

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL



www.livingstontigers.com

Supplemental Parent-Student
Handbook
2026-2027

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

August 3, 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians:

On behalf of the faculty and staff of Livingston Middle School, welcome to a new school year! We are proud that you and your children will be part of the LMS family.

We are excited to help your child develop all the skills needed to be successful in high school and beyond as we work through the challenging and rewarding middle school years together.

We have provided this handbook so that our families are aware of important LMS and Overton County Schools policies and procedures.

With your support, we expect this year to be both educational and enjoyable for your child. Communication with your child's teachers really is important, so please reach out to them often with any concerns or questions you may have. Please check our website and Facebook page for important information and updates throughout the school year. You can also access your child's grades as well as attendance data using the online student management system. Please feel free to contact me as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Doug Smith, Ed. S.
Principal

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of LMS is to provide positive, appropriate learning opportunities for each student regardless of social, cultural, economic or intellectual status. These opportunities will foster the development of basic values, good citizenship, and a strong sense of self-worth to enable students to be productive citizens in a rapidly changing world.

To that end, LMS seeks to enhance learning by providing:

- A competent and caring staff that strives to teach by example;
- A creative, comprehensive, and effective curriculum; and
- A safe, orderly, stimulating, and caring environment.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

We believe that every student who comes to LMS deserves our best professional guidance and individual respect. We are obligated to help each one reach his/her fullest potential. We believe that the education of a child is not limited to school but also includes all his/her experiences in life. We, therefore, need to collaborate with the home and community and utilize their resources for the students' benefit.

SCHOOL GOALS

Our goal at LMS is to help each student reach his/her fullest potential. To reach this goal, we strive to:

- Provide a clean, safe, drug-free, healthy school environment;
- Provide a positive school climate where learning is enjoyable;
- Help students become good moral, ethical and law-abiding citizens; and
- Work cooperatively with parents to better meet the needs of our students.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

CODE OF CONDUCT

Students will:

1. Know and adhere to the rules and regulations established by the Overton County Board of Education and Livingston Middle School;
2. Respect the human dignity and worth of all individuals;
3. Refrain from making threats to others;
4. Refrain from bullying other students;
5. Be on time for all regular school activities;
6. Study and maintain the best possible level of academic achievement;
7. Adhere to the school dress code; and
8. Respect the authority of all faculty and staff.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

Equal Educational Opportunity Policy:

All students at Livingston Middle School shall have the same educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, religion, ethnic origin, sex, or disabilities. Public Law 101-336;42; U.S.C. 12101.

Curriculum:

Livingston Middle School provides students with academic instruction as required by the Overton County Board of Education and the State Department of Education. Additional educational opportunities are provided in physical education, computer science, health, science lab, library, and guidance.

Asbestos Management Plan:

- Building materials containing asbestos still remain in Livingston Middle School.
- Parent(s)/guardian(s), upon request, shall be given the opportunity to review the Asbestos Management Plan. A request to review our plan can be made in our school's main office.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

SCHOOL DAY

The building will open at 7:00 a.m. School begins at 7:40 a.m. All students arriving before 7:40 a.m. will report to the cafeteria or gym. The teachers on duty will dismiss students to their classrooms. Class begins at 7:40 a.m. If students arrive after 7:40, they must be signed in at the front office, and they will be considered tardy. School will be dismissed at 2:40 p.m.

After-School Program:

We offer an after-school (3:00 - 5:00 p.m.) remediation and enrichment program for students Monday through Friday as well as every morning from 6:30 – 7:30 a.m. This includes an hour of homework and tutoring along with an hour of fun activities. All school rules apply to the after-school program. **Students who are assigned to out-of-school suspension or alternative school are not eligible to participate in the after-school program until they have completed their time in those settings.**

At the time this handbook is being completed, the status of the After-School Program has not been determined for the 2026-2027 school year.

Attendance:

It is very important that every student attend school each day to receive maximum benefit from the educational environment. The instruction and classroom activities that occur each day are important for each student's learning. Tennessee attendance laws require that students attend school every day except for sickness or emergencies.

Overton County Attendance Procedure

(Pre-K)

If a child has four (4) or more excused absences within one (1) month – the Pre-K teacher will contact the family and determine the child's participation status. The teacher will maintain documentation of all attempts to communicate with the family concerning attendance and the outcomes of those attempts and/or communications.

If a child has five (5) or more unexcused absences in a three (3) month period, the site-level administrator (Principal) should contact the family to develop an attendance plan.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

- A. The attendance plan should be designed to help the family establish regular attendance or, if necessary, to plan for alternative services. The attendance plan should be developed by the family and appropriate school personnel, including, but not limited to: the child's primary pre-k teacher; the site-level administrator; the IEP team (if applicable); and additional staff serving the school and family, which may include a counselor, social worker, family support personnel, teacher assistant, or other school staff supporting the child and family. The attendance plan should:
- i. Identify the reasons for the unexcused absences;
 - ii. Include a specific plan and date for establishing regular attendance or alternative services that meet the child's educational goals; and
 - iii. Include documentation of services and student outcomes to determine effectiveness of the attendance plan.

Every effort should be made to ensure the child has access to a quality school program. However, these spots are made available through a state grant and are limited by funding. Students who have more than (5) unexcused absences per month, or ten (10) unexcused absences in a year, may be terminated from the program for failure to follow the district pre-k attendance procedure. Future eligibility for the terminated child to re-enter the program will depend upon vacancies. The student will also be required to adhere to a 30-day waiting period and a parent conference to establish an attendance agreement. The parent/ guardian will be required to fulfill the terms of the attendance agreement, or their students may be dismissed from the program.

(Truancy Tier Plan – Kindergarten – 12th Grade)

If a student is absent, he/she will have three (3) school days to present an excuse to the homeroom teacher or Attendance Secretary. If the note is not presented within three (3) days, the absence will automatically be unexcused.

Students are allowed seven (7) excuses written by a parent or guardian each year. After these seven (7) written excuses are turned in, doctor's excuses will be required to excuse absences. These must be validated and given to the office. No copies of doctor's excuses will be accepted. (In order to be considered excused, all absences must be for a valid reason as outlined in Overton County Schools Board Policy (<https://www.oc-sd.com>)).

Each excuse will cover one day. If the student has missed multiple days in a row, then each day will count toward the total number of excuses allowed.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Attendance at Livingston Academy will be calculated using each period's attendance. An entire school day is made up of five (5) periods. Missing one (1) period will equate to missing one-fifth of one day, missing two (2) periods will equate to two-fifths, etc. These missing periods do not need to be in the same day to accumulate. For example, a student who is absent from first period any five (5) days will have accumulated one (1) full day's absence.

TARDY – missing fewer than thirty (30) minutes of class, either coming late or leaving early

ABSENT – missing thirty (30) or more minutes of class

Tardies at Elementary and Middle Schools – 5 tardies will result in the equivalent of 1 day. Example: 10 tardies will equal 2 days.

OCS policy states that students who accrue 3 unexcused absences during the school year shall be subject to the progressive truancy intervention plan.

Students will receive a truancy letter at 3, 5, 10, 15 unexcused days. These letters will NOT be mailed. They will be posted to Skyward Family Access.

Tier I of the progressive truancy intervention plan shall include the following: Handbooks with the attendance policy will provide parent/guardian/students with written notice of the law at the beginning of each school year, attendance will be monitored, Letters will be sent home after three days of unexcused absences. Student progress will be monitored on a regular basis and additional communication with the home will be scheduled as needed.

Tier II - If the student accumulates additional unexcused absences (total of 5 unexcused days), the student will be subject to Tier II. Under this tier, five-day letter and a 10 day letter will be send home, and an attendance contract will be set-up and signed by the student, parent, and attendance representative. An individual attendance assessment will be conducted to identify the barriers impacting attendance and a referral to the school counselor will be made if necessary. School based community support and referral to social services will be made if necessary.

Tier III – After 9 unexcused absences, the school-based team will review the attendance contract and interventions. The plan will be adjusted if needed so that students' needs are met. The Director of Schools/Designee will approve the final plan if changes are made. A petition to the court will be filed with the Juvenile Court once the student reaches 10 unexcused days.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Make-Up Work:

When students must be absent due to unexpected illness, they will be given ample time to make up their work once they return to school. The school is not required to allow students to make up work missed due to unexcused absences.

Leaving School:

Students are expected to remain at school throughout the school day unless they are signed out. Students must be signed out in the office. In most cases, students will only be allowed to leave with people listed on their enrollment form.

Students who need to ride a different bus, walk home, or ride with someone other than adults listed on their enrollment sheet must have a permission note signed by their parent/guardian. This note must include a phone number and must be approved by the principal or his designee.

FIELD TRIPS

All students participating in school-sponsored field trips must provide a permission form that has been signed by a parent or guardian. Students may not participate in field trips if the following circumstances apply during the current school year:

- The student has five or more discipline slips;
- The student has been assigned to alternative school; or
- The student has five or more unexcused absences.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT HEALTH

Medications at School:

Medications for students should be brought to the principal or his/her designee (the school nurse, front office staff, or other administration). These medications must have accompanying instructions signed by a parent/guardian.

All medications will be stored in the office or nurse's station. (Please see the school nurse if you have questions about possible exceptions.) Students requiring inhalers should bring the labeled prescription inhaler box to school so that the staff will be aware of all students who use inhalers.

Medications will be administered by the school nurse or other trained personnel.

Please direct any questions or concerns regarding medications to the school nurse.

Head Lice Policy:

Please refer to OCBOE Policy 6.4031 for information about head lice. Board policy can be found at <https://www.oc-sd.com/>.

Meningitis & Flu Awareness:

Per state law, the Overton County School District is required to provide information to parent(s)/guardian(s) as to the following diseases:

Meningococcal meningitis is inflammation of the tissues and fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord. It can be caused by bacteria or viruses. Symptoms can include fever, sudden severe headache, stiff neck, rash, nausea, and vomiting.

The bacteria that causes meningococcal meningitis is very common. Most people will carry this bacteria in the back of their nose and throat at some point in their lives without ever getting sick. In a few people, the bacteria overcomes the body's immune system and passes through the lining of the nose and throat into the blood stream where it can cause meningitis.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Meningitis is spread through exchange of respiratory droplets or saliva with an infected person. Only a small percentage of people who are exposed to the bacteria will develop meningitis. The bacteria that causes meningitis is not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been.

There is a vaccine that will decrease the risk of some types of meningococcal meningitis, but it does not totally eliminate risk of the disease.

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and lungs. Symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, feeling tired, and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea.

Flu viruses are spread mainly by droplets made when someone with the flu coughs, sneezes, or talks. A person can also get the flu by touching something that has the flu virus on it and then touching his/her mouth, eyes, or nose.

There is a vaccine that can be received in the form of a flu shot or by nasal spray that can protect against the flu.

To receive additional information regarding these diseases, including locations to receive the vaccinations, contact the Overton County Health Department at (931) 823-6260.

LUNCHROOM RULES

To provide a safe, orderly, and pleasant lunchroom environment, the following rules are necessary:

1. Students are expected to display good manners at all times.
2. Students are to get everything they need as they go through the line before sitting down (fork, spoon, napkin, etc.).
3. If a student plans to purchase additional snacks, he/she must wait until all students have been served.
4. No running, throwing food, popping bags, misuse of materials, excessive noise, or horseplay will be allowed in the lunchroom.

5. Restaurant food may not be brought to students or delivered to the school unless specific permission has been given for a special day or event.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

In the operation of the child nutrition program, no student will be discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, or disability.

Currently, Overton County Schools is the recipient of Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), which allows all students to receive one free breakfast and one free lunch per school day. Additional food items are available for an extra charge.

For more information, contact Debie Taylor, School Nutrition Supervisor, at (931) 823-1287 ext. 142 or taylord11@oc-sd.com.

PROPERTY DAMAGE

Students who damage or destroy any school property including library books, textbooks, student devices, chargers and any other materials will be expected to pay for repairs or replacements. Destruction of school property is a violation of state law and may result in legal petitions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

LMS students will participate in required physical education each week. Appropriate gym shoes not worn outside are necessary for physical education class when held in the gym. **(These gym shoes do not need to be new or expensive, just clean.)** Students should keep a pair of gym shoes at school since the decision to hold class inside or outside is made daily depending on the weather and gym availability. When possible, recess periods are also scheduled for students.

LIBRARY

Students may have one or two sessions per week in the library. They may check out books, read, or be involved in a unit of study during this time. Students may check out two books at a time for a one-week period.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Please refer to the Code of Conduct on page 3 of this Handbook.

Academic Integrity:

Students' work should be their own and not copied from a website, another student, or any other published material; student work should not be created using artificial intelligence (AI) unless the teacher has given permission to do so.

Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Overton County Schools is dedicated to equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world by integrating cutting-edge Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology into educational programs. This initiative aims to prepare students for post-secondary education and future careers by providing hands-on experience and a deep understanding of AI, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Emphasizing the responsible use of AI, our district teaches the ethics of digital citizenship, ensuring students become proficient in AI technologies while understanding the importance of using these tools ethically and responsibly. Data security is a top priority, with the exclusive use of Microsoft Copilot by staff to maintain high standards of data protection and privacy. By embracing these advanced technologies, Overton County Schools strives to create a generation of informed and conscientious digital citizens, empowering students to achieve their full potential and make a positive impact on the world.

Please read our full AI Acceptable use policy at <https://www.oc-sd.com/page/approved-ai-resources>.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

DISCIPLINE

Self-discipline and responsibility are two of the most important lessons taught through education. It is this training that helps develop good character. Schools have a special duty to assist students in the development of self-discipline. To do this effectively, the school and home must cooperate. **Working together**, we need to provide students with guidance and experiences to develop a personal sense of socially acceptable conduct. It is important that parents and educators reinforce each other's efforts. In accordance with Tennessee State Law 49-6-4103, discipline may include corporal punishment. For more information, please see a school administrator.

Alcohol & Drugs:

Students will not consume, possess, use, sell, distribute, or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages in school buildings or on school grounds at any time, in school vehicles or buses, or at any school-sponsored activity, function or event whether on or off school grounds. This includes, but is not limited to, abuse of inhalants and prescription drugs.

Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed on students who violate the standards of conduct required by this policy. Such sanctions will be consistent with local, state and federal laws, up to and including suspension/expulsion as well as referral for prosecution. Completion of an appropriate rehabilitation program may also be recommended.

Students may not possess or use cigarettes, cigarette paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes/vapes), smokeless tobacco, or tobacco products at school.

Tobacco/Nicotine Vapes/ CBD Vapes:

1st Offense

- Petition to court

2nd Offense

- 3 days ISS
- Petition to court

3rd Offense

- 10 days alternative school
- Petition to court

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

4th Offense and beyond

- Petition to court

THC vapes/Vapes with other illegal drugs/Alcohol:

45 days alternative school

Petition to court

If a student tests positive for THC or other illegal drugs after having violated the vape policy, the 45 days in alternative school will become a suspension of 180 days from school (served in alternative school if space is available).

Please refer to the following Overton County Schools Board policies:

6.3071 – Student Alcohol and Drug Testing & 6.309 – Zero Tolerance Offenses

Zero Tolerance:

Overton County Schools Board Policy 6.309

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

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

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

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Modification of the length of time shall be granted on a case-by-case basis. Students that commit zero tolerance offenses may be assigned to an alternative school or program at the discretion of the Director of Schools.

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

Bullying or Harassment:

Student discrimination, harassment, bullying, cyberbullying, and intimidation are strictly prohibited. Please refer to Overton County School Board Policy 6.304 for more information about procedures related to this topic.

Cell Phone Policy:

Per Overton County Board Policy 6.312, students may possess wireless communication devices in schools so long as such devices are turned off and stored for the entirety of the school day. Classroom teachers may require students to turn in these devices during homeroom for storage, and the devices will be returned at the end of the day. Such devices include any portable wireless device that has the capability to provide voice, messaging, or other data communication between two (2) or more parties, such as wearable technology (including earbuds and smartwatches), cell phones, laptops, tablets, and gaming devices.

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 or 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.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

The following consequences are in place for students who violate the school's cell phone policy:

1st Offense – The device will be confiscated, and the parent/guardian must pick up the device at school.

2nd Offense – The device will be confiscated, the parent/guardian must pick up the device at school, and the student will be given three days of in-school suspension.

3rd Offense – The device will be confiscated, the parent/guardian must pick up the device at school, and the student will be given five days of in-school suspension.

Further offenses will result in five days of in-school suspension for each successive offense. At each offense, the student will receive a discipline slip.

TELEPHONE USE

Students should ask to use the phone only when necessary. Arrangements for after-school activities (including going home with friends) should be made before coming to school. **Students will be called to the telephone only in case of an emergency.**

For the safety of our students, it is extremely important for the school office to have a current and working telephone number on file so that parents/guardians can be reached in case of an emergency. If you do not have a phone, please use the number of a close friend, relative, or neighbor.
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SPECIAL SERVICES

The Overton County Board of Education provides services to disabled students ages 3 through 21.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

DRESS CODE

- **Students shall dress and groom in a clean, neat, and modest manner so as not to distract or interfere with the school's operation.**
- Students' clothing must be worn so that the midriff, back, and/or undergarments are not visible during normal activities such as walking, standing, sitting, etc.
- Students may not wear sleeveless, low-cut, see-through, or off-the-shoulder shirts or tops.
- ALL shorts, dresses, and skirts **should be no more than two inches above the knee.**
- **When wearing leggings, a student should wear a top, dress, or skirt that comes to mid-thigh.**
- Pants and shorts must have **no holes more than two inches above the knee** that expose the skin underneath.
- Clothing associated with any type of gang activity or messages is prohibited.
- Students shall not wear clothing with lewd messages, advertisements for drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. The provision is not intended to prevent any speech protected by the First Amendment in a school setting. If there are questions about implementing the provision, the Director of Schools will be consulted.
- Caps, hats, bandanas, or other head coverings may not be worn inside the school or other areas designated by LMS administration.
- Hoodies: Hoods may not be worn on top of the head at any time.
- Students with facial piercings will not be allowed to wear such jewelry at school.
- Abnormally colored hair will not be allowed.
- Pajama pants are not allowed except on special dress-up days.
- **Any clothing or jewelry that distracts or interferes with the classroom learning process will be considered a violation of the dress code.**

DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Immodest behavior will not be tolerated among students. Public display of affection is not appropriate at school. Students are not allowed any display of affection such as kissing, hugging, holding hands, or any other inappropriate actions on school grounds. Violation will result in disciplinary action.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

INTERNET USER POLICY

Students will be allowed to access the internet at school. Unfortunately, information exists on the internet that is not suitable for students. Students will be verbally warned and reminded not to access inappropriate materials. Any student who deliberately makes inappropriate searches will not be allowed to use a computer for a designated amount of time up to the remainder of the school year. The school system uses a filter to prevent access to such sites as much as possible.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Custody:

If custody of a student is in question, it is very important that we be provided current court documentation.

Bus Zone:

Parents are asked not to use the bus loading area for drop-off or pick-up during normal school days. The bus loading zone is the upper parking lot in front of the school. Cars are to use the middle and lower parking lots for drop-off and pick-up. The bus zone is not to be used for thru traffic. The purpose of this is to ensure the safety of all students.

Drop-Offs/Pick-Ups:

Morning drop-offs will occur in the middle parking lot (two lanes) except during periods of heavy rain, in which case drop-offs will occur in the upper parking lot (one lane).

Afternoon pick-ups will occur in the middle parking lot (two lanes) for students in grades 5 and 6 and in the lower parking lot parallel to Bilbrey Street for students in grades 7 and 8 (and their 5th and 6th grade siblings). Using both lots for pick-ups helps traffic flow more smoothly and saves everyone time.

In most cases, the first buses to arrive at LMS will be loaded before walkers and car riders are called.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Change of Address/Phone Number:

Please notify the school office of any change as soon as possible. It is vitally important that the student information sheets be kept current so that we can better care for your child. In most cases, students will not be allowed to leave with individuals not listed on their information sheet. **Parents will be asked to come to school if they want to make changes to the student information sheet.**

Parent-Teacher Conferences:

Formal parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring; however, teachers or parents may request a conference anytime during the school year. Either the parent or the teacher can initiate the conference. If a parent wants a conference with the teacher, the parent must schedule the conference at a time that is mutually convenient for both parties. Feel free to call the school office or email your child's teacher to schedule an appointment.

Volunteers:

Our school can always benefit from the volunteer services of tutors, classroom helpers, and a host of other active participants. If you or someone you know are interested in volunteering for service at LMS, please contact our School Counselor, Mr. Dusty Ruehling.

School Closings/Delays:

The decision to close schools or delay school opening is made by the Director of Schools. Information regarding closings and delays can be received via local radio and television stations and the LMS Facebook page; notifications will also be sent through the school phone tree system. Please ensure that both your child and school office personnel are aware of your plans for him/her in the event of early dismissal.

Visitors:

To help LMS be a safe place for our students to learn, all visitors (**including parents**) should report to the school office, sign in, and have a valid form of identification available. A visitor's badge will be issued and must be worn while in the building. Please keep in mind the value of our instructional time. If parents need to speak with a teacher, a conference should be scheduled during non-instructional time.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

OVERTON COUNTY SCHOOLS NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Overton County School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities or employment policies as required by Title VI and VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation act of 1973 and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states: No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Inquiries regarding compliance with Title VI and Section 504 may be directed to the Director of Schools at the Overton County Board of Education Office, 302 Zachary Street, Livingston, Tennessee (931-823-1287). If you have a complaint, there are forms at each school and at the Central Office to register the complaint; the complaint may be made orally or in writing.

In accordance with the policy of the Board, the following procedure governs the processing of student discrimination/harassment grievances:

1. Any student who wishes to file a discrimination/harassment grievance against another student or employee of the district may file a written or oral complaint with the superintendent, principal, or counselor. The administrator taking the complaint will document the time, place, complaint, and incident senior administrator to investigate the grievance. The grievance shall set forth the circumstances of the incident and identity of the student(s) or employee(s) involved.
2. The superintendent or appointed administrator shall initiate an investigation of the incident and shall protect the confidentiality of the grievant.
3. The investigation shall be completed within ten (10) days of the filing of the grievance. Results of the investigation, along with the recommendation and suggestions, shall be shared with the grievant, unless it violates another student's confidentiality.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

4. If the grievant believes the issues are not resolved after considering the recommendations and suggestions of the superintendent or investigating administrator, the grievant may request a hearing by the grievance committee.
5. Upon receiving a request for a hearing, the grievance committee shall schedule the hearing to occur within twenty (20) days from the date of the request.
6. Both the grievant and the person against whom the complaint was made (respondent) may be represented by legal counsel at the hearing.
7. With ten (10) days of the hearing, the grievance committee shall furnish a written report of its findings and recommendations of the committee or furnish a report to the grievant explaining why the recommendations will not be implemented.
8. Upon receipt of the superintendent's report, the grievant may file a written appeal with the Board. The Board shall, within thirty (30) days from the date the appeal was received, review the report and affirm, overrule, or modify the decision of the grievance committee.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended in Dec. 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) makes it clear that Congress expects local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools receiving federal funds to ensure that parents are actively involved and knowledgeable about their schools and their children's education. The law requires schools to give parents many different kinds of information and notices in a uniform and understandable format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand. Listed below are some of these required notices that must be made to parents by school districts or individual public schools.

Student Privacy

Districts must give parents annual notice at the beginning of the school year of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

- ✓ activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal student information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information;
- ✓ administration of surveys containing requests for certain types of sensitive information; and
- ✓ any nonemergency, invasive physical examination that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school, scheduled in advance, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of student.

A district must develop and adopt policies regarding the rights of parents to inspect:

- ✓ third-party surveys before they are administered or distributed to students;
- ✓ measures to protect student privacy when surveys ask for certain sensitive information;
- ✓ any instructional materials;
- ✓ administration of physical examinations or screening of students;
- ✓ collection, disclosure, or use of personal information from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information; and
- ✓ the parental right to inspect any instrument used to collect personal information before it is distributed to students.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Districts must give parents annual notice of an adoption or continued use of such policies and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in such policies [20 U.S.C. 1232g].

Public Release of Student Directory Information

Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), an LEA must provide notice to parents of the types of student information that it releases publicly. This type of student information, commonly referred to as “directory information,” includes such items as names, addresses, and telephone numbers and is information generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The notice must include an explanation of a parent’s right to request that the information not be disclosed without prior written consent.

Additionally, ESSA requires that parents be notified that the school routinely discloses names, addresses, and telephone numbers to military recruiters upon request, subject to a parent’s request not to disclose such information without written consent [§8025].

A single notice provided through a mailing, student handbook, or other method that is reasonably calculated to inform parents of the above information is sufficient to satisfy the parental notification requirements of both FERPA and ESSA. The notification must advise the parent of how to opt out of the public, nonconsensual disclosure of directory information and the method and timeline within which to do so [20 U.S.C. 1232g] [ESEA §8025].

Military Recruiter Access to Student Information

Districts receiving federal education funds must notify parents of secondary school students that they have a right to request their child’s name, address, and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without their prior written consent. Districts must comply with any such requests [ESEA §8528(a)(2)(B)].

Parent and Family Engagement

A district receiving Title I funds must develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written district-level parent and family engagement policy. Each school served under Title I must also develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written school-level parent and family engagement policy. If an individual school or district has a parent and family engagement policy that applies to all, it may amend the policy to meet the requirements under the ESEA [ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116(a)(2)] [20 U.S.C. §6318(b); (c)].

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Parents shall be notified of the policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language the parents can understand. Such policy shall be made available to the local community and updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school [ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116(b)(1)].

Schools must:

- ✓ hold at least one annual meeting for Title I parents;
- ✓ offer a flexible number of meetings;
- ✓ involve parents and families in an ongoing manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs;
- ✓ provide Title I parents and families with timely information about the programs, a description and explanation of the curriculum, forms of academic assessment and expected levels of student proficiency;
- ✓ if requested, provide opportunities for regular meetings to discuss decisions related to the education of their children; and
- ✓ develop a school-parent compact that outlines the responsibilities of each party for improved student academic achievement [ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116(c)].

Report Cards on Statewide Academic Assessment

Each school district that receives Title I, Part A funds must prepare and disseminate an annual report card. Generally, the state or district must include on its report card information about public schools related to student achievement, accountability, teacher qualifications and other required information, as well as any other information that the state or district deems relevant.

These report cards must be concise and presented in an understandable and uniform format accessible to persons with disabilities and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that parents can understand. In Tennessee, **these requirements are met through the state's report card** [ESEA Title I, Part A, §1111(h)(1) and (h)(2)].

Achievement on State Assessment

All schools must provide to parents, teachers, and principals the individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports, which allow specific academic needs to be understood and addressed and include information on the student's achievement on academic assessments aligned with state academic achievement standards [ESEA §1111(b)(2)(B)(x)].

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

National Assessment of Education Progress

Districts, schools, and students may voluntarily participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Parents of children selected to participate in any NAEP assessment must be informed before the assessment is administered that their child may be excused from participation for any reason, is not required to finish any assessment, and is not required to answer any test question. A district must make reasonable efforts to inform parents and the public about their right to access all assessment data (except personally identifiable information), questions, and current assessment instruments [ESEA Title VI, Part C, §411(c)(1); (d)(1)–(2)].

Schoolwide Programs

An eligible school operating a schoolwide program shall make the comprehensive plan available to the LEA, parents, and the public. The information contained in such plan shall be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand [20 U.S.C. §6314][ESEA Title I, Part A, §1114].

English Learner Programs

A school district that uses federal funds to provide a language instruction education program for English learners must no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year inform the parents of each child identified for participation or participating in such a program:

- ✓ the reasons for the identification of the child as an English learner;
- ✓ the child's level of English proficiency;
- ✓ how that level was determined and the status of the child's academic achievement;
- ✓ methods of instruction used in the program in which their child is participating and methods of instruction used in other available programs;
- ✓ how the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of their child;
- ✓ how the program will specifically help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
- ✓ the specific exit requirements for the program;
- ✓ in the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the child's IEP objectives; and
- ✓ information about parental rights detailing the right of parents to have their child immediately removed from such program upon their request and the options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such program or to choose another available program or method of instruction.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

For a child not identified as an English learner prior to the beginning of the school year, the district must notify parents within the first two weeks of the child being placed in such a program *[ESEA Title I, Part A, §1112]*.

Homeless Children

To be eligible for McKinney-Vento funds, the school must provide written notice at the time any child seeks enrollment in the school, and at least twice annually while the child is enrolled in the school, to the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth that, shall be signed by the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth; that sets forth the general rights provided; and specifically states:

- ✓ the choice of schools homeless children are eligible to attend;
- ✓ that no homeless child is required to attend a separate school for homeless children;
- ✓ that homeless children shall be provided comparable services, including transportation services, educational services, and meals; and
- ✓ that homeless children should not be stigmatized by school personnel.

If the district sends a homeless child to a school other than the school of origin or the school requested by the parent or guardian, the district must provide the parents a written explanation for, including notice of the right to appeal, the decision. The information must also be provided whenever a dispute arises over school selection *[ESSA Title IX, Part C, §722(g)(3)(B)]*.

Each LEA liaison for homeless children and youth shall ensure the parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children *[ESSA Title IX, Part C, §722(g)(6)(A)(iv)]*.

Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated where such children and youths receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens *[ESSA Title X, Part C, §722(g)(6)(A)(v)]*.

21st Century Community Learning Centers

A program or activity funded as part of a 21st Century Community Learning Center providing before and after school activities to advance student academic achievement must undergo periodic evaluation to assess its progress toward achieving its goal of providing high-quality opportunities for academic enrichment. The results of evaluations shall be

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

made available to the public upon request, with public notice of such availability provided *[ESEA §4205(b)(2)]*.

Waiver Request

If a school district requests the U.S. Secretary of Education to waive any provision or regulation of the ESEA, it must provide notice and information about the waiver to the public in the manner in which is customarily provides public notice *[20 U.S.C. §7861(b)(3)(B)] [ESEA Title IX, Part D, §8401(b)(3)(B)(ii)]*.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

School Parent and Family Engagement Policy Livingston Middle School and Overton County School District

School Year: 2026-2027

Date: February 27, 2026

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, **Overton County School District** receives Title I, Part A funds and therefore must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by Section 1116(a)(2) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the district's expectations and objectives for meaningful parent and family engagement and describes how it will implement several specific parent and family engagement activities.

The **Overton County School District** agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:

- The school district will put into operation programs, activities, and procedures for the engagement of parents and family members in all of its schools with Title I, Part A programs. These programs, activities, and procedures will be planned and operated with meaningful consultation with parents and family members of participating children.
- Consistent with Section 1116, the school district will work with its schools to ensure that the required school-level parent and family engagement policies meet the requirements of Section 1116(b) of the ESSA, and each include as a component a school-parent compact consistent with Section 1116(d) of the ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act).
- In carrying out the Title I, Part A parent and family engagement requirements to the extent practicable, the school district and its schools will provide full opportunities for the participation of families with limited English proficiency, limited literacy, disabilities, of migratory children, who are economically disadvantaged, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language families understand.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

- If the district plan for Title I, Part A, developed under Section 1112 of the ESEA, is not satisfactory to the families of participating children, the school district will submit any parent comments with the plan when the school district submits the plan to the state department of education.
- The school district will be governed by the following definition of family engagement and expects that its Title I schools will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition in Section 8101 of the ESSA:
 - Family engagement means the participation of families in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:
 - (A) families play an integral role in assisting their child's learning;
 - (B) families are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school;
 - (C) families are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child; and
 - (D) other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of the ESEA.

Description of how the district will implement required district parent and family engagement policy components:

JOINTLY DEVELOPED

The **Overton County School District** will take the following actions to involve parents and family members in jointly developing its LEA (Local Education Agencies) plan under Section 1112, and the development of support and improvement plans under paragraphs (1) and (2) of Section 1111(d) of the ESEA:

1. The Overton County School System will conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this Family Engagement plan in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to improve participation by parents in Family Engagement activities (with focused attention on parents who are economically-disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its Family Engagement plan and activities to design strategies for more effective family engagement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its Family Engagement Plan/Policies.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Summaries of the data collected from the surveys are provided to each principal and are used for development of the following year's school-level Family Engagement Plan and Policies.

2. The district will include parents and families in the development of the district parent and family engagement policy, the district improvement plan, and school improvement plans by invitations to district and school-level meetings and by information shared on the district and school websites, school-level Title I site-based meetings, annual Title I school-level meetings, CPAC meetings, and annual effectiveness surveys. Parents will be encouraged to participate and share ideas, suggestions, and/or feedback regarding all required documents.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Overton County Schools' Consolidated Administration employs a federal programs director to work with Title I schools to assist the principal and school leadership in the allocable expenditures from school allocations, as well as to aide in parent and family engagement. Through the school-based Title I site-based meetings, the director works with the staff, parents, and community stakeholders to review/revise parent and family engagement policies/plans, school-parent compacts, and all Title I parent and family engagement requirements. Additionally, the director works with the instructional coaches and administrators to plan and implement district and school-level parent and family engagement events and correspondence. Community partners and stakeholders support school/district parent engagement events by providing materials, handouts, and/or informational booths (i.e., health fairs, college/career fairs, etc.) Annual surveys are provided for parents to help determine specific needs/topics for events and changes/improvements, and perceptions regarding school climate and culture.

The **Overton County School District** will provide coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist and build capacity of all Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parent and family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

The **Overton County School District** will take the following actions to conduct, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Barriers to greater participation by families in activities (with particular attention to families who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background),
- The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers,
- and strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

Each spring, the **Overton County School District** will conduct a survey on the district website to evaluate the content and effectiveness of the policy and overall perception of parent & family engagement. Additionally, through the district Parent Advisory Committee (CPAC) meetings, the district's parent and family engagement plan will be reviewed and evaluated to determine necessary changes. Any necessary modifications will be updated to the policy to ensure effectiveness.

The school district will use the evaluation's findings about its parent and family engagement policy to design evidence-based strategies for more effective family engagement and to revise, if necessary, its policies.

RESERVATION OF FUNDS

The **Overton County School District** will reserve that amount of Title I funds 2024-2025 to carry out the parent and family engagement requirements listed in this plan and as described in Section 1116 of the ESSA. Furthermore, OCS will distribute 90 percent of the amount reserved to Title I schools to support their school-level family engagement programs and activities. The district will provide clear guidance and communication to assist each Title I school in developing an adequate family engagement budget that addresses their needs assessment and parent recommendations.

COORDINATION OF SERVICES

The **Overton County School District** will coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies, to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant federal, state, and local laws and programs including LEA Administered Pre-K Programs and the Livingston Head Start Program that encourage and support families in more fully participating in the education of their children.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

BUILDING CAPACITY OF PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS

The **Overton County School District** will, with the assistance of its Title I schools, build families' capacity for strong family engagement by providing materials and training on such topics as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy) to help families work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement. Assistance will also be provided to parents and families in understanding the following topics:

- The challenging state academic standards;
- The state and local academic assessments including alternate assessments;
- The requirements of Title I, Part A;
- How to monitor their child's progress; and
- How to work with educators.

BUILDING CAPACITY OF SCHOOL STAFF

The **Overton County School District** will, with the assistance of its schools and families, educate its teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals, and other school leaders, and other staff in the value and utility of contributions of families, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with families as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between families and schools by:

- Involving families in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of that training,
- Providing necessary literacy training for families from Title I, Part A funds, if the school district has exhausted all other reasonably available sources for that training,
- Paying reasonable and necessary expenses associated with family engagement activities, including transportation and childcare costs, to enable families to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions,
- Training families to enhance the involvement of other families,
- Maximizing family engagement and participation in their children's education, arranging school meetings at a variety of times, or conducting in-home conferences between teachers or other educators who work directly with participating children, with families who are unable to attend those conferences at school,
- Adopting and implementing model approaches to improving family engagement,
- Establishing a district-wide parent advisory council to provide advice on all matters related to parent and family engagement in Title I, Part A programs,

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

- And developing appropriate roles for community-based organizations and businesses, including faith-based organizations, in family engagement activities.

HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION/TITLE IX

For information regarding harassment, discrimination, and Title IX, refer to OCBOE Policies 6.304 and 6.3041.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records. The law applies to all schools that receive federal funds. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their child's education records. When a student reaches the age of 18 or attends a post-secondary school or college, the parent's rights transfer to the student and the student is then an "eligible student" under the law.

Under FERPA, parents and eligible students have the following rights:

1. To inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school within 45 days of the school's receipt of a written request. The request should identify the record(s) being inspected. The school is not required to provide copies of records and may charge a fee if copies are requested. The following staff may be contacted to seek access to your child's record:

Mr. Doug Smith (931) 823-5917
dsmith@oc-sd.com

2. To request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. The request must be in writing and clearly specify: (a) the part of the record requesting to be changed, and (b) why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the

record, the parent or eligible student has the right to a hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement in the record about the contested information. The school is not required to consider request for grade or disciplinary decisions, opinions of school officials in the education record, or the child's special education determination. The following staff may be contacted to request an amendment to your child's record:

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mr. Doug Smith (931) 823-5917
dsmith@oc-sd.com

3. To control the disclosure of their child's personally identifiable information from their education record. The school or district must, with certain exceptions, obtain parent written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records. An exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school staff with legitimate educational interest, such as a person employed by the district a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, or therapist; or a parent of student serving on an official committee, such as a grievance or disciplinary committee or assisting another school official; and/or an official of another school district in which a student seeks to enroll. A school official has a legitimate education interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill a professional responsibility. A school district may also disclose personally identifiable information from education records without prior written consent to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. Student directory information may also be disclosed without prior consent if the categories to be disclosed are designated and parents are given the opportunity to opt out prior to disclosure.

You have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education at the following address if you feel the school district has failed to comply with the requirements of FERPA:

Family Policy Compliance office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

CHILD ADVOCACY

For information on child advocacy, contact the following groups:

The Stephens Center
616 North Church Street B
Livingston, TN 38570
(931) 823-6432

The Upper Cumberland Child Advocacy Center
750 B East Spring Street
Cookeville, TN 38501
(931) 854-0115

In addition, you may reach out to our school counselor for further assistance.

LIVINGSTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT CLUBS

- 4-H

ASSESSMENT

For information regarding student assessments, please visit the OCS website at <https://www.oc-sd.com/>. Click on “Parents” and then “2025-2026 Assessment Calendar.”

For questions about any policy not covered in this handbook, please refer to Overton County Board of Education Policy, which can be accessed at <https://www.oc-sd.com/>.