

Sweetwater Elementary School
Principal, Brandi Smith
301 Broad St.
Sweetwater, TN
423-337-7062

1. Welcome

Welcome to Sweetwater Elementary School! We hope that your child will experience a happy and productive year with many opportunities for academic, social, and personal growth.

2. SES Vision Statement, Mission Statement, & Beliefs

Vision Statement:

Students will strive for personal greatness by becoming ready, responsible, and respectful citizens.

Mission Statement:

Sweetwater Elementary is committed to providing a nurturing and safe environment. It is our responsibility to help students develop as responsible citizens and lifelong learners in a constantly changing world.

Beliefs:

1. We provide opportunities for our students to experience success while encouraging risk-taking within a safe and secure environment.
2. We provide flexibility of instruction, assessment, and use of diverse methods to meet the individual needs of students.
3. We promote character by encouraging responsibility to self and others.
4. We believe education is the shared responsibility of administrators, students, teachers, parents, and the community.
5. We continually reflect on our efforts and modify our strategies in order to provide positive results.

3. Entrance Requirements

According to state law, no child shall be permitted to attend any public school until proof of immunization is given to the school. All new students must have a birth certificate to show proof of age.

4. Transfer/Moving

Let the office and your child's teacher know when you are moving and where you are going, so his/her school records will follow promptly. Any change of address should be reported to the office at once. **We need to know where to reach parents at all times.**

5. We Need Parents

Parents are necessary in order for the team to be complete. Volunteer your time or any ideas you have. There are some programs in place that need parent volunteers, like leading art projects, tutoring, parties, and field trips. We encourage you to participate.

6. Arrival

School begins at 8:00 A.M. each morning. The bell to go to classes will ring at 7:45 A.M. Children who arrive on early buses will be provided supervision in our cafeteria beginning at 7:00 A.M. Beginning at 7:30 A.M., all third graders who have finished eating breakfast, along with those not eating, will go to the gym. They will remain in the gym until 7:45 A.M. **No student is allowed in classrooms before 7:45 a.m.** At 7:45 A.M., students will be escorted to their classrooms. After 7:45 A.M., students will go directly to their classroom and remain seated. If they arrive after 8:00 A.M., they must report directly to the office and are considered tardy. **A record of tardies is kept.**

7. Tardies

Any child arriving at school after 8:00 A.M. should report to the office to have his/her name removed from the absentee report. A class admission slip will be given to the child in the office, and this slip must be presented to his/her teacher. **Tardies and early dismissals will accumulate into absences in the following manner. On each fifth unexcused tardy, unexcused early dismissal, or combination of the two, the accumulated actions will be converted to a day of unexcused absence. This day will be added to other unexcused days of absence.**

When a student has accumulated five unexcused absences for the year, the child is considered to be truant. The school will send a legal notice/warning letter to the parent concerning the truancy. If the child has any more unexcused absences—either as a result of five (5) accumulated tardies or early dismissals or as a result of a day of absence-- the parent and student must attend a Truancy Parent Meeting to review attendance requirements, share the cause of the truancy, and be informed of the next legal step which must be taken. After the Parent Meeting, upon the next unexcused absence or accumulation of five (5) unexcused tardies or unexcused early dismissals, the parent and student will be petitioned to a Truancy Board appearance (if the child has never been before Truancy Board) or Juvenile Court (if the child has previously been before the Truancy Board). A student will be afforded a Truancy Board appearance once during their K-4 grade years and once during their 5-8 years. The Truancy Board meeting will also be attended by the SRO, school nurse, juvenile court officer, and a representative from Child Protective Services. After appearing before the Truancy Board, and upon the next unexcused absence or accumulation of five (5) unexcused tardies or early dismissals, the student will be petitioned to appear in Juvenile Court. If the student is age 11 or younger, a referral to Child Petition Services will be made; children over age 11 may also be referred to Child Protective Services as a result of the circumstances of their individual situation.

8. Dismissal

The regular dismissal times are as follows:

3:00 1st run buses

3:02 Car riders & 1st run buses & walkers

3:05 Late Buses

After being dismissed from the classroom in the afternoon, students are not permitted to return to their rooms to retrieve “forgotten” materials, without permission from the late bus room teacher. This is necessary to insure security, supervision, and teacher planning and conference time.

Students waiting on their rides **must remain on the sidewalk** and in an orderly line for safety. All car riders are to line up under the canopy on **Broad Street**. Please follow the flow of traffic to help eliminate traffic congestion and foremost to ensure **safety** of all children. Please do not park in the bus lanes which impede the flow of traffic or at the back entrance of the building.

9. Early Dismissal

Students will NOT be allowed to check out after 2:30, unless a doctor's appointment card is presented.

- For protection of your child, any student leaving school during the day must be checked out through the office by the parent or guardian. **Please come to the office to pick up your child**, not the classroom.
- It is the responsibility of your child to find out the work missed and for to make it up in a timely manner.
- A record is kept of early dismissals.

10. School Closings

In the event of severe or inclement weather, school may be closed or the starting time delayed. The same conditions may also necessitate early dismissal. These situations will be announced over by our school calling and/or texting system, the radio stations, and/or television stations. Please avoid calling the school.

11. Changes in Transportation

Please notify the office in advance and advise the teacher, if there is a change in the transporting of your child. If a child is to make a temporary change, a note must be sent to the principal. If no notification is received, your child will follow his/her regular method of getting home. All plans should be finalized at home. Students are not permitted to use the telephone to change plans.

12. Absences

Attendance is a key factor in student achievement; therefore, students are expected to be in school and on time each day that school is in session

An absence occurs when a student is in school less than three hours and sixteen minutes of any school day. Absences shall be classified as excused or unexcused as determined by the principal or his designee. *Notes for reasons of student absences must be submitted within five (5) school days after the student returns to school. If notes are received after this time, they will be counted as unexcused, even if the note is for a medical appointment or court appearance.* Parent notes may be used to excuse five days of absence for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness
2. Other circumstances under which the parent believes the child is unable to attend school

Excused absences may also be given for the following reasons:

1. Dental and medical appointments;
2. Death in the immediate family;
3. Religious observance;
4. Educational trips arranged by parents and with prior approval of the principal (if the student has not missed over their allotted days of unexcused absences during the current school year. See school board policy for more info);
5. Circumstances which in the judgment of the principal and Director of Schools creates an emergency over which the student has no control

Obtaining and completing make-up work is entirely the responsibility of the student. Make-up work must be completed within a reasonable period, not to exceed the total length of the absence.

Parents may request by 10:00 A.M. work for the day absent. The work will be on the office counter after 2:30 P.M.

Students are rewarded every nine weeks for perfect attendance. At the end of the school year, students who have accomplished perfect attendance are recognized at the awards ceremony.

13. Telephone Calls

Teachers cannot be called to the telephone to talk with parents while their classes are in session. If you wish to speak with a teacher by phone, please place your request through the school office. The teacher will return your call promptly when he/she is not responsible for the supervision and instruction of students.

Please do not ask our office personnel to relay messages to children except in case of an emergency. Children are only permitted to use the phone in case of illness. They may not use the phone to ask parent to deliver forgotten material or money unless they have approval from the principal. The student must have a telephone pass given by the teacher before permission will be given.

14. Visitors

Parents and visitors must register in the office to insure safety. Our parents are always welcome. However, class interruptions, especially at the end of the day, prevent teachers from instructing their students.

15. Conferences

In order to protect the instruction time for all students, we will not interrupt classes for parents to talk with teachers. Appointments with teachers must be scheduled in advance. Regular conferences are scheduled twice a year. Additional conferences may be scheduled with your child's teacher.

16. School Supplies

A grade level/class supply list will be posted at school and Wal-Mart before school begins. In addition, many SES teachers send a welcome letter with the supply list attached.

17. Textbooks and Library Books

Textbooks and library books are provided by the taxpayers of Tennessee. Students are fully responsible for textbooks and library books issued for their use. All lost or damaged textbooks or library books will result in payment to the school system by the parent or guardian. All school debts must be paid before a child's records can be transferred or register for a new school year.

Students will be held financially responsible for any deliberate damage to any school property, including desks, furniture, computers, etc.

18. Personal Items

Students must not bring to school any items which violate laws, safety rules, or disrupt our learning process. Also, these items may possibly be broken or removed from school without the owner's permission. Such items include beverages in cans or glass bottles, cell phones or similar items, electronic games, toys, firecrackers, trading cards, etc. These items may be confiscated by the teacher and kept until the parent is able to pick them up. **If a student brings a cell phone to school, it must be turned off and kept in a backpack at all times.** If the phone rings or the teacher sees the phone, the teachers will confiscate it and keep it until parents can pick it up. No pets are permitted at school.

19. PTO

The Parent-Teacher Organization is a vital part of our school. It serves as a primary channel for parent involvement in a host of school activities. The PTO has provided our school with playground equipment and duplicating machines. The PTO is a joint organization of the city

school system's schools. You are urged to join our faculty and support our PTO. Meetings are held three times a year.

20. Weapons

Students or visitors are not allowed to bring any weapons onto the school campus. Weapons include knives, guns, lighters, or any device that could cause harm to themselves or others.

21. Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Any student who sells, possesses, uses, or is under the influence of illicit drugs, narcotics, or alcohol in or on school property, including buses, shall be suspended from school and reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency. State law has established zero tolerance for drugs at schools.

22. Tobacco Products

The use and /or possession of tobacco products is prohibited. Any student who violates this rule is subject to disciplinary action. This rule applies in the school building, on the school grounds, on buses, and at any school sponsored activity.

23. Dress Code

The Sweetwater Board of Education believes that good taste and normal standards should be maintained in dress and grooming. We are asking your cooperation with the following dress requirements. Students violating the dress code are subject to disciplinary action to include correcting immediately or call home for help with it or be dismissed for the day.

1. All students should be appropriately dressed or groomed in keeping with the purposes and ideals that contribute to the learning process. **NO "sagging" is allowed. Pants, shorts, and skirts must be worn at a natural waistline and securely fastened.** Shorts, skirts, and dresses must not be shorter than the student's fingertips when the arm is fully extended by his/her side. Skintight clothing, such as spandex or bicycle shorts, is also not permitted.
2. Students may **NOT** wear spaghetti straps, halter tops, clothing displaying bare midriff, muscle shirts, fish net shirts, or any apparel with provocative suggestions or make reference to products which students may not legally buy.
3. No clothing, accessories, or other items associated with gang affiliation is allowed.
4. Jewelry must be of the appropriate size. Earrings and/or studs may be worn in the **ears only**. Studs or ornaments of any kind worn in any other pierced area are not authorized.
5. No chains hooked to pants or other garments will be allowed.
6. Head apparel and sunglasses, except for religious and medical purposes, must not be worn inside the building.
7. Footwear is required and must be safe and appropriate for indoor and outdoor physical activity.
8. No apparel, dress, or grooming which may become potentially disruptive will be allowed.
9. No inappropriate or excessively torn jeans can be worn.
10. Students should not write on themselves, others, or their clothing.
11. No make-up permitted.
12. No skate shoes.

The principal and teachers reserve the right to determine whether or not a student's attire is within acceptable limits.

24. Accidents/Illness

If an accident occurs at school, we will administer first-aid. If it is a serious injury or illness, the school will attempt to contact you. **It is vital that each parent fills out the emergency card and provides relatives' or friends' numbers if we cannot reach you. If your home or work number changes during the school year, please notify your child's teacher.**

Any child determined to have a contagious or communicable medical problem, cannot by law, be permitted to remain at school. This includes common conditions such as head lice, "pinkeye", or high fever. See the office for readmission rules.

If your child has been diagnosed as having a significant medical condition, such as diabetes or epilepsy, please notify your child's teacher and the school nurse.

25. Medication

The school is not allowed to give out medicines of any kind, including aspirin. If your child needs to take a non-prescription medicine and can personally administer this medication, send a signed note stating the name of the medication, proper dosage, and time of day the child should take the medicine. State law requires that the child take the medication without assistance. If your child needs to take prescription medication, written documentation must be furnished, and medication brought in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. **All medicine, non-prescription and prescription, must be turned into the office.**

26. Screenings

Vision and hearing screenings are given annually. Parents are notified of students who do not pass the screenings.

27. Discipline Policy

In order to maintain the excellent learning atmosphere of our school, the faculty and administration will employ a school-wide discipline plan, reflecting our belief that all students are capable of appropriate behavior, and that no other student has the right to prevent any teacher from teaching or to prevent any other student from learning.

If a student violates a classroom rule, the consequences range from detention at recess to losing privileges.

If a student exhibits **severe** or **persistent** misconduct, he/she will be sent to the principal for correction. In such cases, the student may be subject to **In-School Suspension, Out-of-School Suspension, or Corporal Punishment (paddling).**

A separate sheet will be sent home concerning corporal punishment. You must return this paper signed, giving or not giving permission for paddling.

Fighting, physical assault or threats, stealing, and cursing towards school personnel are grounds for suspension. Tennessee law has established zero tolerance for assault on school personnel.

Students are entitled to a due process hearing consisting of the right to be given notice of charges, and opportunity to be heard, and a fair hearing.

28. General Expectations

1. Follow teacher's first request.
2. Keep hands, feet, and other objects to yourself.
3. Walk and talk quietly.
4. Use proper language (no teasing, put-downs, cursing).
5. Take care of school property (no gum).
6. Be respectful.

29. Playground Expectations

1. Play in assigned areas only.
2. Use equipment properly.
3. Do not throw rocks, mulch, or other harmful objects.
4. No teasing or rough play.
5. No tackle football.

30. Cafeteria Expectations

1. Get everything you need as you go through the lunch line
2. Remain seated with your room until dismissed.
3. Keep your food on your tray.
4. Speak in a soft voice.
5. Clean up your space after eating.

SES offers both breakfast and lunch daily. Breakfast is free, but it must be completed by 7:50 A.M. The price of lunch is \$1.75. Extra milk, juice, ice cream, and deserts are available at \$.50. Students may pay daily, weekly, monthly or yearly. If a student forgets to bring money, lunch may be charged on a limited basis. Payment is expected on the following day. Children may bring lunch from home, but canned/glass-bottled beverages are not permitted. *No soft drinks*

Visitors are welcome to eat lunch at school for \$3.25. Please notify your child's teacher in advance for seating arrangements.

Applications are available for free or reduced price meals to students whose families meet federal eligibility requirements.

The weekly breakfast and lunch menus are published in the local newspaper and are online.

31. Bus Room Expectations

1. Go directly to your assigned area.
2. Stay seated until your ride or bus arrives.
3. Talk quietly.

32. Assembly Expectations

1. Enter and exit in a quiet, orderly manner.
2. Stay in your seat with your class.
3. In the auditorium, stay seated.
4. Use good manners with appropriate response.

33. Bus Expectations

Bus transportation is not required by state law, but it is a privilege. Students must follow the bus procedures, or they could lose these privileges.

Bus students will report each morning and afternoon to a designated area where there will be supervision.

1. **Obey the bus driver.** The driver is authorized to assign seats.
2. No loud, rude, or profane language or obscene gestures.
3. No eating or drinking allowed.
4. No possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
5. Keep hands and head inside the bus; no throwing objects out of the bus.
6. Parents will be responsible for any act of vandalism.
7. Students must be quiet while bus is stopped for railway crossings.
8. Students shall not leave the bus from the emergency door unless an emergency exists.
9. Students shall stay in their seats while bus is in motion.

34. Library

All students come to library twice weekly with their class. The library is open at other times for students to work individually. Books are checked out for one week and can generally be renewed. Any lost or damaged book must be replaced by the student's parents. General classroom rules are in effect at all times.

35. Music

Each student will participate in general music classes throughout the year.

36. Physical Education

State law requires all children to participate in Physical Education unless excused in writing by a physician. If a student needs to miss physical education for minor illness, the parents must send a note to the teacher stating the nature of the illness.

1. Tennis shoes are required. No boots, sandals, or dress shoes are allowed.
2. Comfortable, suitable clothing is required. No dresses.
3. Teachers will not be responsible for jewelry.
4. Use safety in all activities.
5. If you are injured report it immediately to the PE teacher.

37. Parties

There are three scheduled school parties during the year. These are Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Parents may participate by sending food. The parties will be given the last hour of the day on the holiday or Friday if the holiday occurs on a weekend.

38. Report Cards

Reports cards are issued four times a year after each nine weeks grading period. If the student's grades are not satisfactory, parents may arrange a conference with the child's teacher.

A=95-100	D=70-74
B=86-94	F=69 -below
C=75-85	

*Note: Your child's grades may be accessed through Synergy, ParentVue. See your child's teacher for more details.

39. Homework

Homework is considered a viable part of the instructional process. It becomes an increasing major part of education in the intermediate grades. If your child does not turn in his/her homework, grades will suffer. We encourage parents to make sure their child completes daily assignments. This prevents students from getting behind in their studies and becoming frustrated. Homework allows students to complete unfinished class assignments and work on mastery. Homework gives students experiences with self-discipline, independence, and responsibility. Parents are able to be a part of the learning process and know what their child is studying.

40. Special Education Services

Special education services, including speech therapy, are available to all students who meet eligibility standards based on state and federal criteria through the IEP Team process. Either the parent or the teacher may refer a child for assessment. Referrals from parents should be made in writing, to the principal. All referrals will go through the student's support team.

41. Counseling Services

A counselor is available to assist students in dealing with behavioral or academic problems.

42. School Pictures and Yearbooks

Students' pictures are taken a two main times a year (fall and spring). The fall pictures will be published in the yearbook, which is available in May. Pictures and/or money must be in before field trips.

43. Field Trips

Field trips are offered as a means of enhancing the instructional program. They are a privilege afforded to students. No student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students will be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. In all cases, students must have written parental consent (no last minute phone calls) in order to participate.

44. Fund Raising

Students are not allowed to solicit and raise funds for non-school activities.

The principal retains the right to be the final recourse in all disciplinary situations.

CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL

Rodney Boruff	Director of Schools
Diana Howard	Supervisor of Instruction, Federal Programs
Nancy Crabtree	Special Ed Director, Federal Programs
Traci Bryant	Human Resources
Janet Collins	Financial Officer
Donna Cook	Administrative Assistant
Donna Canada	Attendance Coordinator
Valerie Allmon	Accounts Payable/Payroll
Larry Arwood	Technology Coordinator
Mark Purdy	Technology
Jewel Sledge	Food Services
Victor Upton	Maintenance
David Underwood	Maintenance

FACULTY AND STAFF

Brandi Smith	Principal
Shannon Croft	School Counselor
Patty Shamblin	Secretary/Bookkeeper
Heather Hall	Office Assistant
Amber Bohrer	Nurse

3rd Grade
Jeanette Anderson
Hannah Camp
Debbie Faraone
Laurie Heffron
Laura Key
Tracie Kile
Lauren Letterman
Susan Phipps
Brittany West

4th Grade:
Susan Amos
Lisa Archer
Tiffany Earle
Shannon Henderson
Brandi Long
Nicki Nile
Erica Watson

3rd and 4th Grade:

Paula Bales	Special Education
Kelsey Levering	Special Education
Becky Nichols	Speech
Jennifer Hicks	Librarian
Joe Allen	Physical Education
Steve Riddle	Music
Holly Harrison	RTI
Crystal Smith	RTI
Karen Sadikoff	Academic Coach
Marilyn Brannon	Special Ed Assistant
Deborah Bukowski	Special Ed Assistant

Custodians:

Ron Stinnett
Julie Worley
Jan Bailey

Cafeteria:

Rhonda Bledsoe	Cafeteria Manager
Linda McKeehan	
Shirley Pitman	
Linda Russell	
Kat Hill	

This student handbook does not contain all of the discipline procedures for this school. A copy of the complete Code of Discipline for Sweetwater for Sweetwater City Schools may be obtained by contacting the principal's office or contacting the director's office at 423-337-7051.

We have read and agree to be governed by the Sweetwater Elementary School Handbook.

Parent's Signature

Date

Student's Signature

Date

Should your child become the victim of a violent crime at Sweetwater City Schools, you have the right to request a transfer to the nearest county school, pending their enrollment. Because Sweetwater City School is an independent city school district, Tennessee State Board of Education Unsafe School Choice Policy states that the district may choose to facilitate a requested transfer to another school; however, such transfer shall not be required. Sweetwater City Schools' faculty and staff are making every effort to prevent any situation in which your child may not be safe. If you have any questions regarding safety policies or procedures, please contact Mr. Boruff at 423-337-7051.
