (or class after the 7:45 tardy bell) are to report to the main office before reporting to class to receive a tardy slip. The student will not be admitted to class without a tardy slip. Students arriving after the 7:45 tardy bell will sign the tardy book unless the cause of their tardy meets the criteria for an excused absence. Excessive tardiness causes disruption to teaching and learning in the classroom. It is the parents’ responsibility to see that children arrive at school on time. Excessive tardiness may result in referral to the Truancy Review Board.

Early Dismissal Procedure

The school must receive permission from a guardian before a student is allowed to leave school early. If possible, guardians should call before 7:40 on the day of the early dismissal. If a note is sent, the student should bring it to the office before 7:40. If the office is contacted prior to 7:40 the student’s name and the time of the early dismissal will be included in the daily announcements and the student will not be required to show his teachers an early dismissal slip. If contact is made after 7:40 the student will be issued an early dismissal slip and is required to have it signed by teachers of the class (es) the students will miss. Please inform the office if the student will return from an early dismissal before the end of the school day.

Parents may pick up students early by coming to the office prior to 2:15. After 2:15 parents should go to the pick-up line behind the gym. Only those persons listed on the emergency card will be allowed to obtain an early dismissal for a student. Any person picking up a student should be prepared to present identification.

Emergency Dismissal

School may be canceled in advance of the scheduled day. In such cases, local radio and television stations (channels 2, 4, and 5) will carry the notice of cancellation. Parents can also call 232-4000 for school closing information.

In case of cancellation during the school day, we will release buses and car riders at the time designated by the central office. A form will be sent home with each child to determine where he/she is to go if school is called off. If we do not have this information on file, students will be instructed to dismiss as they normally do.

School Related Activities

Off-campus and/or out-of-school activities shall be counted as attendance only when school directed, with prior approval of the Principal.

Appeals Process

Students/guardians have the right to appeal any attendance matter to an attendance review committee.

Implementation of System –Wide Attendance Policy (Elementary & Middle School)

1. Parent notification after a total of twelve (12) absences (excused or unexcused), documented by letter or phone call.
2. Students notification between 5 and 15 unexcused absences by principal or his/her designee (date documented).
3. Attendance Supervisor notified of unverified absences for further action.
4. Call or mail letters to parents to discuss their child's absences.
5. Five unexcused tardies and/or unexcused early dismissals-send parent/legal guardian a copy of the tardy and early dismissal policy along with the number of tardies and/or early dismissals.
6. Ten unexcused tardies and/or unexcused early dismissals-meeting with parent/legal guardian. Failure of parent/legal guardian to correct tardiness and/or early dismissal problems may result in a referral to the Truancy Review Board.

Reporting Procedure for Unexcused Absences (System-wide)

1. If and/or when a student commits his/her fifth (5th) unexcused absence, a letter will be sent to the parents or guardian.
2. If a student continues to miss school without adequate excuse after five (5) unexcused absences, that student's name and the facts of such unlawful absences will be reported to the juvenile authorities.
3. Parents or guardian will be renotified by the superintendent or his/her designee after each successive five (5) day period of unexcused absences.

Excuse from PE class

Tennessee State Law requires all children to participate in physical education. Students may be excused from PE for the following reasons:

1. Signed doctor's excuse
2. Note from parent/guardian indicating a one-day minor illness or condition that would not allow the student to participate
3. Religious exemption signed by an ordained clergyman

Truancy Review Board

The Stewart County Truancy Board is a body of concerned citizens who recognize the necessity of regular school attendance. This is a joint effort by the school, juvenile court, law enforcement, and community health agencies. The mission and purpose of the Truancy Review Board is to:

1. Insure compliance with compulsory attendance laws and Board of Education policies.
2. Send a generalized message to truancy population that compulsory attendance laws will be enforced.
3. Advise and educate parents of their rights and responsibilities.
4. Reduce amount of dropouts and retention rates due to non-attendance.
5. Decrease time of Attendance Supervisor for prosecuting cases in court.

This board is in effect and will meet as needed at the Stewart County Board of Education. Referrals to the Truancy Review Board will be based on students who have demonstrated a history of truancy. For more information please contact Marian Page at 232-5176.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Activities

- Accelerated Reading Program-point and award based program
- Accelerated Math Program-point and award based program
- DARE-Drug Abuse Resistance Education
- Presidential Physical Fitness Program-PE students
- 4-H-program provided by the Agriculture Extension office
- Yearbook Staff
- Boys basketball
- Girls basketball
- Boys baseball
- Girls softball
- Football
- Football and basketball cheerleading
- Golf

Clubs

- Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- Jr. BETA Club

FUNDRAISING

Various school clubs, organizations and athletic teams may have fundraisers within the school year. Fundraising by students is not allowed during class time. Students may only solicit support from faculty/staff members before or after school hours, or during a staff member's planning time. Students should not bring candy for sale by outside school organizations.

Soliciting and/or sales by individuals or non-school groups are not permitted. School clubs and organizations must secure permission from the principal to sell items of any type at a school sponsored activity. This must be approved by the Director of Schools and approved by the Board of Education.

GRADING SCALE

Report cards go home five days following the end of the grading period and will be sent home four times a year. Parents must sign and return the cards to the classroom teacher. SCMS has adopted the following grading scale.

90-100	A (outstanding)
80-89	B (above average)
73-79	C (average)
70-72	D (below average)
Below 70	F (unacceptable)

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The guidance counselor is Mrs. Carla Wallace and her office can be reached at carlawallace@stewart.k12.tn.us or 232-9112. Her office is located in the main office area and provides a setting for individual students, small groups and families to conference with her or other staff to ensure that all students are successful and happy in school. She offers a comprehensive, developmental program

that includes classroom guidance, small group sessions for students with common concerns, and individual counseling. This counseling is based upon the belief that each person has the right to respect and dignity as a unique human being, the right to self-direction and self-development, the right to privacy, and the responsibility for decisions reached. Parents can call her at any time to set up a phone conference or a conference at school.

MEDICATION (Code 6.405 TCA 49-5-415)

Students are NOT permitted to bring prescription or non-prescription drugs to school. All medicine must be brought to the office by the parent or guardian. Forms must be completed by the parent or guardian and/or physician in order for any medication to be administered to the student.

IMMUNIZATIONS (Code 6.203, 6.402 TCA 49-6-3008(b), TCA 49-6-5001)

All students enrolling in the State of Tennessee must have their immunizations up-to-date. Shot records can be taken to the Stewart County Health Department. They will in turn give the student a “green form” which is proof of immunizations.

STUDENT HEALTH SCREENINGS NOTIFICATION FOR ALL STUDENTS

As required by the Tennessee Department of Education, mandated Student Health screenings will be conducted at your child’s school this year. The high school students will be screened in their Wellness classes. Austin Peay State University (APSU) Nursing Department, Lions Club and various other trained volunteers will be assisting with screenings. While all information is private and confidential some information may be shared with the classroom/PE teacher(s) such as elevated blood pressure, vision or hearing needs to assist with your students educational needs. This data is reported to the Tennessee Department of Education and the Tennessee Department of Health.

We will be screening to determine if your child has a health risk that 1) needs medical attention and/or 2) might affect his/her classroom work. Grades 5 and 7 may be prescreened at the end of the school year to allow for rescreening during the following year. The screenings are typically conducted in but not limited to these grades:

- Vision & Hearing** – Grades Pre K, K, 2, 4, 6, and 8
- Scoliosis** – Grade 6 only
- Dental** – Grades K, 2, 4, 6 and 8
- Blood Pressure & Height and Weight** – Grades K, 2, 4, 6, 8 and Wellness class

You will be notified of the results if your child’s screenings only after review by the school nurse and if there is a need for further evaluation. You may request them by contacting the school nurse at the number indicated below. These screenings do not qualify as an examination and parents are encouraged to make sure your child has annual medical check ups as well as bi-annual dental checkups. ***You will be notified if any screening is thought to be outside of normal range.***

The state mandated screenings usually take place the first few months of school but could be conducted at any time during the year. If you have any questions regarding this free service, **or if you want your child excluded from the Health Screenings, please contact the School Nurse at the numbers below or return a note with your child’s name, grade, and homeroom teacher stating that you do not wish for your child to be screened and sign/date it.**

North Stewart Elementary School – 232-5505
Stewart County Middle School – 232-9112

Dover Elementary School – 232-5442
Stewart County High School – 232-5179

PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

It is the desire of the Stewart County School System to provide parents with opportunities to request meetings to formulate suggestions, and to participate in decisions relating to the education of their children. If you would like to request a meeting with the administration of your child's school or with your child's teacher please contact the school office and a meeting will be scheduled.

Normally a child's teacher is the first point of contact. A note asking the teacher to call a specific number at their planning time often works well. If you telephone, it is important to call during school hours. The office staff will gladly relay any message to the teacher. If you would like to request a conference, a time will be set up to speak with the teacher during his/her planning time. It is the policy of Stewart County Middle School to not interfere with a teacher's instructional time unless absolutely necessary.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

School-wide Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice a year. The dates and times are listed on the District School Calendar on page 1. At times the teacher will indicate a desire for a conference on the student's report card, or the teacher may contact the parent. A visit to the school may prove to be the best investment of time that a parent can make in their child's education.

PARKING/TRAFFIC

- Morning

Buses will unload at the front gym doors in the morning beginning at 7:10. Car riders should be dropped off only behind the gym at the hall door between the gym and cafeteria. There will be no supervision prior to 7:10 am. Dropping students off at the front entrance is unsafe due to the arrival of morning buses. **Please make sure you leave the ambulance entrance open when parking in the car rider line.**

- Afternoon

Buses will load at the front entrance in the afternoon at 2:40 (early buses) and at 3:00. Car riders will load at 2:40 at the back gym doors only. **DO NOT pick up children at the front entrance after 2:00.** Buses may block you in and doing so congests the area so that buses cannot park in their normal parking spots. **Please make sure you leave the ambulance entrance open when parking in the car rider line.**

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

School supplies may be purchased from a bookstore cart in the library.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

Sexual harassment toward a student by an employee or another student will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures or words of a sexual nature which:

1. Interferes with the student's work or educational opportunities.
2. Creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment.
3. Implies that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of receiving grades or credit.
4. Implies that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for determining the student's grades and/or participation in a student activity.

Victims of sexual harassment should report these incidences to an appropriate school official. Confidentiality will be maintained and no reprisals or retaliation will occur as a result of good faith reporting of charges of sexual harassment.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, all of the circumstances, including

the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated. The principal shall be responsible for investigating all complaints of sexual harassment. If satisfactory resolution of the complaint is not reached, the student may appeal the matter to the Director of Schools, and ultimately, to the Board of Education.

STUDENT RECORDS

Parents have the right of access to their child's entire cumulative record kept at the school. Children do not have access to these records while they are minors. If you wish to see a record, please make the arrangement through the school counselor.

Access is available to both natural parents regardless of their present marital status unless the school is otherwise directed by a court order. Besides parents and staff with a need to know, no one else is given this information without a signed release.

PBS INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Stewart County Middle School has a ticket system which utilizes the Rebel Express Card. Every teacher and staff member was given a stack of these cards to reward students when positive behaviors are observed. Separate boxes for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades are displayed in the office. Upon receiving a reward card, students write their name on the back and place it in the appropriate box. Bus bucks are placed in the same boxes. The PBS team decided that scheduled and random drawings would be the most efficient means of implementing the reward system. Drawings for PBS t-shirts, dances, ballgames, concession items, and other rewards occur periodically. Grade level incentives are awarded at least once each grading period. All students who have turned in a card are rewarded with a group reward.

Reasons to give a Rebel Card

- Acts of kindness
- Going above and beyond
- Assisting someone else
- Highest grade on a test/quiz
- Providing an answer no one else knew
- Noticeable behavior improvement
- Doing something positive without being asked
- Winning a subject content game

Do not give Rebels Cards for these reasons

- All expected behaviors (unless it is a behavior improvement)
- Having homework
- Completing an assignment
- Being on time to class
- Classroom participation (discussions, working at the board, group work)

STUDENT RULES/GUIDELINES

1. Student spectators will not be allowed to wait for athletic events after school.
2. School personnel will supervise athletic events. Students are expected to behave appropriately and obey the supervisor(s). Violations of behavior standards will result in expulsion from the event and possible expulsion from future after-school events.
3. Obscene or vulgar language will not be tolerated at SCMS.

4. No student may ride motorbikes, skateboards, inline skates or bicycles on campus, nor should they be on campus after school hours.
5. Radios, electronic games, toys, etc. or other items that could cause disruptions are not to be brought to school. The teachers may collect any items that cause a disruption to the learning process. These items must be picked up by the parents at the end of the school year or at the discretion of the administration.
6. Cell phones must be turned off during school hours. Any visible cell phone will be confiscated. Any audible cell phone sound during class will be punished as a class disruption and the phone will also be confiscated.
7. School supplies will be available to purchase in the library.
8. Stay off the court or playing field during athletic events. Do not boo, kick, or stomp the bleachers, and do not throw objects. Students are expected to stay in the gym during basketball games. Students who cannot follow these rules will not be allowed to attend SCMS ball games.
9. A note is required from the parents if their child is riding a different bus that day, getting off the bus at a different location, being picked up by anyone other than the people listed on the child's emergency card, or being picked up by a parent after school when the child usually rides the bus home. The note should contain the date, phone number where parent/guardian can be reached, address and bus number where child will be getting off the bus and signature of parent/guardian. AT SCMS, we strive to provide your child with the safest environment possible. (With this in mind, we encourage you to ensure that your child knows exactly what transportation arrangements have been made for him/her arriving at school each day.) **Please contact the office before 1:30 to request the change of a student's bus number for that afternoon. This ensures enough time to notify the student of the bus change before the dismissal of school.**
10. SCMS is not responsible for money or valuables brought to school by students.
11. Students are not to place anything on the outside of lockers unless it enhances school spirit or student performance.

Bus Conduct

1. To insure safety, everyone is under the supervision of the bus driver on the bus. Passengers must respond promptly to instructions given by the bus driver including seating assignments.
2. The bus is an extension of the classroom and all rules of behavior for students as specified by School Board Policy and the School Handbook Manual are applicable.
3. Food, drink, and candy on the bus are prohibited except in unusual circumstances as specified by the bus driver or Supervisor of Transportation.
4. Animals, oversized objects (including balloons), and glass containers are not permitted. Flammable items are not to be on the bus including cigarettes lighters or matches.
5. Passengers must observe conduct similar to that in the classroom. Ordinary conversation is permitted. Horseplay, unruly behavior, abusive, obscene language or gestures are not acceptable.
6. Keep aisles and step-off platform clear at all times.
7. The student should never extend any portion of the body outside bus windows. Objects are not to be thrown from the bus.
8. Students are to sit in the seats. Students should not attempt to move about while the bus is in motion but remain seated until the bus stops.
9. Damage to the bus must be paid for by the student/guardian. Bus service will not be provided until this is done or arrangements are made.
10. Regular pickup time schedules must be observed by the student.
11. Students must wait at the proper stop and never stand in the road.
12. Students are to wait for the drivers signal before crossing the road to board the bus. Students are to cross well in front of the bus.

13. Observe driver's instructions when loading or unloading.
14. Drivers will not unload passengers at places other than the regular stops near their home or at school without proper authorization from the parent and school officials.
15. Failure to follow regulations, procedures, or bus driver directions may result in suspension from bus service.
16. Parents/guardians should never board a bus to talk to the driver. Any issue or problem should be addressed at the school.

Cafeteria Procedures

Lunch money for the entire week is due on the first day of each week. Lunches are available for \$1.50 and breakfast is free for all students. If you have a question or concern about your lunch accounts please call the SCMS cafeteria at 232-6436.

We expect our students to obey all general school rules while in the cafeteria.

We also expect our students:

1. To walk and remain orderly in the cafeteria.
2. To remain in line while entering the cafeteria and waiting to receive a tray.
3. To purchase items in one trip through the line.
4. To remain seated unless returning tray to dishwashing area or the cafeteria monitor grants permission.
5. To speak in a normal conversational tone with students in the immediate area.
6. To leave his/her table and area neat and clean.
7. To walk while returning his/her tray to the dishwashing area.
8. To use good manners at all times.
9. To be respectful of all cafeteria staff and cafeteria monitors.
10. To not bring carbonated beverages.
11. To leave all food, drinks, snacks, or straws in the cafeteria.
12. To push in his/her chair under the table or place chair on table as indicated by monitor.

Care of School Property

1. Individual students, except for those who have waivers, shall be responsible for purchasing workbooks when the teacher requires them.
2. Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, furniture, and equipment supplied by the school. Students who deface school property or do other damage to school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item. (*Code 6.311 TCA 37-10-101 through 103*)
3. Each student will be assigned a locker. If you want a lock on your locker you will have to purchase the lock from the office. Locks will not be required. Periodic inspections will be made by the grade level teachers and principal to see that lockers are kept neat and orderly. Use only the locker assigned to you. If you abuse your locker in a way that causes a disruption to the educational process you will lose the privileges of that locker. All damages or loss of books, equipment, or school property must be paid before the student can receive his/her final report card, or be issued books for the following year. (*Code 6.313 TCA 49-6-4018*)

Behavioral Infractions

Students are expected to conform to the rules and regulations of the school system. Below is a non-inclusive list of behaviors deemed inappropriate for the school environment. These infractions may result

in disciplinary actions. These actions are at the discretion of the principal and assistant principal. Repeat offenses will result in more severe punishment.

Infractions include:

1. Absent from class without permission
2. Alcohol drug distribution
3. Alcohol or drug possession
4. Alcohol or drug use/influence
5. Arson
6. Assault/Battery
7. Behavior inappropriate outside class
8. Bomb threat
9. Bullying
10. Bus regulation violation
11. Cheating
12. Classroom disruption
13. Conduct unbecoming a student
14. Disobedience Assault/Battery
15. Display of affection
16. Disrespect towards a teacher or staff member
17. Dress code violation
18. Extortion
19. Failure to complete discipline assignment
20. Refusal to do assignment
21. Failure to report to office
22. False fire alarm activation
23. Fighting or contributing to a fight
24. Fighting with intent to harm
25. Food throwing
26. Forged note
27. Gambling
28. Hazing
29. Horseplay
30. Knife possession
31. Language (or message) vulgar
32. Leaving class without permission
33. Leaving school without permission
34. Lying
35. Racial harassment
36. Sexual harassment
37. Stealing
38. Tardy to class
39. Sale or possession of stolen property
40. Threats made against others (written or verbal)
41. Tobacco items/para./possession
42. Vandalism
43. Weapons possession/use/transfer

Disciplinary Options (*Code 6.313 TCA 49-64018*)

1. In-School Suspension (ISS) – The principal or assistant principal may institute an In-School Suspension for discipline purposes. The student will be placed in a physical setting where there will be appropriate supervision by a designated person. Any disruption by the student in this setting will result in additional days in In School Suspension and/or Out-of School Suspension.
2. Saturday School – The principal or assistant principal may assign a student to Saturday school. Parents will be notified prior to Saturday School assignment.
3. Out-of School Suspension - The principal or assistant principal may suspend any student from attendance at school or any school-related activity on or off campus or from attendance at a specified class or classes, or riding a school bus, without suspending such student from attendance at school for good and sufficient reasons. (*Code 6.316 TCA 49-64018*)
4. Alternative Learning Center (ALC) – Students who are involved in serious disciplinary problems or who are constant behavioral problems may be considered for the ALC. Such a program may be considered when it appears to be in the best interest of the student and the school district. Once assigned to the ALC, a student who is truant or does not abide by the policies will be referred to juvenile court. (*Code 6.319 TCA 49-6-3402*)

Dress Code and Appearance

The dress of each student should incorporate health, decency, and safety. All students are required to dress in a manner reflecting good taste, modesty, and appropriateness. No clothing or lack of clothing, jewelry, or other personal adornments shall be worn that would create disorder or disrupt the educational program. This includes items that are so ostentatious that it disrupts the

learning or learning environment by causing others to gawk or not listen to teachers or causes undue attention to a student. What is worn should not detract from the learning environment.

Therefore, the following attire is prohibited from Stewart County Middle School:

1. Any clothing suggestive or not deemed to be modest or in good taste, including pajamas.
2. Head coverings of any kind, including but not limited to hats, scarves, bandannas, masks, kerchiefs, caps, or hoods.
3. Any manner of dress that presents a health or safety hazard to others or is potentially damaging to school property.
4. Attire or accessories, which advertise or alludes to any drugs, alcohol, or tobacco products.
5. Clothing depicting any words or symbols, including those with double meanings, which could in any way, be construed as sensual, sexual, violent, or obscene.
6. See-through clothing; tank tops; undergarments, biker shorts, clothes with excessive rips, tears or holes, rips or tears more than four inches above the knee.
7. Shorts, skirts, and dresses that are excessively short. Skirts, shorts and dresses are to be no more than four inches above the knee. No clothing may be worn with holes, rips or tears more than four inches above the knee. Wearing leggings under clothing does not alter this policy.
8. Clothing or accessories displaying words or pictures that contains offensive or obscene symbols, signs, slogans, or words degrading any gender, cultural, religious, or ethnic values that harasses, threatens, intimidates, or demeans an individual or group because of sex, color, race, religion, handicap, or national origin.
9. Shirts and/or blouses, which reveal the abdomen (midriff), excessive underarm area, chest, back, or undergarments. Tops or shirts should not have oversize holes or be revealing. Sleeveless shirts are permitted, provided the seam is a hemmed straight vertical seam.
10. Clothing, apparel, tattoos, accessories, jewelry, items with gang names, gang initials, and gang related self-inflicted wound or scar, "colors," or individual gang monikers that are specifically intended to identify one as a member of a "gang". This provision concerning gang-related items applies to all school-sponsored events and activities. (See Gang related section below)
11. Pants that sag excessively. The pants are to be size appropriate and fit at the waist so that underwear is not showing above the waist of the pants. Pants must not drag the floor.
12. No body-piercing jewelry except for earrings may be worn.
13. Extreme Hair Colors & Styles: Hair styles must be modest and not distract from the learning process. Every student's predominant hair color must be a natural color (it doesn't have to be the student's real color...just a natural color). **A few** streaks of unnatural color, weave or feathers **will not** constitute a dress code violation.
14. No heavy chains that are not formal jewelry are allowed around the neck, around the waist or hanging from the waist into the pocket.
15. No spiked apparel or similar accessories.
16. No tinted glasses, sunglasses unless doctor prescribed.

Remember SCMS is following Board Policy pertaining to dress code and rules. Students will be expected to dress appropriately for all school activities such as dances, etc. When a student is attired in a manner, which is likely to cause disruption or interfere with the operation of the school, the administration shall take appropriate action. Consequences for violations of the dress code include but are not limited to: a warning, being sent home to change into more appropriate clothing, parental contact or conference, or other disciplinary action, such as ISS or suspension. Confiscated items, including headwear, inappropriate jewelry, or other items may be returned at the end of the semester or when a guardian comes to school and picks up the item. Turning clothes inside out will not be adequate for readmission to class.

Bullying/Intimidation

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

Alleged victims of the above-referenced offenses shall report these incidents immediately to a teacher, counselor or building administrator. Any allegation shall be fully investigated by a complaint manager.

The privacy and anonymity of all parties and witnesses to complaints will be respected. However, because an individual's need for confidentiality must be balanced with obligations to cooperate with police investigations or legal proceedings, to provide due process to the accused, to conduct a thorough investigation or to take necessary action to resolve a complaint the identity of parties and witnesses may be disclosed in appropriate circumstances to individuals with a need to know.

Gang-Related Activities

Any verbal remarks, written symbols, signs, dress code violations, gestures or behaviors which are deemed by the administration to be gang-related in nature will typically be dealt with by an out of school suspension for the first offense. Further offenses will result in more severe consequences and/or juvenile court.

Drug and Alcohol Testing (*Code 6.307 TCA 39-17-417*)

Any student while on a school bus, on school property or while attending any school event or activity who acts in an abnormal manner sufficient to cause reasonable suspicion that he/she has violated school policy on drugs and alcohol, will be required to submit to an alcohol and/or a controlled substance test upon the approval and written referral of the school principal. Refusal to submit to requested testing would be treated as a positive test result. At the discretion of the Director of Schools and the administration of SCMS, drug dogs may be used on an unannounced basis.

Searches and Seizures

Any principal, or his/her designee, having reasonable suspicion may search any student, place or thing on school property or in the actual or constructive possession of any student during any organized school activity off campus, including buses, and containers or packages if he/she receives information which would cause a reasonable belief that the search will lead to the discovery of:

1. Evidence of any violation of the law
2. Evidence of any violation of school rules or regulations or proper standards of student conduct
3. Any object or substance, which because of its presence presents an immediate danger of harm or illness to any person

Any items found in the course of a search may be turned over to law enforcement for investigation.

Searches of Lockers

A student using a locker that is the property of the school system does not have the right of privacy in that locker or its contents. All lockers or storage areas provided for student use on school premises remain the property of the school system and are provided for the use of the students subject to inspection, access for maintenance and search.

Searches by Police

If public health or safety is involved, upon request of the principal who shall be present, police officers may make a general search of student lockers and desks or of automobiles of non-students for drugs, weapons or items of an illegal or prohibited nature.

Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

It is in violation of school policy and State Law for anyone to bring a dangerous weapon upon school premises or at any school-sponsored event or activity. Any weapons found upon a person will be confiscated and reported to law enforcement authorities. Persons who bring such items upon school premises, whether students or not will be prosecuted in accordance with State Law. Dangerous weapons for the purpose of this policy shall include, but not limited to "...any firearm, explosive, explosive weapon, bowie knife, hawk bill knife, ice pick, dagger, slingshot, switchblade knife, blackjack, knuckles... *TCA 39-17-1309*

A student in possession of a knife with a blade in excess of three (3) inches at any of the above places will be considered in possession of a dangerous weapon.

Zero Tolerance (*Code 6.316 TCA 49-2-203*)

In order to ensure a safe and secure learning environment free of drugs, violence and dangerous weapons, any student who engages in the following behaviors will be subject to suspension for a period not less than one (1) calendar year. Only the Director of Schools shall have the authority to modify this suspension requirement on case-by-case basis. Zero Tolerance acts as follows:

1. Students who bring or unlawfully possess alcohol, a narcotic or stimulant drug, prescription drug, and other controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, or a dangerous weapon on to a school bus, on to school property or to any event or activity sponsored by the school, either on or off campus.
Any student while on a school bus, on school property or while attending any school event or activity:
 - a. uses, possesses, purchases, sells or manufactures alcohol or illegal drugs or paraphernalia
 - b. is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
 - c. possesses a dangerous weapon
 - d. commits battery, assaults or threatens a teacher or other staff member.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR THE STEWART COUNTY SCHOOL COMPUTER NETWORK

The Stewart County Schools (SCS) offers Internet access for faculty and student use. This document contains the acceptable Use Policy for student 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 Internet Access

- All students will have access to Internet World Wide Web information resources through their classroom, library or school computer lab block.
- 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.

Unacceptable Uses

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

Exchange of Personal Information

- You will not post personal contact information about yourself or other people. Personal contact information includes your address, telephone, school address, work address, etc.
- You will not agree to meet with someone you have met on-line without your parent's approval. Your parent should accompany you to this meeting.
- You will promptly disclose to your teacher or other school employee any message you receive that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.

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.
- 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 one 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 from the Technology Coordinator.

Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

- You will not plagiarize works that you find on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writing 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 requirement. 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 and both your teacher and parent have approved.
- If you mistakenly access inappropriate information, you should immediately tell your teacher, librarian or another district employee. This will protect you against a claim that you have intentionally violated this Policy.
- Your parents should instruct you if there is additional material that they think would be inappropriate for you to access. The district fully expects that you will follow your parent’s instruction in this matter.

Your Rights

Free Speech

- Your right to free speech, as set forth in the SCS Disciplinary Code, applies also to your communication on the Internet. The SCS Computer Network is considered a limited forum, similar to the school newspaper, and therefore the District may restrict your speech for valid educational reasons. The District will not restrict your speech on the basis of a disagreement with the opinions you are expressing.

Search and Seizure

- You should expect only limited privacy in the contents of your personal files on the SCS Computer Network. The situation is similar to the rights you have in the privacy of your locker.
- 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, the SCS Disciplinary Code, or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.
- Your parents have the right at any time to request to see the contents of your e-mail files.

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 or the SCS Disciplinary Code in your use of the SCS Network, the matter will be addressed in accordance with the SCS Disciplinary Code.
- If the violation also involves a violation of other provisions of the SCS Disciplinary Code, it will be handled in a manner described in the SCS Disciplinary Code. Additional restrictions may be placed on your use of your Internet account.

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.

SYSTEM-WIDE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

Visitors

Parents and others with interest/business concerning students are welcome to visit the school. In compliance with State Law and Board Policy, visitors are required to report directly to the office to receive permission and a visitor's pass before visiting any area of the school. Every effort will be made to insure that classes and teachers are not disturbed during class time. Students are not allowed to bring visitors to school.

School officials may prohibit any person from entering school property that disrupts the educational environment or poses a threat to students or staff, even if that person is a parent. Pursuant to T.C.A. section 49-2-303, a principal has the duty to:

Supervise the operation and management of the personnel and facilities of the school or schools of which the principal is principal as the local Board of Education shall determine.

Administer and implement the school behavior and discipline code and require guest passes for all persons other than enrolled students and employees of the school.

Principals are encouraged to improve school security by limiting school access during school hours to monitored entrances.

Also T.C.A. section 49-6-2008 addresses this issue. The statute is as follows:

- a. In order to maintain the conditions and atmosphere suitable for learning, no person shall enter onto school buses, or during school hours, enter upon the grounds or into the buildings of any school, except students assigned to that bus or school, the staff of the school, parents of students, and other persons with lawful and valid business on the bus or school premises.
- b. Any person improperly on the premises of a school shall depart on the request of the school principal or other authorized person.
- c. A violation of subsection (a) is a Class A misdemeanor.
- d. In addition to any criminal penalty provided by law, there is created a civil cause of action for an intentional assault upon educational personnel by any person during school hours or during school functions, if the parties are on school grounds or in vehicles owned, leased, or under contract by the LEA and used for transporting students or faculty. A person who commits such assault shall be liable to the victim for all damages resulting therefrom, including compensatory and punitive damages. Upon prevailing, a victim shall be entitled to three times the amount of the actual damages and shall be entitled to reasonable attorney fees and costs.

Student Complaints and Grievances (*Code 6.305 Title IX Education Amendment 1972*)

Student complaints and grievances shall first be made to the teacher, then to the principal. If not resolved, the matter may then be appealed to the Director of Schools and ultimately to the Board.

Getting Involved in the Schools' Planning Process

- **Advisory Council**

Each school in the Stewart County School System has an Advisory Council that meets monthly to discuss school issues, concerns, solve problems, plan, and brainstorm ways to improve the school. These councils are comprised of parents, teachers, administrators, and students (when appropriate). If you would like to attend an Advisory Council meeting, present information at a meeting, or join the council at your child's school, please contact the school's administration.

- **School Improvement Planning Teams**

School improvement is a continuous process utilized in Tennessee schools to ensure that schools are meeting all students' needs. School Improvement teams are one way to begin building the professional learning communities needed to support the continuous improvement effort. These teams are charged with learning to effectively use data to determine student performance goals and to use research to identify strategies and interventions to achieve these goals. School wide planning includes all constituencies involved in the school. The quest for tools to improve student learning will be sustained throughout the continuous school improvement process.

Each school develops or updates a School Improvement Plan every year. If you would like to be a part of your child's School Improvement Planning Team, please contact the school's administration.

ESL Program Policy

The English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Policy is designed to set minimum standards for Tennessee school districts in providing services to non-English language background (NELB) students who are also limited English proficient (LEP). These students are referred to as English Language Learners (ELLs).

States, districts, and schools are required to provide specialized programs for LEP students to comply with title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1965 and T.C.A. 4-21-90. This ESL policy has two purposes. First, it establishes the minimum required compliance components for ESL programs in Tennessee. Second, it provides a framework for implementing effective education programs for ELLs. ESL Contact for Stewart County School System: Judy Cherry-232.5176

Equal Education Opportunities Nondiscrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Stewart County School System not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, 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 life styles 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 to 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.

The Stewart County Board of Education provides services for all eligible students under IDEA, Part B and Section 504. If you know of a child who may be in need of services due to a disability please contact the Stewart County Board of Education.

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

Stewart County Central Office 232-5176
Leta Joiner, Director of Schools
Marian Page, Title VII, and Section 504
Robyn Crain, Title IX

Federal Programs

The federal government provides funds for the following programs within a school system: Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, Title V, Migrant and Homeless. Stewart County meets the criteria to receive funds in the following federal programs:

Title I – Both elementary schools and the middle school meet the qualifications to be Title I School Wide schools. The qualifications are based on the number of students receiving free and reduced lunches. Every student is considered a Title I student in a school wide school. The purpose of Title I is to work with students who are at-risk of failing.

Title II – Federal funds provide staff development opportunities for teachers in areas of science and math.

Title IV – Federal funds are provided to ensure a safe and drug free environment. These funds are used for programs such as DARE, GREAT, etc.

Title V – Federal funds are used for staff development opportunities as well as parent trainings and supplies used through The Center for Teaching and Learning.

At the present time, Stewart County does not meet the criteria to receive funds for Migrant and Homeless. However, if you have questions about these programs or those mentioned above or you know of a migrant or homeless child in our community, please contact the Board Office at 232-5176.

No Child Left Behind

It is the intent of No Child Left Behind, a federal mandate by President George W. Bush, that every teacher be “highly qualified”. By January 2006, teachers must be fully endorsed in the area they teach. If you have questions concerning your child’s teacher, please contact the school.

If a teacher who is not “highly qualified” is employed for over four weeks, parents will be notified in writing.

Parents also have the right to request that their child’s name, address and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without prior written consent.

Family Resource Center

The purpose of the Family Resource Center is to provide families with an additional support system that will assist them in identifying and addressing home/community barriers to their child’s success in school.

The Family Resource Center acts as a family education center and offers a place where families with children can turn to for guidance, counseling, networking and problem-solving.

The Family Resource Center acts as a referral agency helping families to connect with resources that will aid problem solving. The Family Resource Center encourages the development of strong families and the preservation of the family unit. Parents are recognized and valued as a vital part in the solution-finding process. The intervention is hoped to break the cycles of at-risk behaviors which may lead to family disruption and impede school success.

The Family Resource Center is a comprehensive family program that offers support and information to families in need.

The Family Resource Program is to enhance students’ abilities to succeed in schools by assisting children, youth and families in meeting some of their basic needs.

- Family Resource Services

Head Start Programs

Reading Readiness Resources

Mentoring Programs

Resources for After-School Tutoring

Make n/Take Workshops

Community Health Fair

Student Health Fair

CPR/First Aid Classes

Parent Checkout Library

Referrals to Medical and Social Services

Parent/Family Involvement

- General Expectations for all Schools

The school district shall be governed by the statutory definition of parent involvement as cited in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and shall carry out programs, activities and procedures in accordance with this definition.

The Board shall implement the following as required by federal and state legislation:

- The school district will put into operation activities and procedures for the involvement of parents in all of its schools. Those programs, activities and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents.
- The school district shall incorporate activities and strategies that support this district wide family and community engagement policy into its Tennessee Comprehensive System wide Planning Process (TCSPP).
- The TCSPP shall include procedures by which parents may learn about the course of study for their children and have access to all learning materials.
- The TCSPP shall include strategies for parent participation in the district's schools which are designed to improve parent and teacher cooperation in such areas as homework, attendance and discipline.
- If the school district's TCSPP is not satisfactory to the parents, the school district shall submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the State Department of Education.
- To the extent practicable, the school district and its schools shall provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports in an understandable and uniform format and including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- The school district shall appoint a Family and Community Advisory Council that will annually assess, through consultation with parents, the effectiveness of the Family and Community Engagement Program and determine what action needs to be taken, if any, to increase parental and community participation. In order to accomplish this, each advisory council shall be composed of representatives from parents of students in elementary, middle and high schools, community business leaders, a member of the school board, and representatives from the school district.
- Every school district shall ensure Title I schools are in compliance with the *No Child Left Behind Act*.

Parent Family Involvement Policy

The Stewart County Board has adopted a Parent/Family Involvement Policy. The following policy will be used to create Family and Community Engagement Plans for each of the four schools in Stewart

County. Suggestions for additions or improvements to the policy will be appreciated. Additionally, suggestions for programs, activities and procedures to involve parents are welcomed.

Please contact the Stewart County Board of Education at 931-232-5176 or email letajoiner@stewart.k12.tn.us or robyncrain@stewart.k12.tn.us. For more information visit stewartcountyschools.net and click on any of the individual schools.

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION

Answers to many questions and much helpful information may be obtained from the State Department of Education by calling 1.888.212.3162 or visiting <http://www.state.tn.us/education/speced/index.htm>.

Legal Services Division
Division of Special Education, Tennessee Department of Education
710 James Robertson Parkway
Andrew Johnson Tower, 5th Floor
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0380
Phone: 615.741.2851
Fax: 615.253.5567 or 615.532.9412

West Tennessee Regional Resource Center
100 Berryhill Drive
Jackson, TN 38301
Phone: 731.421.5074
Fax: 731.421.5077

East Tennessee Regional Resource Center
2763 Island Home Blvd.
Knoxville, TN 37290
Phone: 865.594.5691
Fax: 865.594.8909

CHILD ADVOCACY GROUP CONTACT INFORMATION

In addition to the state and local resources available to parents and children, there are many agencies and organizations that offer support, information, training, and help in advocating for persons with disabilities in Tennessee.

A few of these organizations are listed below:

The Arc of Tennessee is on the Internet at <http://www.thearctn.org/>

44Vantage Way, Suite 550
Nashville, TN 37228
Phone: 615.248.5878 Toll-free: 1.800.835.7077
Fax: 615.248.5879 Email: pcooper@thearctn.org

Support and Training for Exceptional Parents (STEP) is on the Internet at <http://www.tnstep.org/>

712Professional Plaza
Greeneville, TN 37745

West Tennessee:
(901) 756-4332
jenness.roth@tnstep.org

Middle Tennessee:
(615) 463-2310
information@tnstep.org

East Tennessee:
(423) 639-2464
karen.harrison@tnstep.org

Tennessee Protection and Advocacy (TP&A) is on the Internet at <http://www.tpainc.org/>

416 21st Avenue South
Nashville, Tennessee 37212

1.800.287.9636 (Toll free) or 615.298.1080
615.298.2471 (TTY) 615.298.2046 (FAX)

Tennessee Voices for Children is on the Internet at <http://www.tnvoices.org/main.htm>

West Tennessee:
(Jackson Area)
Telephone: 731.660.6365
Telephone: 865.609.2490
Fax: 731.660.6372
Fax: 865.609.2543

Middle Tennessee:
1315 8th Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37203

Telephone: 615.269.7751

Fax: 615.269.8914
TN Toll Free: 800.670.9882
E-mail: TVC@tnvoices.org

East Tennessee:
(Knoxville Area)

These are but a few of the organizations available to help with information, training, and advocacy. For a more extensive list visit the Tennessee Disability Services – Disability Pathfinder Database:

http://mingus.kc.vanderbilt.edu/t_dir/dbsearch.asp

On the web page, select your “county” and the “service” you desire from the drop-down lists and click “Submit.”

This information is provided as a service to individuals seeking additional avenues for help and information. The Department of Education does not intend this as an endorsement or recommendation for any individual, organization, or service represented on this page.

