South Fayette Elementary School

Student - Family Handbook

2026-2027

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Welcome to the start of a new school year! We hope you and your families had a safe and enjoyable summer. We are very excited to see our students and their families!

Once you have enrolled and are added to the email list, you will receive a weekly email from the office with a link to our announcements that are located on the elementary school website. We would encourage you to read the announcements because they contain current information about your child's education. We will also continue to email monthly calendars. Parents can also access the announcements, calendars, and menus at any time by visiting www.southfayette.org, selecting your school on the drop-down menu, and selecting current announcements. The website is updated frequently and provides parents with a wealth of current information, so please remember to visit our website often. We hope the handbook provides you with detailed information regarding your child's school!

We would like to thank you for your partnership throughout the year! It is our pleasure to work with you and your child, and we look forward to being a part of their daily lives. If you have any questions or concerns throughout the school year, do not hesitate to email or call us.

With SFES Lion Pride,

Tyler J. Geist
Elementary School Principal

Pharlan Ives
Elementary School Assistant Principal

South Fayette Elementary School
3620 Old Oakdale Road
McDonald, PA 15057

Phone: 412-221-4542
Fax: 724-693-2762
Website: https://www.southfayette.org/southfayetteelementaryschool_home.aspx
Follow us on Twitter: @SFESLions

Tyler Geist, Principal (Grades K-2)
Ext: 337
tjgeist@southfayette.org

Pharlan Ives, Assistant Principal (Grades K-2)
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Kristal Morton, Administrative Assistant/Enrollment – Ext: 332
TBD, Administrative Assistant/Attendance – Ext: 315
Molly Kuczinski, School Counselor (Last Names A-L) – Ext: 335
Cara Snyder, School Counselor (Last Name M-Z) – Ext: 355
Kara Miles, School Nurse – Ext: 333

VISION, BELIEFS AND MISSION OF THE SOUTH FAYETTE SCHOOL DISTRICT (developed by the Steering Committee and adopted by the Board of School Directors, 2018)

Vision Statement

South Fayette Township School District will radiate excellence through future-focused, innovative, diverse, and high quality learning opportunities.

Mission Statement

In partnership with the community, the mission of the South Fayette Township School District, a leader in innovation, is to elevate academic, artistic, and athletic excellence of the whole learner by inspiring the strength to be dynamic, ethical, and empathetic citizens who flourish in a global society.

Shared Values

- Education is the shared responsibility of the student, home, school, and community.
- High, clear expectations are fundamental to success.
- Creativity and critical thinking are the building blocks to develop an entrepreneurial spirit.
- Problem solving and design thinking are key competencies for lifelong learners.
- Confidence and self-esteem are critical to academic, social, and emotional growth.
- Cultural and global competencies are crucial to success.
- Innovation and advancement in technology, teaching techniques, and operations are essential for successful everyday performance.
- Multiple pathways and measures must be used to achieve and evaluate success.
- A safe, caring, positive environment with high levels of courtesy and respect is essential to maximize learning and productivity.
- Communication, collaboration, and agency are relevant workplace skills every student must develop.

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Compliance Statement

South Fayette Township School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender and handicap in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504. For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedure or services, activities, and facilities that are accessible and usable by handicapped persons, please contact Michael Radage, Human Resources Director and Title IX, Coordinator, at 3700 Old Oakdale Road, McDonald, PA 15057, (412) 221-4542, extension 326.

South Fayette PTA

PTA@southfayette.org

PTA Vision

Every child's potential is a reality.

PTA Mission

To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

PTA Values

Collaboration: We will work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to broaden and enhance our ability to serve and advocate for all children and families.

Commitment: We are dedicated to children's educational success, health, and well-being through strong family and community engagement, while remaining accountable to the principles upon which our association was founded.

Diversity: We acknowledge the potential of everyone without regard, including but not limited to: age, culture, economic status, educational background, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, legal status, marital status, mental ability, national origin, organizational position, parental status, physical ability, political philosophy, race, religion, sexual orientation, and work experience.

Respect: We value the individual contributions of members, employees, volunteers, and partners as we work collaboratively to achieve our association's goals.

Accountability: All members, employees, volunteers and partners have a shared responsibility to align their efforts toward the achievement of our association's strategic initiatives.

South Fayette Elementary School

SCHOOL COLORS: ***GREEN & WHITE***

MASCOT: ***LION***

ALMA MATER

South Fayette may we be,
Ever faithful to thee,
May thy children all cherish thy name

For the good thou has done,
For each victory we've won
Alma Mater to thee all thy fame,
Dear old high, thou has served us so well,

All thy virtues we never can tell
Other schools we may all soon forget,

But we'll always love dear South Fayette.

SCHOOL SONG - "YOU'RE A GRAND OLD SCHOOL"

YOU'RE A GRAND OLD SCHOOL

YOU'RE A HIGH RANKING SCHOOL

YOU'RE THE BEST IN THE EAST THEY ALL SAY

"SOUTH FAYETTE"

WHERE THE KIDS ARE SMART

AND DO THEIR PART

WE'RE LOYAL TO YOU EVERYDAY

EVERY HEART BEATS TRUE FOR OUR OWN

COLORS TOO

YOU'RE THE BEST SCHOOL IN EVERY WAY

SHOULD OLD ACQUAINTANCE BE FORGOT

BUT OUR SCHOOL IS HERE TO STAY

"SOUTH FAYETTE"

Attendance

It is important that all students attend school every day as consistent attendance helps students to excel academically. We will make every effort to assist your child in the attainment of a quality education, but attendance is the responsibility of the parent or guardian. The parent/guardian should contact the school if extenuating circumstances regarding a child's absence exist.

Families are able to view and track their child's attendance records within the PowerSchool parent portal.

If a student does need to miss school, the parent/guardian must provide a written or emailed excuse within five school days of the absence. All emailed excuses should be submitted to the homeroom teacher **and** the Attendance Administrative Assistant (esattendance@southfayette.org).

Written/emailed excuses should include the following information:

- Student's first and last name
- Grade
- Date of absence(s)
- Reason for absence(s)
- Signature of parent/guardian
- Signature from medical provider (when applicable)
- Return to school date as recommended by a medical provider (when applicable)

Parents/guardians will receive a phone call via our automated notification system in regard to their child's absence from school. Please note that all students who are absent will receive an automated call even if the parent notifies the school.

All absences will then be recorded as one of the following attendance codes:

Type of Absence:	**Attendance Code:**	**Absence due to:**	**Limit:**
Parent Excused	**PAR**	-student physical/emotional/mental health (without a medical note) -parent/guardian request as approved by building administrator	10 per school year *note that both parent-excused and educational trip absences contribute to the maximum total of ten (10) days.) Each absence beyond the ten cumulative days will require an excuse from a physician or will be marked as unexcused.
Excused	**EXC**	-student illness/injury (verification from healthcare provider required) -doctor/dentist appointment (verification	

		from healthcare provider required) -religious holiday -bereavement -court appearance (verification required) -circumstances relative to homelessness and/or foster care -suspension (SUS) -urgent reason as approved by school administration	
Educational Trip/Tour	**EDT**	*Please see additional information below.* ***Educational Tours & Trips***	10 per school year (total with Parent-Excused Days) Pre-approval from a building administrator is required. Not permitted within the first two weeks or last two weeks of school A student must be withdrawn from the school system if an Educational Trip/Tour exceeds 10 consecutive days. **Alternate consideration may be given for international travel with district approval.* *note that both parent-excused and educational trip absences contribute to the maximum total of ten (10) days.)

Unexcused	**UNX**	-any reason for which a written/emailed excuse is not submitted within five school days of the absence -reasons not deemed permissible (i.e. shopping, cosmetic appointments, oversleeping, car failure, and other reasons other than those listed above under excused)	

Half Days

A student who arrives after 11:30 a.m. will be marked ½ day absent. A student who arrives after 1:25 p.m. will be marked absent for the full day. A student who leaves before 11:30 a.m. will be marked absent for the full day. A student who leaves before 1:25 p.m. will be marked absent for ½ day. Half days are indicated by the code (H) in PowerSchool.

Attendance Notification Procedures

In order to partner with families to achieve consistent school attendance, the following steps will be taken after a certain number of **cumulative** absences are accrued:

Number of Absences	3rd UNX	4th UNX	6th UNX	10th PAR/UNX absence	15th PAR/UNX absence	20th PAR/UNX absence	**10 consecutive absences**
Action Steps	Certified letter Loss of driving privileges for high school students	Certified letter School Attendance Improvement Conference (scheduled via phone)	Community Based Attendance Program or Children and Youth Agency (CYF) referral Charges filed with the District Magistrate	Letter from building principal Doctor's note required for every subsequent absence (lack of documentation will result in a UNX attendance code)	Charges filed with the District Magistrate	Attendance Hearing to consider retention in current grade level	Automatic withdrawal from District

Homework for Absent Students

If your child is absent for more than one day and you would like his/her homework, please email your child's teacher. **Please do not request homework if your child is only absent one day.** Due to their professional responsibilities, teachers are unable to collect and organize student work in one work day.

A student whose absence is excused will have the opportunity to make up work assigned and tests administered during the period of his/her absence. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher. It is the expectation that students complete homework, tests, and other assigned school work within three days of returning to school after being absent.

TARDY PROCEDURES

Students are expected to be in class/homeroom by the posted start of the school day. If a student arrives after that time, they must report to the Student Center/Main Office. A written excuse from the parent/guardian or a doctor explaining the reason for the tardiness is required to be submitted. Reasons for excused tardies and protocols for submitting excuses are consistent with the attendance policies. Oversleeping, missing the bus, car trouble and like excuses are not considered acceptable reasons for tardiness and will be considered unexcused.

1. Students who are tardy to school will have five school days to present an excuse to the Student Center/Main Office.
    1. At the Elementary and Intermediate School, students **must** be escorted by a parent and signed into school. This will constitute the parent excuse.
    2. At the Middle and High School, students **may** be escorted in by a parent and signed into school. This will constitute the parent excuse. If the parent does not escort the student into school, a written excuse must be presented within five school days.

    2. Failure to turn in a note within the allotted time frame will result in the tardiness being considered unexcused.
    3. After the fourth unexcused tardy, the student will receive a written warning from the Student Center/Main Office
    4. After the fifth unexcused tardy, a certified letter will be sent home and a consequence may be assigned by the building principals.
    5. Further unexcused tardies will result in additional consequences and loss of privileges and possible referral to the Magistrate.

Any student who is tardy (excused or unexcused) 10 days without proper medical documentation will be required to submit a doctor's note for subsequent excused tardies.

EXCESSIVE TARDIES

9 Weeks	Maximum Cumulative Tardies	Consequence for Exceeding Maximum Tardies
1st	10	Charges filed with the local district magistrate
2nd	15	
3rd	20	
4th	24	

Parents will be notified throughout the year as students approach the maximum number of tardies throughout the school year.

Early Dismissals

Early dismissals from school are considered partial absence from school and will follow the same guidelines for classification of excused/unexcused. Dismissals before 11:00 a.m. will be marked as a full day absence. Dismissals between 11:00 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. are considered a ½ day absence. Anything before 3:23 p.m. is considered an early dismissal.

If a student needs to be dismissed from school, the parent or guardian needs to submit a written note that contains the following:

- Student's first and last name
- Grade
- Teacher's Name
- Dates for dismissal
- Reasons for dismissal
- Signature of parent or guardian

The child's parent or guardian needs to come into the school building and sign the child out. Please note that parents and guardians must have a valid form of photo identification (i.e., driver's license or passport) to sign the child out. Children **will not** be dismissed to a waiting vehicle. If a student is returning from a doctor's appointment, verification should be turned in the next day. **No student is permitted to leave the school building without the knowledge and permission of the appropriate school officials.**

Parents who are visiting the building cannot remove their child from the child's designated place without talking with the adult in charge of supervising their child and signing their child out at the receptionist's desk or the office. This is for the safety of all children. Please remember—we are responsible for the children during the school day.

Please note that we dismiss elementary students starting at 3:23 p.m. When students are dismissed before the official dismissal time, please note that the early dismissal is recorded in our attendance system, and if the student is dismissed for reasons other than the excused absences, the student will receive an unexcused early dismissal. A pattern of unexcused early dismissals will be referred to the magistrate.

Educational Tours & Trips

Upon receipt of an approved Educational Tour/Trip Request Form from the parent/guardian of the student involved, a student may be excused from school attendance to participate in an educational tour or trip during the school term at the expense of the parent/guardian. When such a tour or trip is so determined by the District Superintendent or his/her designee to serve an educational purpose and student participants therein are subject to direction and supervision by an adult acceptable to the District Superintendent/designee, and to the parents of the student concerned, the trip will be subject to the following conditions:

1. Educational tours or trips will be considered for approval if the District Superintendent or designee determines that such a tour or trip will be of educational significance to the student. In order for the District Superintendent or designee to make such a determination, the parent shall provide a written request for excusal, which shall indicate the days to be missed, the destination of the tour or trip, and the reason why the tour or trip could not be taken on days when school is not in session. **THE TOUR/TRIP MAY NOT EXCEED TEN (10) SCHOOL DAYS. Any days beyond the 10-day limit may be marked as an unexcused absence. PLEASE NOTE: Educational Trips and Parent Excused Days fall into the same attendance category with a combined total of 10 days before turning into Unexcused Absences.**
2. If any educational trips are denied or scheduled during non-permissible days, absences will be attributed to Parent Excused (PAR) if available or Unexcused (UNX).
3. Unless some emergency arises, such requests shall be made at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the tour or trip.
4. The District makes every attempt to provide families with the school calendar at least a year in advance. As a result, we request that families **do not** take Educational Trips/Tours within the two last weeks of the school year. Such a tour or trip request **will not be approved**.
5. For educational tours or trips taken prior to the last two weeks of the school year but within the last quarter, only the permissible days (up to ten) will be approved and students must return to school prior to the end of

the quarter. If this does not occur, the attendance procedures will be strictly followed which may include, but are not be limited to, a student's withdrawal from the district and/or a citation filed with the magistrate.

6. Tours or trips shall not be approved during testing windows including AP exams and state standardized tests. High school students who are absent (excused) during final exams will have the opportunity to take their finals upon their return.
7. If more than one (1) child in a family will be taking the tour or trip, the requests for the children shall be made to the principal of the school of each involved child so that their absences may be cleared with the appropriate principal.
8. All school work missed during the approved tour or trip shall be made up on the "initiative of the student and at the reasonable convenience of the teacher." Students may not be excused for more than ten (10) days per year for educational tours. Tours sponsored by the school district are to be included in the 10-day limitation.
9. Educational trips will not be approved for students over 10 days absent from school or who are failing two (2) or more courses at the time of the request.
10. International trips exceeding 10 days require District approval and adherence to District procedures. Please see the District website for more information.

Take Your Child to Work Day

Students who go to work with a parent on Take Your Child to Work Day will have their absence marked as a parent excused absence. An excuse will need to be submitted within five school days of the absence.

Academics

South Fayette Township Elementary School provides students with a strong academic foundation while taking into consideration individual differences. All children have the opportunity to achieve academically, enjoy exposure to the fine arts through visual art, choral music, and music appreciation, improve their physical fitness, and gross motor skills in physical education, and enhance their research and reading skills through the library.

Grade level curriculum booklets are available on the elementary website grade level links at www.southfayette.org/elem or in the elementary office. These booklets give more detail about the specific curriculum at each grade level.

Language Arts

The Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Into Reading series is used in kindergarten through second grade. Language Arts is taught in a block of time during the school day. The comprehensive Language Arts curriculum emphasizes reading, grammar, writing, spelling, phonics, speaking, and listening skills. Students read high-interest stories on a routine basis. Teachers differentiate instruction so that all students' academic needs are met. Enrichment, as well as remediation activities, are ALSO provided.

Technology is an integral part of the Language Arts instruction. Each student will have a username and password to access the Into Reading digital curriculum. The goal of the Language Arts curriculum is for students to meet the Pennsylvania Common Core Standards. The standards can be assessed online at https://www.pdesas.org/standard/

Mathematics

In Grades K - 2, South Fayette will be using a mathematics curriculum based on the EnvisionMath program from Pearson. This core program will develop conceptual understanding through daily Problem-Based Interactive

Learning and step-by-step Visual Learning. Abundant digital resources are available for use in the classroom as well as at home. In addition, elementary students will also experience mathematics through our Calendar program. Through this dedicated time each day, students work with a variety of mathematics concepts such as time, money, patterns, counting, etc. South Fayette Elementary places a strong emphasis on math, and it is taught daily. Technology is integrated into the math curriculum, and children learn the math concepts by working with manipulatives, so they understand the concepts presented. There is an expectation that students practice and master the grade-appropriate mathematics facts.

Science and Health

The STC science curriculum is used in the elementary school. This program emphasizes the hands-on inquiry-based approach where the children learn by doing. The Science Curriculum correlates to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. The children learn about nutrition, exercise and good health practices in their physical education and/or homeroom class.

Social Studies

The elementary social studies program teaches a wide variety of content skills at the various grade levels. Children learn about geography, history, economics, government, citizenship, sociology, anthropology and humanities through a wide variety of activities.

Handwriting

Children are taught formal manuscript (printing) beginning in kindergarten. Slant printing is taught in second grade, and students are taught cursive handwriting in third grade.

Special Area Subjects

Children in first grade through second grade receive instruction daily in one special area subject. Children are exposed to the fine arts through choral music, music appreciation, and visual art instruction. In art classes, the children have the opportunity to express themselves using different art media.

The Arts Alive class provides students with opportunities to experience the connections between art forms including movement, visual arts, music, and to relate the arts to other content areas studied at the elementary level. Arts Alive focuses on history and culture as a humanities component and provides students with additional opportunities for performance to increase confidence and poise, as well as develop a positive self-concept. Students learn to express emotions in a positive, creative and productive way. Through the curriculum, students are provided with a sound foundation to explore the creative process as a way of learning.

The curriculum taught in library class encourages children to borrow books and read independently. The children also learn introductory library and research skills.

In physical education, the children learn the importance of physical fitness through a wide variety of activities and instruction. Students are required to wear tennis shoes on gym days.

The specials are scheduled on a six-day rotating basis. The first day of school is day A. The sixth day of school is day F. The seventh day of school is day A. The six-day schedule will be included on the monthly calendar.

All elementary students take part in our STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) program. While in the Learning Lab with Melissa Unger, our Elementary STEAM teacher, students create projects from across the disciplines and participate in activities ranging from team building and design challenges, to an introduction to basic principles of computer coding and robotics using age-appropriate materials. Students rotate through the Learning Lab throughout the year to complete projects that coincide with content from their regular homeroom classes.

Additionally, many upcoming activities in the Learning Lab will have an environmental focus, as a grant has enabled us to create an outdoor classroom space where students will learn more about plant growth and development, farming, and energy.

Arrival at School

The elementary school day will start at 9:00 a.m. Parents may start to drop off their children in the morning at **8:30 a.m**. Any students being transported to school by their parent should be dropped off at the side entrance door. For the safety of the children and the school buses, **automobiles are not permitted in the front of the school from 7:45 a.m. until 9:00 a.m.**

Parent Drop-Off Area

The parent drop-off area is located on the right-hand side of the building. The entrance is open from 8:30 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. only. ***This area is for student drop-off ONLY!*** If parents need to bring something into the building, please park in the front parking lot and enter the building through the main entrance.

Please help us keep the traffic moving in the parent drop-off area by following the procedures below:

- ✓ This is a student drop-off area only.
- ✓ Children should be dropped off on the sidewalk side of the building.
- ✓ To keep traffic moving, **parents should not get out of the vehicle**.
- ✓ Your vehicle is not to be parked in the parent drop off area. **If you need to talk to one of the paraeducators, or you need to come into the building, please park your vehicle in the front parking lot.**
- ✓ Parents are welcome to walk their child/ren into the building, but to do this, **please park in the front lot and walk your child to the building**.
- ✓ Parents should not be reprimanding other parents who they feel are not "following" the drop off rules. We want to avoid verbal confrontations. Please call the elementary office to report drop off issues.
- ✓ Drop-off starts at 8:30 a.m.
- ✓ The door at parent drop-off is closed and locked at 9:00 a.m.
- ✓ PM kindergarten parents need to walk their children to the front entrance as the parent drop-off door is not operational after 9:00 a.m.
- ✓ Students who arrive after 9:00 a.m. will need to enter through the front door of the building accompanied by a parent. **Do not knock on the door and try to get someone to open the door.**

Arrival at School on Two Hour Delays

The elementary school day will start at **11:00 a.m.** on a two-hour delay. Parents may start to drop off their children in the morning at **10:30 a.m.** Any student being transported to school by their parent should be dropped off at the side entrance door. For the safety of the children and the school buses, **automobiles are not permitted in the front driveway of the school from 9:45 a.m. until 11:00 a.m.**

Kindergarten Schedule on a Two Hour Late Start

Morning Kindergarten 11:00 a.m. – 12:39 p.m.

Afternoon Kindergarten 1:44 p.m. – 3:23 p.m.

Backpacks

Often elementary students have a backpack, and we realize that the backpacks make it easy for the students to transport their school work and books to and from school. As you are purchasing a backpack for your child, we are

recommending that you do not purchase a backpack on wheels. Even though they are convenient for the children, they are a tripping hazard in the busy hallways. They also require extra room to transport on our buses. All of the children will need to carry their backpacks. They will not be permitted to wheel them in the hallways.

Birthday Treats

Students will not be permitted to bring "food" birthday treats to share with their class. However, they can bring a "nonfood" item to share with the class on their actual birthday or a day that is close to their birthday.

Board Policies

All board policies are located on the district website.

Books

Students are provided with workbooks and hardback books. If a child loses his/her book, parents will be billed the replacement cost of the book.

Bullying/Cyberbullying Policy

Board policy #249 prohibits bullying by district students. This board policy can be located on the district's website.

Bus Rules

- ✓ Always Treat Others with Respect
- ✓ Use Quiet Voices
- ✓ Keep Hands and Feet to Yourself
- ✓ Stay Seated at All Times
- ✓ Follow directions of the adults on the bus
- ✓ No Eating on the Bus

Bus Transportation and Behavior

Children are transported to and from school by school bus. Parents who have questions about the bussing should contact the Director of Transportation at (412) 221-4542, extension 452. Please note that the school district does not take responsibility for transporting students outside of the school district boundaries. Buses will pick up and drop off students at a regularly scheduled stop only. ***Please note that children are only permitted to have two bus routines***.

Please note that as our enrollment continues to grow the seats on our buses are often filled. In the event of an emergency, parents may request that their child ride a bus home with a friend. These requests need to be made in writing by the parents of both of the children. Please note that because of increased enrollment, many of the buses are near capacity. The only way these requests will be approved is if there is an available seat on the bus.

If your child has a play date with another child, you need to transport your child to his/her friend's house at the end of the school day and not use school transportation for this purpose. Again, our buses are near capacity.

There is an expectation that students follow school rules when riding the bus. They are to remain in their assigned seat at all times, keep their hands and feet to themselves and talk quietly. For the safety of the children, eating and

drinking are prohibited on the bus. Students are not permitted to put their hands, feet, etc. outside of the bus. Animals cannot be transported via school bus. All items being transported via school bus should fit comfortably on the child's lap.

When students do not follow the bus rules, the bus driver will submit a discipline slip to the office. The principal may feel it is appropriate to watch the video tape from the bus to observe the student's behavior. The school counselor may talk to the student. The parent will be called, and an appropriate consequence will be given to the student. A parent-principal conference could be necessary. Students who receive a discipline slip from the bus driver could lose their bus privileges for one or more days. When a student is suspended from the bus, the parent needs to transport the child to and from school. We encourage parents to review appropriate bus behavior with their child.

Assigned Seats on the Bus

We consider the bus an extension of the elementary school and all students will have an assigned seat on the bus. We will do our best to assign elementary school students to the front of the bus and intermediate students to the back of the bus. Just as teachers do in the classroom, once seats have been assigned by the bus driver, students are expected to stay in that assigned seat. There are instances where seats may have to be changed, and this will be left to the discretion of the bus driver and/or building principals.

Reporting Bus Issues

We encourage students to discuss bus issues with the bus driver. If the student does not feel the issue has been resolved, the student should then discuss it with the building principal.

Parents should follow these procedures when reporting issues on the bus:

1. Call the bus garage (412-221-4542 x450) and leave a message for the bus driver to call you.
2. If the issue is not resolved, please contact the building principal or Director of Transportation (412-221-4542 x452).

Please remember that per Pennsylvania State Law, parents/guardians are not allowed to board a school bus for any reason.

Cafeteria

Student Meal Service (2025–26 School Year)

Service Hours & Location

- Breakfast and lunch are served daily in the Cafeteria.

Menus & Ordering

- Monthly menus are posted under **Food Service** at www.southfayette.org.
- Elementary School students may enjoy breakfast free of charge (Pennsylvania statewide program).
- Lunch is only free to those families who qualify and complete an application each year or who receive written confirmation annually.

Complete Meal Components
To qualify as a reimbursable (full-price or free/reduced) meal, a student's tray must include:

1. One main entrée
2. Two fruits (or one fruit plus one juice)
3. Up to two vegetables
4. One milk (milk or Lactaid)
5. **At least one fruit or one vegetable (required)**

À la Carte Items (Extra Charges)

- Additional items will be offered for sale in addition to the regular meal. If you wish to block your student from making these purchases, please contact Nicolle Pleil at 724-693-3019 or email at nbpleil@southfayette.org
- Bottled water is charged separately.
- Students may not purchase additional items unless they have funds available on their account.

Free & Reduced-Price Meals

- Families must submit an application each year (unless directly certified in writing).
- Approved free meal status provides one free complete lunch per student.

Reminders

- If the student tray lacks a fruit **or** a vegetable, items will be charged à la carte.
- Encourage your child to take advantage of our healthy breakfast and lunch options!

Student Accounts

- Parents/Guardians must maintain a positive balance on their child's meal account at all times.
- To set up an account, visit www.myschoolbucks.com using your child's Student ID or birthdate.
- Online features include:
    - Viewing account balances and purchase/payment history
    - Making credit-card payments (note: service fee applies per transaction)

Alternate Payment Methods

- Cash, check, or money order may be sent with your child or mailed directly.
- Enclose payment in an envelope and clearly write the student's first/last name and Student ID#.
- Make checks payable to **South Fayette School Cafeteria**.

Student Cafeteria Accounts
Parents may add money into an account that students will use to purchase lunch.

The South Fayette Township School District is committed to the safety and security of all student data. In doing so, the following precautionary measures are in place:

No Fingerprint Storage: The system does not store your child's fingerprint. Instead, it creates a special code that can only be identified by your child's fingerprint. Each time your child uses the fingerprint scanning tool, the code will be regenerated.

One-Way Process: The code cannot be traced back to your child's fingerprint, keeping their information private.

Complete Security: All data is encrypted, and nothing is stored online or in the Cloud.

Cafeteria Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Cafeteria Behavior

Students need to follow school rules while in the cafeteria. It is very important that they eat their lunch while using indoor voices to talk to their classmates. After they finish eating, students are to clean up the food scraps and paper before leaving their cafeteria seat. Inappropriate cafeteria behavior could result in a student being assigned a cafeteria seat by himself/herself or another appropriate consequence.

Campus Driving

Please be cautious driving to and from campus as well as when on campus. The STOP signs and slow traffic speed limits are in place to enhance safety. If you have a young driver, please discuss the importance of obeying all traffic signs, speed limits, and especially no texting while driving.

Personal Electronic Devices (Cell Phones and Smartwatches)

To promote student engagement, minimize distractions, and provide a safe, focused learning environment, South Fayette Elementary School follows the District's **bell-to-bell personal electronic device policy**.

Students are discouraged from bringing personal electronic devices, including cell phones and smartwatches with communication capabilities, to school. If a student brings a personal electronic device to school, it must remain

powered off and stored in accordance with District procedures for the entire instructional day unless an exception has been approved by the school.

Students may **not** use personal electronic devices during the school day, including instructional time, lunch, recess, transitions, or other school activities, unless authorized by school personnel for an educational purpose or as otherwise permitted under District policy.

Smartwatches that function only as a timepiece may be worn during the school day. However, smartwatches with the ability to send or receive calls, text messages, internet communications, or notifications are considered personal electronic devices and must not be used during the school day.

Students who need access to a personal electronic device because of a documented medical need, an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a Section 504 Plan, or another approved reason should work with school administration to determine appropriate accommodations.

Parents and guardians who need to communicate with their child during the school day should contact the school office. Likewise, students who need to contact a parent or guardian during the school day may do so through the school office.

Students who do not follow the District's personal electronic device expectations may be subject to progressive disciplinary action, including confiscation of the device for the remainder of the school day. Repeated violations will be addressed in accordance with District policy.

Communication with Parents

One of our goals is to communicate with parents/guardians on a regular basis. Once parents/guardians complete the enrollment process, their email address will be added to receive school and district communications; however, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to keep an updated email address on file with the school.

The District utilizes ParentSquare as its primary communication platform for school announcements, reminders, emergency notifications, attendance information, and direct communication between families and staff. Parents/guardians are encouraged to activate their ParentSquare accounts and ensure that their contact information remains current so they can receive important updates in a timely manner.

The school website is also updated regularly, and parents are encouraged to use it as a resource to stay informed about school news and events. When seeking answers to questions, parents should first visit www.southfayette.org. Additionally, the District provides a newsletter update each Friday throughout the school year that is distributed via email and posted on the website under the Weekly Green Scene tab found at the top of each main page.

Deliveries to Students

The elementary school will not accept birthday gifts or other gifts (balloons, cookie bouquets, flowers, etc.) to be delivered to a student. We will continue to accept necessary items (eyeglasses, homework, lunch boxes, tennis shoes, etc.) to be delivered to the student. If a parent drops off an item that is not deemed necessary for the school day, the item will be held in the office and delivered to the student at the end of the day. We must be able to view any item that is being delivered to a student. The parent needs to notify the office if someone other than the parent is dropping off an item.

Student Behavior and Discipline

At South Fayette Elementary School, we believe that every student can learn and grow socially, emotionally, and behaviorally. We are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment where students are taught and encouraged to demonstrate positive behaviors aligned with **The South Fayette Way: Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Responsible.**

School staff explicitly teach behavioral expectations, reinforce positive choices, and use restorative and instructional approaches to help students develop self-regulation, problem-solving, and responsible decision-making skills. Families are valued partners in supporting student success.

Addressing Student Behavior

Teachers and staff address most classroom and school-based behaviors using developmentally appropriate interventions designed to teach and reinforce expected behaviors. Depending on the situation, these interventions may include but are not limited to:

- Verbal reminders and reteaching of expectations
- Restorative conversations or problem-solving conferences
- Reflection activities
- Opportunities to repair harm or restore relationships
- Classroom-based consequences that are logical, instructional, and developmentally appropriate
- Communication with parents or guardians
- Positive behavior supports and intervention planning

When behaviors become frequent, significantly disrupt the learning environment, or present safety concerns, the student may be referred to a building administrator for additional support and intervention.

Administrative Responses

When a student is referred to the office, administrators will investigate the incident, consider the developmental level of the student, the severity and frequency of the behavior, previous interventions, and any individual student needs before determining an appropriate response.

Possible responses may include, but are not limited to:

- Restorative conferences
- Parent or guardian conferences
- Behavior reflection and goal setting
- Temporary removal from the instructional setting when necessary to restore safety or learning
- Check-in/check-out or other behavioral supports
- Loss or restriction of specific privileges when appropriate and related to the behavior
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension when warranted by the seriousness of the behavior and in accordance with Pennsylvania law and Board Policy

Repeated or significant behavioral concerns may also result in the development of individualized intervention plans or referrals to appropriate student support teams.

Serious Misconduct

Behavior that threatens the safety of students, staff, or the school community requires immediate administrative intervention. Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical assault or fighting resulting in injury
- Threats of violence
- Possession or use of a weapon or dangerous object
- Possession, use, or distribution of prohibited substances
- Theft
- Vandalism
- Arson
- False alarms or bomb threats
- Extortion
- Other behaviors that substantially disrupt school operations or endanger others

Depending on the circumstances, responses may include emergency removal from class, suspension, recommendation for expulsion in accordance with Board policy, restitution for damages, referral to law enforcement, and other actions permitted by law.

Ongoing Behavioral Support

When a student demonstrates persistent behavioral challenges, school staff will collaborate with families to identify supports and interventions that promote student success. These supports may include behavioral assessments, individualized intervention plans, counseling services, participation in MTSS or PBIS interventions, or referrals to additional school-based supports.

Participation in extracurricular activities, field trips, celebrations, or other special events may be affected when student behavior creates significant safety concerns or substantially interferes with the educational experience. Such decisions are made on an individual basis, with consideration given to the student's needs, progress, and safety.

Detention

Detention may be assigned when classroom interventions and other appropriate supports have not been effective or when the nature of the behavior warrants additional consequences.

Parents or guardians will be notified prior to an after-school detention. Students are expected to complete academic work or reflection activities during detention. Transportation home following detention is the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

Failure to attend an assigned detention without an approved excuse may result in additional disciplinary action.

Suspension

In accordance with **22 Pa. Code §12.6** and applicable Board Policy, a suspension is the exclusion of a student from school for a period of **one to ten consecutive school days**.

Before a suspension is imposed, the student will be informed of the reason for the proposed suspension and given an opportunity to explain their version of the events. Prior notice is not required when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or presents an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process.

Parents or guardians will be notified promptly of any suspension. When a suspension exceeds three school days, the student and parent or guardian will be offered the opportunity to participate in an informal hearing consistent with Pennsylvania law.

Students who are suspended will be provided the opportunity to make up missed assignments, assessments, and instructional activities in accordance with district procedures.

Students with Disabilities

Disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities are implemented in accordance with the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Pennsylvania School Code, and applicable Board Policies.**

Students with disabilities are entitled to all procedural safeguards required by law. When disciplinary removals constitute a change of placement, the student's IEP Team will conduct a Manifestation Determination Review and determine appropriate educational services and supports as required by federal and state law.

Reconciliation Through Restorative Practices

RECONCILIATION

Invariably, students will break rules as stated in the diversity and equity, unlawful harassment, and bullying/cyberbullying policies in the Handbook. When this happens, students will need to re-enter the community for the community to heal. Reconciliation is a collaborative and interpersonal process that may include respectful dialogue as well as active listening about the event or occurrence in order to begin to reestablish healthy interactions and relationships. The District will work towards reconciliation through the use of restorative/transformative justice practices. These practices are defined as a way to hold individuals responsible for their actions, repair harm and hurt to victims, and provide resources and support to individuals who caused harm by reintegrating them back into the community. In other words, justice, according to restorative justice, is not an eye for an eye. Restorative justice centers mutual respect, dialogue, and a commitment to building and maintaining relationships as opposed to focusing solely on the misbehavior (Macready, 2009).

Restorative justice is constituted by a set of questions, which are always more transformative than definitive answers:

a. Who has been hurt and what are their needs?
b. Whose obligation is it to meet those needs (and what are their needs?)
c. Who else has been affected by this event?
d. What is a participatory process that engages all those impacted to decide what needs to be done?

Consequences and supports include but are not limited to: forms of mediation (if agreed upon by all parties), teacher-student-parent meetings, interactions with a school counselor/social worker, communication with teachers as needed, referrals to the SAP teams and restorative practices (reflection/improvement statements, courses on topics related to the offense(s) or other restorative practices). Restorative justice practices follow seven principles:

1. Meeting student needs

2. Providing accountability and support
3. Making things right
4. Viewing conflict as a learning opportunity
5. Building healthy learning communities
6. Restoring relationships
7. Addressing power imbalances.

These practices are consistent with the Association for Middle-Level Education and with Teaching for Tolerance's (www.tolerance.org) publication, *A Guide for Administrators, Counselors, and Teachers Responding to Hate and Bias at School.*

For an example on how to Build a More Forgiving Community, see the website below: https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_build_a_more_forgiving_community

Forgiveness is a complex process that involves individuals and the larger community and is positioned within past and present harms. The District will use restorative/transformative justice practices during the reconciliation process to work towards forgiveness. Forgiveness is an individual and internal process where the party/parties seek greater understanding of the event, occurrence or situation. Forgiveness is also a community process, that requires our highest aspirations and ideals to be reflected in our actions when harm is caused. As a learning community, we will create opportunities for students to increase their cultural and global competencies by learning how to make conscious, deliberate decisions to release feelings of resentment or vengeance toward a person or group who has harmed them. The District sees this as instrumental in growing and supporting collaborative and confident community members. (See page 11, South Fayette School District 2019-2022 Strategic Plan).

PUNITIVE VS. RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE

PUNITIVE	RESTORATIVE
"Misbehavior" defined as breaking school rules or letting school down.	"Misbehavior" defined as harm (emotional/mental/physical) done to one person/group by another.
Focus is on what happened and establishing blame or guilt.	Focus on problem-solving by expressing feelings and needs and exploring how to address problems in the future.
Adversarial relationship and process. Includes an authority figure with power to decide on penalty, in conflict with wrongdoer.	Dialogue and negotiation with everyone involved in communication and cooperation with each other.
Imposition of pain or unpleasantness to punish and deter/prevent.	Restitution as a means of restoring both parties, the goal being reconciliation and acknowledging responsibility for choices.
Attention to rules and adherence to due process.	Attention to relationships and achievement of a mutually desired outcome.
Conflict/wrongdoing represented as impersonal and abstract; individual versus school.	Conflict/wrongdoing recognized as interpersonal conflicts with opportunity for learning.
One social injury compounded by another.	Focus on repair of social injury/damage.
School community as spectators, represented by member of staff dealing with situation; those directly affected uninvolved and powerless.	School community involved in facilitating restoration; those affected taken into consideration; empowerment.

Accountability defined in terms of receiving punishment.	Accountability defined as understanding impact of actions, taking responsibility for choices, and suggesting ways to repair harm.
PUNITIVE DISCIPLINE ASKS…	**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ASKS…**
What rule was broken?	Who was harmed?
Who broke it?	What are their needs?
How should they be punished?	Who will be held accountable for making things right?
PUNITIVE DISCIPLINE PRACTICES…*	**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTICES…***
Lecturing Students	Student-Student Mediations
Self-Directed Detentions	Staff-Student Mediations
In School Suspension	Peace Circles
Out of School Suspension	Reinstatement Conversations
Expulsion	Community Building Circles

*It should be noted that punitive and restorative discipline can, and will be, used in tandem. However, each discipline infraction will involve a Restorative Justice practice, but not necessarily a Punitive Discipline practice. For example, when a student is returning from suspension they will, at a minimum, they should also engage in a restorative reinstatement conversation.

Macready, T. (2009). Learning social responsibility in schools: A restorative practice. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 25(3),* 211-220.

The Denver School-Based Restorative Practices Partnership
Step by Step Guide to Implementation

Oakland Unified School District Restorative Justice Implementation Guide: Whole School Approach

Dismissal

AM Kindergarten Dismissal

AM Kindergarten buses will depart the elementary school at 11:45 a.m. AM kindergarten students on the parent pickup list will be brought to the hallway outside the Greeter's Station. Parents will need to sign the pickup list with the Greeter before taking their child. Parents who pick up their children on a daily or a regular schedule should complete a Daily Dismissal Form or the Parent Pick Up Google Doc and return it to the office. Parents should park in the front parking lot if picking up their child at the end of AM Kindergarten.

PM Kindergarten through Second Grade Dismissal

Please note elementary students will be dismissed to the buses starting at 3:23 p.m. Elementary students will be dismissed daily to parents at 3:23 p.m. and parents need to arrive in time for dismissal. Parents who pick up their children on a daily or a regular schedule should complete a Daily Dismissal Form or the Parent Pick Up Google Doc and return it to the office. Parents who pick up their children are to enter the school through door B3 located near the Discovery Garden and sign the dismissal sheet at the sign-out table in the main hallway outside the cafeteria and gym (all-purpose room). Children are dismissed to the all-purpose room and parents need to wait in the hallway to pick up their children instead of going to the classroom. (Please note that we do not dismiss children from the elementary office at the end of the day.) Parents should park in the stadium parking lot if picking up their child/children at the end of the school day.

Change in a Child's Dismissal Arrangement for the Day
A note or a phone call from a parent is necessary if there is a change in your child's dismissal arrangements for the day. If the office does not have a record of the dismissal change through a phone call or a note from the parent or guardian, the child will follow his/her normal routine. For the safety of the children, we cannot take verbal dismissal changes from a child. If a child is questioning their routine, please note that we may hold the child in the office after dismissal time until we contact the parents for verification. This is for the safety of the child. Thank you for your cooperation and help with this matter to keep all of our children safe.

Diversity and Equity

School Board Policy 256 - Educational Environment/Anti-Intimidation

Introduction:
Hate will never be welcome or tolerated in the South Fayette Township School District (SFTSD). Every student and every educator and staff member — regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, citizenship status, mental and physical ability status, and/or religion — is a valued member of our SFTSD community. The District recognizes that we must remain steadfast in our commitment to foster an environment where all members of the community feel welcome, respected and safe in all of our schools, buildings and facilities. In order to nurture a stronger community, the District is also committed to providing an environment and practices for reconciliation that not only include reflection and restoration but also creates the conditions for forgiveness.

Preamble:
The South Fayette Township School District believes that equity, diversity and inclusion are integral to the District's vision, mission and goals. Addressing the needs of all learners requires recognition of the inherent value of diversity and acknowledgment that educational excellence requires a commitment to equity in the opportunities provided to students and their resulting experiences.

In order to eradicate institutional bias of any kind, including implicit or unintentional biases and prejudices that negatively affect a positive learning community, and to eliminate disparities in educational experiences for students from underserved and underrepresented populations, the District shall proactively endeavor to identify class and cultural biases as well as practices, policies, and institutional barriers that negatively influence student learning, perpetuate opportunity gaps, and impede equal access to all students for full participation in the SFTSD community.

Purpose:
The purpose of this policy is to support an equitable learning environment that honors and respects the diversity of the students attending our schools and living in our community. Behaviors that create an unsafe, intimidating or hostile learning environment for students will not be tolerated and allegations of such conduct will be investigated.

Definition:
Intimidation of any group is defined as: Words and actions directed toward the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity of another individual constitute intimidation when such words and actions have the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's educational performance, or creating an unwelcome, intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Diversity and Equity
The District believes that intimidation of any kind derails our efforts to educate students and enable them to thrive locally and in a global society. Students who commit the offense of intimidation respect to the actual or perceived

race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity of another individual, whether such conduct occurs on school grounds or during school-sponsored trips, events or activities, will be disciplined and mandated to reconcile through restorative practices.
The following consequences relate to intimidation as outlined above:

INFRACTION OF INTIMIDATION	DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCE	RESTORATIVE / RECONCILIATION
Including, but not limited to the use of language (name calling-verbal, social media, offensive gestures or pictures, use of symbols of hate including but not limited to the Confederate Flag and the swastika, wearing ethnic symbols in a manner in which they are unintended and misrepresented, threats, defacing and destroying property, vandalism, graffiti, destruction of symbols, retaliation.	Appropriate discipline will be implemented per the District's discipline policy/procedures.	Support may include but is not limited to: mediation (if agreed upon by all parties), teacher-student-parent meetings, interactions with a school counselor/social worker, meetings with the Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging, communication with teachers as needed, referrals to the Student Assistance Program, restorative lessons and service- oriented opportunities.

The following categories of severity will be used to inform the progressive discipline model as outlined in the respective school handbooks.

INSENSITIVITY	DISCRIMINATION	INTIMIDATION
Definition: Showing a lack of feeling or concern for others because of actual or perceived difference of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity.	Definition: Purposeful unjust or prejudicial treatment of someone due to their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity.	Definition: Words and actions directed toward the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity of another individual constitute intimidation when such words and actions have the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's educational performance, or creating an unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Authority related to Diversity and Equity Policy

Shared responsibilities of community members

Each student shall be responsible to respect the human dignity and rights of others in order to foster an atmosphere free from insensitivity, discrimination and intimidation.

Each teacher shall be responsible for creating a safe learning environment for all students by fostering a culture that is free from insensitivity, discrimination and intimidation of any kind.

Building administrators shall work to create a community within each building that does not tolerate insensitivity, discrimination and intimidation of any kind.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Such administrative regulations shall be reviewed annually with students, parents, and/or guardians.

The Superintendent or designee in cooperation with other appropriate administrators shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board of School Directors.

Dress

Although there is not a dress code at South Fayette Elementary School, there is an expectation that students are properly groomed and dressed neatly. Students are not permitted to wear clothing that displays indecent pictures or writing or allusion to drugs or alcohol. Clothing should always fit appropriately, and student's underwear must always be covered. Students are not permitted to wear hats in the school building. ***Proper footwear*** must be worn at all times. Students who wish to play on the large playground equipment must wear athletic footwear. Tops with thin straps and short shorts are not appropriate school dress. Students are not permitted to wear heavy neck chains to school because the child could become entangled while playing, posing the risk of a serious injury.

Students are not permitted to wear shoes with wheels (shoes with wheels tucked into the sole of the shoe) to school or on school grounds because they are not safe in our school environment. Whether the student is in the hallway or outside the building, we cannot take a chance that he or she will fall or cause someone else to fall due to the student "skating" rather than walking. We can never guarantee a child will not slip and fall or have some other kind of accident while in our care. However, when we see the potential for harm, we attempt to take all precautions to prevent it.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

School Board Policy #227 prohibits students from possessing, using and selling drugs and/or alcohol or look-alike substances on school property. This policy can be located on the district's webpage.

Electronics (including the iPads), Toys, and Collectables

Kindergarten, first-grade and second-grade students will be permitted to use their district-issued iPad during the school day. The iPads will always go through the district's security filter when the iPad is at school and connected to the District's network. However, parents will be responsible for monitoring the use of the iPad at home. Personal electronic devices are permitted, but will be used at the teacher's discretion in the classroom. Upon request of any staff member or teacher, students must immediately show their device screen without turning the device over, off, locking it, or activating a screen saver. Students are **discouraged** from bringing their own electronics, toys, games, trading cards, action figures, collectibles, etc. to school. At no time is the use of electronic devices in locker rooms or restrooms permitted. We are **not** responsible for students' personal devices that are lost, broken, or stolen. The district will only repair or replace district-issued devices according to the signed parent contract. Students are not permitted to trade items nor are they permitted to exchange items for cash.

Students(s'):

- Must adhere to the Acceptable Use of the Internet and Bullying/Cyberbullying policies whether accessing the Internet through the school's Wi-Fi or a cellular provider.
- The iPads will always go through the district's security filter when the iPad is at school. However, parents will be responsible for monitoring the use of the iPad at home.
- Taking pictures, video, or audio of individuals for any reason without permission of a teacher or staff member is prohibited.
- Actions considered inappropriate offline are considered inappropriate online.
- Are prohibited from taking pictures of tests, texting other students their answers, or engaging in conduct that compromises academic integrity in any way.
- Use of devices is prohibited in bathrooms, at recess, and while riding the school bus.
- Devices are prohibited during drills that could compromise safety.

Emergency Cancellation/Delay of School

School cancellations, delays, and early dismissals will be posted on the South Fayette Township School District website, communicated through Parent Square, and broadcasted via local media.

Parents should always have an emergency plan and appropriate childcare arrangements in place in the event of an unexpected, emergency dismissal. It is also important to keep your emergency contact information up to date at all times.

2 Hour Delay Schedule

Morning Kindergarten	11:00 a.m. – 12:39 p.m.
Afternoon Kindergarten	1:44 p.m. – 3:23 p.m.
First Grade/Second Grade	11:00 a.m. – 3-23 p.m.

In the event of a two-hour delay, both morning and afternoon kindergarten will be in session and will follow a modified schedule. Morning kindergarten children will be picked up in the morning two hours later than their scheduled time and will arrive home one hour later than scheduled. Afternoon kindergarten will be picked up one hour later than scheduled and will arrive home at their regularly scheduled time.

K-Plus students will follow the delay schedule of students in grades one through four. They will be picked up in the morning two hours later than their scheduled time and will arrive home at their regularly scheduled time.

If you believe the roads in your area are too dangerous for travel, parents/guardians always have the final determination as to whether to send their child to school on a given day. While we make every effort to plan for and make the best decisions possible in the timeframe, we have to make determinations, untimely snow squalls, icy conditions, and winter weather issues may unexpectedly occur.

Emergency Drills

Monthly fire drills and other periodic emergency preparedness drills will be held throughout the year. Classroom teachers will issue specific instructions that must be followed exactly. For active intruder drills, the District utilizes the ALICE certified training protocol. Staff and students are trained on age-appropriate responses to these emergencies as deemed by ALICE.

ELL(English Language Learners)

South Fayette Township School District offers a K-12 English as a Second Language (ESL) Program. The ESL program is designed to provide non-native, English-speaking students with the language skills they need to participate successfully in content area classes. To meet this goal, ELL instruction addresses the ELL and Pennsylvania Academic Standards in Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening to enable full participation. The emphasis placed on achieving benchmarks is adjusted to the needs of the individual student. An underlying objective is to provide a source of support as the student seeks to understand and adapt to his or her new cultural and academic setting. The ELL teacher works to develop an appreciation of the students' strengths within the school setting and to ensure full access to the range of educational opportunities available at South Fayette Township School District. If you have any questions regarding the English as a Second Language Program, please call Dr. Kelle Oliver, Director of Student Support Services, at (412) 221-4542, Extension 429.

Extended Day Services

Extended Day Services offers a before and after school program at South Fayette Schools for students. This program includes physical activities, arts and crafts, group games and contests, snacks as well as homework assistance. Parents can use the program on either a full-time, part-time or flextime basis. Parents contract with and pay Extended Day Services directly. For further information or to enroll your child, please call Extended Day Services at (412) 221-1980. This information is provided as a courtesy and for reference purposes relative to Extended Day Services. Inclusion in our handbook does not constitute an endorsement from the district.

Faculty Room

Please note that volunteers are not permitted in the faculty room between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. because this is a time that faculty members are eating lunch. Children should not be in the faculty room at any time.

Field Trips

Students in kindergarten through second-grade will have the opportunity to participate in one field trip with their grade level. Written parental permission is required for the student to participate. The grade level team of teachers determines the location of the field trip that correlates with the curriculum. If there is a charge for the field trip, we request that parents write a check to South Fayette School District. Please do not send cash.

Teachers often request that parents volunteer to chaperone a field trip. ***The number of parents asked to chaperone will depend on the destination of the field trip and the needed adult to pupil ratio. The teachers will determine an appropriate adult to pupil ratio so that appropriate supervision is always provided. There are a limited number of seats available for parent chaperones on the school bus.*** For the safety of all students, students are to ride the school bus to and from the field trip. If there is a charge for the activity, parents will need to pay for their admission.

Siblings are not permitted to attend field trips. Only ***legal guardians*** may chaperone. Chaperones must pay ahead of time to "confirm" their attendance on the trip. Please note that our campus and our buses are smoke-free zones. We realize that there are designated places to smoke in many of the places that we visit, but we request that parents refrain from smoking when accompanying students on a field trip. Students who do not attend the field trip will stay in a designated classroom or the office for the day and they will be given class work to complete.

Any parent or guardian wishing to act as a chaperone for the field trip must have the following clearances on file with the school district at least one month prior to the field trip date:
Act 114 - FBI Background Clearance
Act 34 - PA Criminal History
Act 151 - Child Abuse Clearance

Fall Festival Rules

The Board of School Directors approved the option of ***elementary*** students, employees and parents wearing costumes during the annual October party. We will celebrate Halloween at South Fayette Elementary with a classroom party sponsored by the PTA. The students, employees as well as parents are permitted to wear costumes during the party.

To balance the desire for fun and the necessity of maintaining a respectful, safe school environment, the following costume guidelines ***must*** be adhered to by **students, parents and employees** wearing costumes:

- Students will be permitted to put on their costume before the start of their party.
- Halloween costumes should be carried to school. Students will not be permitted to ride the bus wearing a costume nor will they be permitted to wear the costume for the entire school day. Costumes will be limited to the party.
- Participants need to be able to dress themselves, and the costume needs to fit over school clothing.
- Participants need to wear tennis shoes or other appropriate school footwear.
- Masks or other full face coverings are **not permitted**.
- Costumes depicting monsters, death, or other frightening characters **are not permitted**.
- Items resembling guns, swords or weapons **are not permitted.**
- Staff must wear their ID badges with picture and name visible at all times.
- Parents must wear their visitors' badge in a visible place at all times.
- All students will need to remove their costumes prior to dismissal. Students will not be permitted to exit the classroom or ride the bus while wearing their costume.
- The PTA, faculty, and administration are not responsible for lost or damaged Halloween attire.

Harassment Policy

School Board Policy #103 prohibits harassment of any kind. The South Fayette Township School District is committed to maintaining a learning/working environment free from sexual harassment and harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin/ethnicity, ancestry, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity of any student or school personnel at school or any school sponsored activity. This board policy can be located on the district's webpage.

Health Screening Schedule

GRADE	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Physical	X						X					X	
Dental	X			X				X					
Hearing	X	X	X	X				X				X	
Vision	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Height/Weight	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Scoliosis	X						X	X					
Immunizations	X												

The Department of Health of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania requires the above health screenings.

1. **Physical and Dental Examinations**

a. For continuity of care, your *private* doctor and dentist are best suited to complete these examinations. Examinations done by private physicians or dentists can be dated up to one year before that grade level. For example, if your child will be entering kindergarten in September and you choose to have your private doctor perform their kindergarten physical, it can be done after June 30 of the previous year through the end of their kindergarten year. Forms for private physical or dental examinations of a pupil of school age are available at the school nurse's office, or under the pupil services section of the school website.

b. Physical and/or dental exam can be performed in school by the school physician or school dentist, during the second semester. Examinations performed at school are at no cost to the student and only with written consent from the parent/guardian. No immunizations are given at school. The parents/guardians are requested at the beginning of the school year to complete a form stating their desire to have a school or

private physical or dental examination according to the grade requirements. If desired, parents may attend these examinations.

2. **The school nurse performs Hearing, Vision, Height, Weight Screenings**. Parents/guardians are notified if a student failed or needs a follow-up examine by their private physician

Homework

Homework provides students with opportunities to practice, reinforce, and extend the learning that takes place during the school day. When thoughtfully designed, homework helps students develop responsibility, organization, independence, and effective study habits while strengthening the home-school partnership.

The South Fayette Elementary School PTA provides each student with a homework folder. Students in first and second grade also receive student agendas to help organize assignments, communicate with families, and build organizational skills.

Families play an important role by establishing consistent routines, encouraging effort, and providing a supportive environment for learning. Students are encouraged to complete assignments independently whenever possible. If a student is consistently unable to complete homework or experiences ongoing difficulty, families are encouraged to communicate with the classroom teacher so that appropriate supports can be identified. When needed, the school team may collaborate with families to develop strategies that support the student's success.

To support family time and student well-being, homework will generally not be assigned over holiday breaks, long weekends, or on evenings when the school sponsors district- or PTA-sponsored family events.

Effective Homework

At South Fayette Elementary School, effective homework is:

- Purposeful and directly connected to current classroom learning.
- Designed to reinforce or extend skills that have already been taught.
- Appropriate for the student's age and developmental level.
- Reasonable in length and able to be completed independently by most students.
- Focused on quality rather than quantity.
- Clearly communicated so students understand the expectations.
- Designed to encourage responsibility, organization, and positive work habits.
- Inclusive of meaningful family engagement when appropriate, such as conversations, reading together, or sharing personal experiences—not requiring parents or guardians to teach new content.

Families are encouraged to communicate with the classroom teacher if homework becomes consistently challenging, causes significant frustration, or requires more support than expected. Working together allows us to ensure homework remains a positive and meaningful part of each student's learning experience.

Home Education Policy

School Board Policy #137, Home Education Policy, outlines the requirements for a home education program and can be located on the district's webpage.

Illness or Injury

The school nurse is in the elementary school for the entire day. When children are ill or hurt, they should report to the nurse's office. The nurse will assess the seriousness of the situation and determine whether parents should be called. We cannot treat injuries or provide first aid for accidents that happen outside of the school.

When students exhibit one or more of the following symptoms they may be sent home: fever greater than 100 degrees, chills, vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, inflamed or watery eyes believed to be infectious, continuous coughing or runny nose, lethargy, unusual pallor or any condition that prevents the student from concentrating or participating in regular classroom activities.

Students with evidence of a communicable disease such as chickenpox, measles, mumps, strep throat, influenza, impetigo, etc. will be sent home and should remain at home until they are no longer contagious (refer to your personal physician.) Parents of students with evidence of head lice will be contacted. The district nurses follow the recommendations set forth by the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Additionally, their classmates may be checked for evidence of head lice, and parents will be notified via email that a lice screening was performed on their child. Students with head lice should be treated with a lice treatment and checked by the school nurse prior to returning to school.

Students may return to school if they have been fever free (without the use of medication), nausea free, and/or diarrhea free for 24 hours from the cessation of symptoms, that is, eating, drinking, sleeping and playing normally. For contagious illnesses such as pink eye, ringworm, or pinworm (enterobiasis) students may return to school once prescribed drops or ointments are given.

Immunization Requirements

The following immunizations are required as a condition of attendance at school for the entrance of all beginners or initial enrollments, and apply to children in ALL grades (K-12):

- **Diphtheria** Four or more properly-spaced doses of diphtheria toxoid. One dose should be given on or after the fourth birthday. This is usually given as DTap or DTP.
- **Tetanus** Four or more properly-spaced doses of tetanus toxoid. One dose should be given on or after the fourth birthday. This is usually given as DTap or DTP.
- **Acellular Pertussis** Four or more properly-spaced doses. One dose should be given on or after the fourth birthday. This is usually given as DTap or DTP.

- **Poliomyelitis** Fourth dose on or after the fourth birthday and at least 6 months after the previous dose given. Three doses of polio vaccine (oral or inactivated injectable) are acceptable if the third dose is after the fourth birthday and at least 6 months after the previous dose given)

- **Measles (Rubeola)** Two properly-spaced doses of live attenuated measles vaccine (usually given as combined measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine) with the first dose to be administered at 12 months of age or older, or serological proof of immunity.
- **German Measles (Rubella)** Two doses of live attenuated rubella vaccine (usually given as combined measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine) administered at 12 months of age or older, or serological proof of immunity.
- **Mumps** Two doses of live attenuated mumps vaccine (usually given as combined measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine) administered with the first dose administered at 12 months of age or older, or a physician's diagnosis of mumps disease indicated by a written record signed by a physician or his/her designee.

- **Hepatitis B** Three properly spaced doses of Hepatitis B vaccine.
- **Varicella** Two doses of Varicella (chicken pox) vaccine or written statement from a physician indicating month and year of disease or serologic proof of immunity.

Children in Grades 7-12 need additional immunizations for attendance:

- **MCV** Two doses given. The first dose is given between the ages of 11-15. The second dose is ***required*** at age 16 or entry into 12th grade. If the dose was given:
    - At age 16 years or older, only one dose is required.
- One dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) is required

Section 1402 of the Public School Code requires each child of school age be measured for height and weight by the school nurse. This growth screening enables school nurses to:
1. Monitor growth and development patterns of students
2. Identify students who may be undernourished or overweight
3. Notify parents of screening results with a recommendation to share findings with the student's health care provider for further evaluation and intervention, if necessary.

We will be using a CDC computer program to record and monitor each student's growth pattern. A letter will be mailed home annually with each child's BMI. The letter will indicate whether the child is underweight, normal, or overweight. Follow-up with the child's health care provider will be recommended when appropriate.

Invitations for Parties

Invitations may ***not*** be distributed at school unless there is an invitation for ***every child in the class*** or ***boys have an invitation for every boy in the class*** or ***girls have an invitation for every girl in the class***. The practice of giving an invitation to a select group of children causes hard feelings and is not something we want to promote in our school. If parents are inviting a select group of students, parents will need to find an alternative way to distribute the invitations. ***Please note that teachers and principals' assistants are not permitted to give out children's addresses.***

Kindergarten Schedule

Morning Kindergarten 9:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Afternoon Kindergarten 12:38 p.m. – 3:23 p.m.

Kindergarten Schedule on a Two Hour Late Start

Morning Kindergarten 11:00 a.m. – 12:39 p.m.

Afternoon Kindergarten 1:44 p.m. – 3:23 p.m.

Morning kindergarten children will be picked up in the morning two hours later than their scheduled time and will arrive home one hour later than scheduled. Afternoon kindergarten will be picked up one hour later than scheduled and will arrive home at their regularly scheduled time.

Extended Day kindergarten students (K-Plus) will follow the delay schedule of students in grades one through five. They will be picked up in the morning two hours later than their scheduled time and will arrive home at their regularly scheduled time.

On early release (dismissal) days, bus dismissal will start at 12:00 p.m. On these days, there will be no school scheduled for PM kindergarten students. Please check the district calendar for dates of early dismissal days.

Lost and Found

Sometimes children misplace or lose items that they bring to school. These items are placed in the lost and found which is located inside the parent pick-up doors (door B3). Items that are not claimed by the end of June will be donated to charity. Children are not permitted to take items out of lost and found that are not theirs.

McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act

In compliance with the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, South Fayette Township School District makes every attempt to identify all children within the District that may be experiencing homelessness. Under McKinney-Vento all school districts are responsible for identifying students experiencing homelessness and connecting them with the resources needed to ensure academic success. You may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act.

Children who are experiencing homelessness may qualify for assistance with free school lunch, school supplies/materials, tutoring, and transportation so that they can remain in their school of origin throughout the duration of their homeless episode. Additionally, the district partners with local community agencies such as the Bridgeville Community Food Bank, Salvation Army (Chartiers Valley Service Center), Goodwill (Heidelberg Outlet), and South Hills Interfaith Ministry (SHIM).

Who is considered homeless? Children or youth living in a shelter, transitional housing, hotel/motel, vehicle, campground, on the street or doubled up with friends or family due to a lack of alternate resources are considered homeless. An unaccompanied homeless youth is a child or youth that is not in the care of their parent or legal guardian and meets the definition of homeless under McKinney-Vento.

Where can students experiencing homelessness attend school? The law indicates that homeless students have the right to remain in their school origin (the school they attended at the time of the homeless episode or last school attended) through the end of the school year in which they find permanent housing, provided it is in the child/youth's best interest.

If through consultation between the school and the family and/or unaccompanied youth it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in the student's best interest, then the student has the right to immediately enroll in the school that non-homeless students living in the attendance area in which the child/youth is actually living are eligible to attend, even if they do not have all of the required documentation. Additionally, unaccompanied homeless youth have the right to immediately enroll in school, even if they do not have a legal guardian present. What support can school districts provide to homeless students? Homeless students are eligible for support and services to remove barriers to educational success. This may include transportation to the school of origin, free meals, referrals to physical/mental health providers, clothing to meet school requirements, access to school supplies and resources, assistance with credit recovery, tutoring supports, expedited evaluations and assistance to participate in school activities including parent engagement opportunities, sports, club, etc.

If you believe you know of families or individual students that may qualify for this service, please contact Dr. Kellee Oliver, Director of Student Support Services at raandler@southfayette.org or 412.221.4542 x429.

Medical Insurance

South Fayette Township School District does not provide medical insurance for injuries occurring to students. Insurance coverage for injuries occurring to students during the school day is the responsibility of the parents. South Fayette Township School District offers a low-cost supplemental insurance policy to parents on an annual basis. Information about the policy is sent home with students at the beginning of the school year and is included in the district calendar. For additional information, parents may contact the Director of Finance at (412) 221-4542, extension 406.

Medication at School

Under no circumstances will school personnel diagnose, provide or prescribe any medicine for a student. Medication shall include all pills, drugs, and medicines prescribed by a physician and any over-the-counter medicines. No herbal remedies will be given during the school day.

The South Fayette School District requests that medicine is given at home during non-school hours. However, it recognizes that sometimes it is essential for medication to be administered at school. **Any medication to be administered during school hours must include both physician and parent signature on a written request.**

Parents who send cough drops to school for their child also need to send a note to the nurse. The type of cough drop needs to be verified. If the cough drop contains an over-the-counter medication, a doctor's order will need to be given to the school nurse prior to the student being permitted to take the cough drop at school. Please note that cough drops can be a choking hazard especially in the younger grades where the students are smaller and less adept at handling these types of hard, small lozenges. In order to follow safety precautions, if a student should need to take a cough drop, please note that the lozenge will need to be finished in the nurse's office before the child returns to class. Students are not permitted to give cough drops to other students.

Prescription Medication

a) A written request must be submitted by the parent/guardian requesting the school nurse administer medication as prescribed by a physician.
b) Physician's signed request (note or medication form) authorizing the administration of the prescribed medication.
c) Prescription medication must be in a pharmacy-labeled bottle containing:
    1. Name and telephone number of the pharmacy
    2. Pupil's name
    3. Name of the physician
    4. Name of the drug
    5. Prescribed dose and times of administration
    6. Rx number

Non-Prescription (over-the-counter) Medication

a) A written request must be submitted by the parent/guardian requesting the school nurse administer over-the-counter medication as prescribed by a physician.
b) A physician's signed request (note or medication form) authorizing the administration of all over-the-counter medication.
c) Over-the-counter medication must be in the *original manufacturer's package* and imprinted with the dosage instructions that are typically found on labeled bottles, blister packs, tubes or cans.

Storage of Medication

Medication shall be kept in a secured appropriate storage area in the health office. Students are **not** permitted to keep medication with them.

Transportation of Medication to School

All medication shall be brought to school by the parent and kept in the health office. If this is not possible, the pharmacy-labeled container or original manufacturer's package must be sent to school in a sealed envelope with a note signed by the parent/guardian stating the number of tablets being sent to school. The nurse will verify this information with a phone call to the parent/guardian.

Request for Administration of Medication During School Hours Form

This form is available in the health office and a sample is included in the back of the student handbook. The form is not essential to use as long as all the requested information is included in a written note.

Medication Administration
All medications shall be administered by the school nurse or self-administered by the student upon the physician's written order. Only in an emergency shall a school employee other than the school nurse administer medication to a student. A parent or legal guardian may come to school to administer medication to their child in the nurse's office.

Under **emergency** medical situations such as anaphylactic shock, the school physician has ordered certain medications, such as epinephrine (EpiPen or Epi-Pen Jr.), to be administered. Please refer to the District website to view our District's current standing medication orders signed by our school physician. Parents should notify the school nurse if they have any questions or concerns regarding the District's standing orders for medication. Health office information can be found on the District website under District Services and then under Nursing Services.

** Section 1414.2(g) allows parents/guardians to request an exemption to the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector for their student. In order to request this exemption, contact the School Nurse to make an appointment to discuss this decision, review, and sign the opt-out form.

South Fayette Township School District: Standing Orders
The list below outlines the district's current Standing Orders. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your respective school's nurse.

ES/IS List

- Hydrocortisone 1% or 0.5%, Calamine, or Caladryl lotion for minor rashes or insect bites.
- Throat lozenges, sprays, or warm salt water gargles.
- Afrin Spray 2 sprays on Q tip, rub inside nose, pinch nose- for prolonged nosebleeds.
- Hydrogen peroxide, alcohol, first aid/burn cream, Triple Antibiotic Ointment, Bacitracin, Foille Ointment, and Neosporin Ointment for abrasions, minor burns, lacerations, and puncture wounds.
- Sting Kill Topical Anesthetic Swabs for insect bites.
- Saline, Opti-free, or Multi-Purpose Contact Solution on students with contact lenses,
- Natural tears for students without contact lenses for irritated eyes.
- Blistex or Anbesol for oral issues.
- 2 puffs Albuterol inhaler to staff/students x 1 dose for severe shortness of breath, wheezing, severe coughing-for emergency situations.
- Intranasal Naloxone to a person who is strongly suspected to be experiencing an opioid overdose according to attached Naloxone guidelines and procedure.
- Epinephrine available for the life threatening emergency treatment of allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) to insect bites or stings, foods, drugs, or other allergens, as well as idiopathic or exercise-induced anaphylaxis. Epinephrine 0.3 mg (adult) : for individuals over 66 pounds, Epinephrine 0.15mg (child) : for individuals 33-66 pounds. For individuals having a more mild allergic reaction, Benadryl (diphenhydramine) or Zyrtec (cetirizine) may be administered by a nurse. Doses of these medications may be weight dependent for children under 12 years of age. Parents will be notified if Benadryl/Zyrtec is required. Parents/EMS will be notified if emergency epinephrine is required.

Self-Administration of Inhalers
Students in the South Fayette Township School District will be allowed to carry and self-administer their metered dose inhaler (MDI) medication in school as needed for asthma and other respiratory conditions. The inhaler may be used to alleviate and/or prevent the onset of asthmatic symptoms. This procedure includes dosages required at school, on school-sponsored transportation, or at any activity, event, or program sponsored by or in which the pupil's school is participating.

To ensure your child's health and safety, you and your child's physician will need to complete a medication order and authorization form, and return it to the school nurse. This authorization shall provide the name of the drug, the dose, the times when the medication is to be taken, and the diagnosis or reason the medicine is needed. It shall also include any serious reaction that may occur in conjunction with the use of the medication. Also, this authorization relieves the school of responsibility for the benefits or consequences of the medication. It also acknowledges that the school bears no responsibility for ensuring that the medication is taken.

The nurse will review proper MDI administration technique with your child and evaluate that self-administration is safe and appropriate. You and your child must then sign the self-administration assessment and contract form.

All children in grades K - 12 must notify the school nurse immediately following each use of an inhaler, and sign off such self-administration on the medication record.

The student will be held responsible for keeping their inhaler in a safe place that is not accessible to other students. If any irresponsible behavior is observed in the use of the inhaler, such as sharing medication with another student, the inhaler will immediately be confiscated, and the parent will be notified of the loss of the privilege to self-administer.

It is highly recommended that you keep an additional inhaler in the health office should your child forget his/her inhaler.

Money

Students should not bring large sums of money to school because sometimes the money gets misplaced or lost. We encourage parents to write personal checks when the children need money to pay for different things. Students are not permitted to sell items in school in exchange for money.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Student Assistance Program (SAP)

South Fayette Elementary School is committed to supporting the academic, behavioral, social, and emotional success of every student. To ensure that all students receive the support they need to thrive, the school utilizes a **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)** and the **Student Assistance Program (SAP).**

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

MTSS is a proactive, schoolwide framework that uses student data to identify strengths, monitor progress, and provide increasingly targeted instruction and interventions based on individual student needs.

Students may receive additional academic or behavioral support when classroom data, district assessments, teacher observations, or progress monitoring indicate that supplemental instruction or intervention would be beneficial. These supports are designed to help students achieve success while maintaining high expectations for all learners.

Teachers, specialists, administrators, and other school professionals regularly collaborate to review student progress, evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, and make data-informed decisions about next steps. Families are valued partners throughout this process and are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher regarding any academic or behavioral concerns.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a Pennsylvania state-supported process designed to help identify and remove barriers to learning that may interfere with a student's academic success, attendance, behavior, or overall well-being. These barriers may include concerns related to mental health, emotional well-being, substance use, family challenges, or other factors impacting school performance.

Students may be referred to SAP by school staff, parents or guardians, or through self-referral, when appropriate. The SAP team works collaboratively with families to identify concerns, recommend appropriate school-based supports, and connect families with community resources when needed. Participation in recommended services is voluntary and occurs in partnership with parents or guardians.

Families with concerns about their child's academic progress, behavior, attendance, or social-emotional well-being are encouraged to begin by contacting their child's classroom teacher or school counselor. School staff will work collaboratively with families to determine the most appropriate supports through MTSS, SAP, or other available resources.

Non-Resident

School Board Policy #202 permits students to enroll in the South Fayette School District tuition-free for 45 school days immediately preceding occupancy of a newly constructed or purchased residency. Prior to enrolling children in our schools, parents need to complete and submit a non-resident application with documentation to the Office of the Superintendent for approval prior to their child/ren starting school. The forms and further information in regard to this is available in the elementary office.

If occupancy is not acquired by the end of the 45 school days and the student and his/her parents desire to continue enrollment in South Fayette School District, then applicable tuition must be paid to the South Fayette School District as per the annual approved rate. Failure to provide documentation as noted in the policy will result in tuition being charged from the first day of the student(s) entering the South Fayette School District. Tuition rates shall be determined in accordance with the statute of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

We will not transport a student to and from new construction or a purchased home until the family has an occupancy permit and becomes a resident of the new home. Also, please note that the school district does not take responsibility for transporting to or from school any student residing outside of the school district boundaries.

Opening Exercises

Teachers will develop an opening exercise routine in their classroom to be utilized daily. This routine should include the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, the Alma Mater, and Our School Song. The children may stand during the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, the Alma Mater, and Our School Song. Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the flag on the basis of personal belief or religious convictions. Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate. Students who wish to refrain from such participation shall remain respectfully silent through the flag salute and Pledge of Allegiance. Students whose manners or actions are disruptive during the Pledge of Allegiance or the flag salute will be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by school officials.

Open House

Parents, students, family members, community members and those interested in our school are cordially invited to attend our **Celebration of Excellence** in the spring. This is an excellent opportunity to visit our school and enjoy the accomplishments of our children.

Orientation

Parents and students in the elementary school are invited to attend **Meet the Teacher** on the Monday before the first day of school. Students and parents will attend between 2:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. The purpose of the visit is to allow the children to meet their new teacher, visit their new classroom, and gather information regarding grade level curriculum.

Outside Counseling

In the event of a serious situation impacting our school or community, the South Fayette Township School District may enlist the assistance of outside counseling agencies and resources to help students and faculty. Outside counseling will be provided by professional counseling agencies that have experience in helping students and faculty members cope with the situation. If you have further questions regarding this or do not want your child to participate, please contact the Elementary Guidance Counselors at 412-221-4542 ext. 335 or ext. 355.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

We encourage parents to arrange for conferences on an as-needed basis throughout the year by contacting the teacher directly. Parents need to schedule an appointment to meet with the teacher. We regret that we cannot accommodate unscheduled requests for a conference because of the teachers' schedules. Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled one time during the school year. The conference will be scheduled at the end of the first grading period.

Parking

All vehicles are to be parked in a designated parking area. Vehicles are not to be parked in the driveway in front of the school or on the road around the school because they block traffic. Do not park in the cafeteria entrance driveway as this is reserved for school service vehicles only. Please note the handicapped parking spots are to be used by visitors with a handicapped license plate or a handicapped parking tag visually displayed in the vehicle. Vehicles that are illegally parked may be ticketed.

Pets

Pets are **not** permitted in the school building at any time or outside the building during the school day. We appreciate your understanding.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

At South Fayette Township School District, we are committed to fostering a positive, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students. Our approach to Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) is designed to enhance the overall school climate by promoting and recognizing positive behaviors, thereby reducing disciplinary incidents and improving academic outcomes.

The South Fayette Way

The foundation of our PBIS framework is the "South Fayette Way," which emphasizes three core values: Safety, Kindness, and Responsibility. These values guide our interactions and behaviors, creating a cohesive and respectful community.

1. Safe: We ensure a safe environment for ourselves and others. This includes following safety rules, being aware of our surroundings, and making choices that protect the well-being of everyone in our school.
2. Kind: We practice kindness in all our interactions. This means offering help to those in need, being inclusive and supportive, and addressing conflicts with empathy and understanding.
3. Responsible: We take responsibility for our actions and their impact on others. This involves making thoughtful choices, following school rules, and contributing positively to our school community.

Implementation of PBIS

To effectively implement PBIS, we will:

- Set Clear Expectations: Clearly define and teach the behavioral expectations aligned with the South Fayette Way in various school settings (classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, playground, etc.).
- Positive Reinforcement: Recognize and reward students for demonstrating positive behaviors through a variety of incentives and acknowledgments, such as praise, tokens, and special privileges.
- Consistent Consequences: Apply consistent and fair consequences for inappropriate behaviors, ensuring that students understand the connection between their actions and the outcomes.
- Data-Driven Decision Making: Use behavioral data to monitor progress, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions about interventions and supports.
- Collaboration and Communication: Foster a collaborative environment among staff, students, and families to support the implementation of PBIS. Regularly communicate our goals, strategies, and successes with the entire school community.

By embracing the South Fayette Way and the principles of PBIS, we strive to create a nurturing and effective educational environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Together, we can build a school culture that exemplifies safety, kindness, and responsibility.

Playground

Please note that the playground is not available for public use from 8:00 a.m. until 3:45 p.m. while school is in session.

PTA

South Fayette has a very active and productive PTA that serves both the Elementary School and Intermediate School. Members of the PTA are involved in fundraising throughout the year which allows them to sponsor many programs during the school day as well as evening programs. Members of the PTA also volunteer in the school on a regular basis. The PTA meets on a regular basis, and all parents are invited and encouraged to attend. It is a great opportunity to get to know other parents and learn more about the elementary school. PTA meetings are scheduled at flexible times throughout the school year in an effort to accommodate parents' schedules. Please consult the school calendar or monthly building calendar for the date of the meetings. Additional information can be found on the PTA website located at www.southfayettepta.org. If you have further questions about the PTA, please email them at pta@southfayette.org.

Recess

Recess is an important part of the school day and supports students' physical health, social-emotional development, self-regulation, and readiness to learn. All elementary students participate in a daily recess period that provides opportunities for active play, movement, social interaction, and recreation.

Students are expected to follow **The South Fayette Way** by being **Safe, Kind, and Responsible** during both indoor and outdoor recess. School staff and playground supervisors teach, model, and reinforce expected behaviors to help ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all students.

Whenever weather and playground conditions permit, students will participate in outdoor recess. The district considers a variety of factors, including temperature, wind chill, precipitation, playground conditions, and other safety considerations when determining whether recess will be held outdoors. Families are encouraged to dress students appropriately for the weather each day.

Teachers may also provide brief classroom movement or brain breaks throughout the school day to support student engagement and readiness for learning.

Medical Requests for Indoor Recess

Students are expected to participate in recess unless a medical condition prevents them from doing so.

- If a student is unable to participate in outdoor recess for **one school day**, a parent or guardian should notify the school nurse and provide the reason for the request.
- If a student requires indoor recess for **more than one day** due to a medical condition, a healthcare provider's note should be submitted to the school nurse. The note should include any activity restrictions and, when possible, the anticipated date the student may safely return to outdoor recess.

Students participating in indoor recess for medical reasons will engage in quiet, supervised activities appropriate to their medical needs.

Recess Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Follow directions from playground supervisors and school staff.
- Demonstrate safe, kind, and respectful behavior toward others.
- Use playground equipment safely and as intended.
- Respect personal space and keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
- Care for school equipment and help return materials at the end of recess.
- Line up promptly and follow established procedures for returning to the classroom.

Playground supervisors use consistent routines and signals to ensure students safely transition between recess and classroom learning.

Addressing Recess Behavior

Recess provides an opportunity for students to practice important social, emotional, and problem-solving skills. When behavioral concerns arise, staff will use developmentally appropriate strategies such as reteaching expectations, restorative conversations, conflict resolution, and problem-solving to help students make positive choices.

If a student's behavior creates a safety concern or significantly disrupts the recess environment, staff may temporarily remove the student from a specific activity or area while appropriate supports or interventions are provided. Repeated or serious concerns may be referred to a building administrator and addressed in accordance with the school's student behavior expectations and disciplinary procedures.

Except when necessary to maintain safety or as part of an individualized student support plan, recess is intended to remain an important opportunity for movement, play, and social development.

Report Cards

Report cards are issued every nine weeks to all students in kindergarten through second grade. These report cards can be viewed online through the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

The elementary school report cards are standards-based and correlate directly to the Pennsylvania Common Core Academic Standards as well as the district curriculum. Each student's level of mastery is assessed on a regular basis using the following descriptors:

- 4 - Expanding
- 3 - Applying
- 2 - Developing
- 1 - Emerging

The characteristics are defined as follows:

- 1 (Emerging) - I require significant help and support from my teacher to be successful when independently working with this standard.
- 2 (Developing) - I need some help and support from my teacher to be successful when independently working with this standard.
- 3 (Applying) - I am getting close to being independently successful when meeting the expectations of this standard. I can do the simpler parts of the standard independently.
- 4 (Expanding) - I am independently successful when meeting the expectations described in this standard. I independently take this knowledge or skill and utilize it in new ways.

Students in first and second grade receive instruction in social studies, science, health, STEAM, and special subject areas. Although the students are being assessed in these subjects throughout the school year, the curriculum in first and second grade includes formal evaluations as well as ongoing informal assessments. **These do not appear on the child's report cards.**

School Counseling

The purpose of school counseling services is to help students in social, emotional, educational, vocational, and personal development. The school counselors are in the counseling office in the elementary school daily during school hours. Conferences with students receive first consideration of the counselors' time and are scheduled whenever necessary. Parents are also encouraged to contact the school counselors when issues arise with their student.

Crisis Counseling

In the event of a serious or tragic event impacting the school or the South Fayette community, the South Fayette Township School District may enlist the assistance of outside counseling agencies and resources to help students and faculty cope with such events as they unfold. Outside counseling will be provided by professional counseling agencies that have experience in helping schools cope with tragic events.

The names of these agencies will also be made available to facilitate outside consultation for those who so desire.

If you do not wish for your child to have access to the aforementioned resources in times of crisis, please complete the form below and return it to the elementary school office. All information will be kept confidential.

……

I,_____, parent/guardian of _____ would hereby like to inform the South Fayette Elementary School that I do not grant my child permission to meet with outside counselors or counseling agencies in the instance of a serious or tragic event impacting the South Fayette township or school. Furthermore, I realize that should I desire to arrange outside counseling to assist my child in dealing with such an event, I can obtain the phone numbers or addresses for such agencies, by contacting the school guidance department.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Child's Name: _____

Date: _____

Behavioral Threat Assessment And Management

South Fayette Elementary School is committed to maintaining a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all students and staff.

Behavioral threat assessment management is a fact-based process used to evaluate and respond to behaviors, communications, or situations that may indicate a concern for the safety or well-being of a student, other students, staff members, or the school community. The goal of the process is to identify potential concerns early, assess risk, and connect students and families with appropriate supports and interventions when needed.

The school's Behavioral Threat Assessment Management Team includes professionals with expertise in administration, school counseling, psychology, social work, nursing, special education, school safety, and law enforcement. Team members work collaboratively to gather information, assess concerns, and determine appropriate next steps based on the specific circumstances of each situation.

Behavioral Threat assessments are designed to support student well-being, promote safety, and help prevent harm through early intervention, collaboration, and problem-solving.

Search and Seizure

School administrators may conduct searches and seize evidence when there is reasonable cause to believe a student has violated the law or school rules. These searches may include a student's personal property, their person, areas designated for student use, or any vehicle parked on District property.

Refusal to comply with a proper and reasonable request from an administrator may result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or a referral for an expulsion hearing in accordance with District policy.

Siblings

Siblings are not allowed to participate in school functions during the school day that do not include their classroom. Classrooms often have special programs where parents are invited to attend. Siblings are not allowed to attend these special programs as this disrupts the educational day. We want to ensure that those students involved in the program and the invited guests have an enjoyable experience. Siblings are also not allowed to attend holiday parties.

Student Records

The school district maintains the following student records:

- A permanent record folder for each student is stored in the main office and contains grades, attendance, standardized test scores, etc.
- A medical record for each student is stored in the nurse's office and contains medical records for the student. The information is shared with faculty and staff on a need to know basis. This allows us to best service the medical needs of our students.
- Some students may have a special education file which is stored in the Pupil Personnel Office. These records include IEPs, GIEPs, or 504 Service Plans.

Telephones

Students may use the telephone in the classroom when the classroom teacher deems necessary. Students will not be permitted to take telephone calls. If parents need to contact their child, we will take a message and relay it to the child.

Title I

South Fayette Elementary School receives Title I funds annually. The funding is used to provide the Title I Reading Services to first-grade and second-grade students who are basic or below basic in their reading skills.

All of the South Fayette Elementary Faculty is considered highly qualified according to the No Child Left Behind standards for highly qualified teachers. A highly qualified teacher, according to the United States Department of Education, is fully certified, has a bachelor's degree, a content area major and has passed a content area test. Also, fully certified teachers in Pennsylvania have completed pedagogical coursework in education, including student teaching. We take pride in the tremendous skill and dedication of our faculty and staff.

Please note that, as parents, you have a right to request and receive timely information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher. If you have any questions about our Title I Program or about your child's teacher, please feel free to contact Tyler Geist, Elementary School Principal, at 412 221-4542, extension 337.

Tobacco Use Policy

School Board Policy #222 prohibits students from possessing and using tobacco products and smokeless tobacco devices while in the school building, on school grounds, on school buses, and at all school events. It also prohibits the use of tobacco by all visitors and employees in the school buildings as well as on the school grounds. Our campus is a smoke and tobacco free environment. This board policy can be located on the district's website.

Visitors

All visitors to South Fayette Township School District will be required to produce photo ID which will be scanned using visitor management software upon entering any South Fayette Township District building. Visitors will be issued a photographic visitor ID badge which must be clearly displayed for the duration of their visit.

Children should walk to their classrooms in the morning unaccompanied by an adult. Parents need to either call the classroom teacher or schedule a meeting if they need to discuss something with their child's teacher. We appreciate your cooperation in helping to make our school day run smoothly.

Periodically, elementary children forget necessary items at home and parents will need to bring these items to school. Parents are to drop these items off at the front desk, and the receptionist will make sure these items make it to the child's classroom.

Parents may eat lunch with their child. As with all visitors, parents are to check in at the receptionist's desk. Parents should make their presences known to a student monitor when entering the cafeteria. Siblings are not permitted in the cafeteria during lunchtime. Parents, siblings, and visitors are not permitted on the playground during recess/school hours.

Children who are not registered students in our school cannot visit the school during the instructional day. Only future students with an appointment will be permitted to tour the school during the instructional day.

Weapons Policy

According to School Board Policy #218.1, students, visitors and employees are not permitted to bring any weapons or look-alike weapons to school. This board policy can be located on the district's webpage.

Web Page

Please visit the South Fayette School District at www.southfayette.org for the latest news. Information for the Elementary School can be located by clicking on the school tab. The web page is updated weekly.

Wellness and Classroom Parties

The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265) requires all public school districts to develop local wellness policies that address nutrition, physical activity, and health education. Nutrition guidelines must be developed for all foods available on each school campus during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.

The district formed a committee of students, parents, school board member, administration, and the food service department to review current practices and develop guidelines for the future. Some procedures are implemented districtwide while others are unique to an individual building.

The following are district-wide "actions":

1. No soda (carbonated soft drinks) will be served to students at any time, in any building, during the school day.
2. Vending machines that are located on the campus will only contain water, juice and sports drinks.
3. Food (candy, gum, etc.) will not be used as a reward for classroom or school activities unless the reward is an activity that promotes a positive nutrition message i.e. guest chef, a field trip to a farm, etc.
4. All groups associated with the school district will be encouraged to promote wellness that leads to good choices being made about nutrition, physical activity, and health.

Important Information related to Student Wellness in the Elementary School

1. Classroom Birthday Celebrations

a. Students will not be permitted to bring "food" birthday treats to share with their class. However, they can bring a "nonfood" item to share with the class on their actual birthday or a day that is close to their birthday.

2. Holiday Celebrations
    a. The Elementary PTA sponsors three holiday parties: Halloween (October), Holiday (December), and Valentine's Day (February). Additional food and/or drink items will not be distributed to students. Students will only be allowed to pass out nonfood items to students if they wish to bring a treat for the other students (pencils, erasers, etc.). Classroom games make excellent treats for the students as well. Please remember that holiday celebrations are limited to children in the homeroom only; **siblings are not permitted to attend holiday parties**.

3. Lunch
    a. A nutritious lunch that meets the guidelines of the student wellness policy is available for purchase each day. If you choose to have your child bring lunch from home, you are encouraged that the lunch is nutritious.

1:1 Annual Device Loan Agreement 2025-2026

This is the Annual Technology District Device Agreement for Students and Parents. Please review the Student Responsibility Section with your child.

The South Fayette Township School District is loaning to your Student one District-loaned device, charger, and (for iPads only) a case. (Students in grades K-2 will receive an iPad. Students in grades 3-12 will receive a laptop.) The device is delivered in excellent working order. It is the Student's responsibility to properly handle the equipment and to keep it in an environment that is safe and secure.

The device is, and remains at all times, the property of the South Fayette Township School District and is loaned to the Student for educational purposes only. The Student may not damage, deface, or destroy this property in any way. Inappropriate use of the device may result in the loss of the student's right to use the device. When requested by the South Fayette Township School District, the device must be returned. If the Student leaves or withdraws from the District, the device must be returned prior to departure.

The device, as district property, may be used by the Student only for non-commercial purposes, in accordance with the District's acceptable use policies, procedures, rules, and guidelines as well as local, state, and federal statutes.

Students or others not employed by the District may not install software or apps from personal accounts, without district approval. Photos or videos should only be used by students for educational purposes and under the discretion of the teacher. At some time, it may be necessary to delete videos or photos stored to provide space for District use.

The Student may not make nor allow others to make any alterations to add, delete, access, or modify district owned information on any device or any school owned computer.

The Student, or any individual, may not use the device or any device to have access to, post, or share obscene material. While students are on the South Fayette campus and accessing the District's network, the District utilizes a filtering device to limit accessibility to materials that may be harmful to children.

The Students should have no expectation of privacy regarding the contents of computer files on or communications using the district-owned device. The District reserves the right to examine, inspect and/or access any and all files and information on the device at any time.

The South Fayette Township School District network is provided for the academic use of all students and staff. The Student agrees to take no action that would harm or interfere with the effective, academic use of the school network.

Labels identifying the Student owner and District device have been placed on the device. No other stickers, labels, markings, or tags of any kind are to be added to the device, case (IPads only) or charger. Students should not, under any circumstances, provide their identifiable information to others and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from using their passwords and information. In grades K-8, an email account will not be necessary for Student use.

The Student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) agree(s) to make every effort to assure that the device is not damaged or rendered inoperable by any means, such as an electronic virus, while in the student's possession. In the event of repeated damages, the following measures will be taken:

• First Occurrence - computer is serviced and returned as soon as possible
• Second Occurrence - computer is serviced and returned as soon as possible; the student will also meet to discuss the matter with the building principals, and parent contact will follow
• Third Occurrence - computer is serviced and returned as soon as possible, pending receipt of additional $25 fee from parent/guardian
• Fourth and Subsequent Occurrences - building principals/dean of students will determine consequences, including but not limited to additional service fees and/or loss of device privileges

Theft of a device will be considered a violation of student conduct and thus be subjected to Student Discipline Policy 218 and other applicable guidelines.

The Student and His/Her parent/guardian acknowledges and agrees that the use of the device as District property is a privilege and that by the student's agreement to the terms hereof, the student acknowledges the student's responsibility to protect and safeguard the District property and to return the same in good condition upon request by the South Fayette Township School District.

SOUTH FAYETTE TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT'S 1:1 DEVICE LOAN AGREEMENT 2025-2026
Please review the Student Responsibilities with your child.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES
Your device is an important learning tool, and its use is a privilege. It is to be used for educational purposes. You must be willing to accept the following responsibilities:

• The Student understands that proper digital citizenship is expected. Accessing materials that may be considered harmful to children should immediately be reported, and the Student should immediately turn off their device should this occur. This includes the responsible use of social media and other websites and general adherence to district policies and procedures.

• The Student understands that District filters are in place while on campus and connected to the District Network, limiting access to materials that may be considered harmful to children.

• When using the device at school, at home, and/or anywhere else, the student will follow the policies of the South Fayette Township School District, especially the Acceptable Use Policy, and will abide by all local, state, and federal laws and statutes.

• The Student will treat the device with care by NOT dropping it, getting it wet, leaving it outdoors or in an unsafe area, or submitting the device to extreme conditions/temperatures.

• The Student with an iPad will keep the device in the school issued protective case at all times.

• The Student will not lend the device to anyone, not even friends or family; it will be kept in a secure place at all times.

• The Student will not delete or alter district-owned programs or files from the device.

• The Student will not add software or apps from a personal account or add programs not authorized by the district.

• The Student will bring the device to school each day. The device will be charged and ready for use.

• The Student will agree that any electronic communications should be used for legitimate, appropriate, and responsible reasons.

• The Student will keep all passwords, personal identifications, and accounts secure and will not share or provide the information to others.

• The Student will not attempt to repair the device and will follow District procedures requesting assistance.

• The Student will return the device whenever requested and specifically upon withdrawal or departure from the district. The Student will abide by and comply with any parental restrictions on their child's use of the internet or device during non-school hours. The student is responsible for complying with the parents' or guardians' instructions.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Your student has been issued a device to use as a tool that will enhance and personalize his/her educational experience. It is essential that the following guidelines are followed to ensure the safe, ethical, and efficient operation of this device.

• The Parent/Guardian will supervise the child's use of the device in the home or anywhere the child is using the device. Access to material that may be considered harmful to children should be reported immediately. The Parent/Guardian will also remind the child of proper digital citizenship.

• The Parent/Guardian will discuss with the child the privilege of having the device and the importance of family values and expectations in using technology as a tool for learning.

• The Parent understands that District filters are in place while on campus and connected to the district network limiting access to materials that may be considered harmful to children. However, parents will be responsible for monitoring the use of the device at home.

• The Parent/Guardian will not attempt to repair a device, nor attempt to clean it with anything other than a soft, dry cloth.

• The Parent/Guardian will report to the school any problems with the device and will not delete any district software, apps, or information.

• The Parent/Guardian will make sure the child is prepared for learning by ensuring that the device is charged and is brought to and from school every day.

• The Parent/Guardian understands that the device is the district's property and is not for use by anyone other than the student.

South Fayette Township School District

Required Annual Notices

2026-2027

Parents' Right to Know:

Parents/guardians may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teacher(s). Specifically, individuals have the right to ask for the following information:

- Whether the student's teacher has met state qualifying and licensing criteria for the grade level or subject he/she is teaching;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status;
- The teacher's college major, the baccalaureate degree, and/or any advanced degrees earned by the teacher;
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

To obtain this information, please submit your request in writing to the Assistant Superintendent who oversees teacher/paraeducator certifications/qualifications. Each request should include the child's name, his/her teachers' names and the school he/she attends. Please be certain to include your name, address and a telephone number at which you can be contacted during the day.

South Fayette Township School District
Attn: Assistant Superintendent
3680 Old Oakdale Road
McDonald, PA 15057-3544
412-221-4542, Ext. 409

South Fayette Township School District's Annual Child Find Notice and Student Records Notice

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents the right to have access to their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. When a student turns 18 years old, or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parents to the student ("eligible student"). The FERPA statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the FERPA regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99.

It is the intent of this Annual Notice and policy to inform both the parent(s)/guardian(s) and eligible children (i.e. students 18 and older) of their rights relevant to their privacy rights in the collection, maintenance, release and destruction of these records as required by the ***Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)***, 20 U.S.C. '1232g. 34 C.F.R. part 99.

Annual notice of this policy is given on the District's website, in building parent/student handbooks and hard copies are available in the main lobby of the administration building.

The different categories of information maintained by the school district are as follows; educational and health records, personally identifiable information and directory information. Information known as directory information can be released without consent. Parents may opt out of this by requesting in writing to the school principal that some or all directory information not be released. In addition, photographs and/or videos may be used in newspaper articles highlighting various school activities or television coverage of school events. If you do not wish your child to be photographed or videotaped for these purposes, you must inform the district in writing.

Education Records include records directly related to a student that are maintained by the South Fayette Township School District. The Educational Records of the District may include all of the following (this list is not intended to be exhaustive): grades, standardized test results, student evaluation reports, samples of student work, records transferred from sending schools, discipline records, medical records and any other records created and maintained by the school district directly related to the student. Educational records do not include communications with legal counsel that are attorney client privileged. Educational Records do not include records maintained solely by the creator for their personal use, not shared with others. Personal observation of students is not considered to be an educational record. The contents of a student's educational file shall be determined by the District unless a specific parental request is made or a complaint is made, consistent with this Notice.

The District shall permit the parent/guardian(s) of a student or an eligible special education student, who is or has been in attendance in the District, to inspect and review the education records of the student upon written request. The District will comply with a written request to review records within a reasonable period of time (never to exceed 45 calendar days from the date of written request) after the request has been made. When there are special cases and where necessary, a parental request to review records will be granted and arranged as soon as possible. Visits to review a student's records shall be arranged and facilitated by the building principal or designee, or any party selected by the District, for the purposes of security and assistance in explaining or interpreting the data.

The right to inspect and review education records includes:

2. The right to a response from the District to reasonable requests, made in writing, for explanation and interpretations of the record; and
3. The right to obtain copies of records from the District where failure of the District to provide the copies would effectively prevent a parent or eligible student from exercising the right to inspect and review the educational records (e.g. where the parent is disabled and is unable to review the records personally). A District designee will sit with the parent when the parent reviews the records in a private conference area of the main office.
4. ***A reasonable fee of $.25 will be charged per page for duplicate copies of documents already provided to parents/guardians.***

In accordance with FERPA, the District will not produce or compile documentation that does not already exist.

It is presumed by the District that both natural parent/guardian(s) of a student has authority to inspect and review the education records of the student at the school in the child's attendance area (main office) by appointment unless there is evidence that there is a legally binding instrument, or a State law or court order governing such matters as divorce, separation or custody, which provides to the contrary.

Under federal law, parental consent is not required for the release of Directory information, which is information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

The District designates the following as **Directory Information means:** information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

a) Directory information includes, but is not limited to, the student's name; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; grade level; enrollment status (*e.g.,* undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time); dates of attendance; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, honors and awards received; and the most recent educational agency or institution attended.
b) **Directory information does not include a student's**:
1) Social security number; or
2) Student identification (ID) number, except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section.
(c) Directory information includes a student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used by the student for purposes of accessing or communicating in electronic systems, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a personal identification number (PIN), password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.

A written record of this information, or microfilm copy of the same, including grade level completed and year completed, may be maintained at least 100 years after a student attains age 21. A parent/guardian or eligible student may notify the District in writing of their refusal to allow the District to release directory information without prior consent. Such written refusal for consent must be sent to the Director of Student Support Services, South Fayette Township School District, 3660 Old Oakdale Road, McDonald, PA 15057-3544.

The District is required to release student directory information (access to names, addresses, and phone numbers of high school juniors and seniors) to **military recruiters and college admissions officers.** High schools are required to release information to colleges or other higher learning institutions upon request. Any parent/guardian or student who has reached age eighteen may notify the District **in writing of their refusal** for this information to be released. Letters seeking the withholding of information to military recruiters should be sent to: Director of Student Support Services, South Fayette Township School District, 3660 Old Oakdale Road, McDonald, PA 15057-3544.

Per federal guidance, **student medical records,** maintained by the nurses' office, are considered educational records and will be shared with staff who the district determines have a legitimate educational interest in the information and a need to know medical information to protect the safety and health of the student. **Once provided to the District, specific parental consent will not be sought to share information on a need to know basis. Parental requests to maintain the confidentiality of specific medical information must be made in writing to the nurse's office.** Requests for complete confidentiality of medical information will be granted at the discretion of the nurse. These requests will be granted unless dangerous to the student.

If the agency reported a crime committed by a student with a disability the district will ensure that copies of the special education records and disciplinary records of the student will be transmitted properly and only to the extent possible that the transmission is permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The District shall obtain the written consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student age eighteen before disclosing personally identifiable information, other than directory information, from the education records of a student to a third party. Consent is not

required where the disclosure is to the parent/guardian(s) of a student who is not an eligible student or the student himself or herself.

Personally Identifiable Information:
The term includes, but is not limited to ---
(a) The student's name;
(b) The name of the student's parent or other family members;
(c) The address of the student or student's family;
(d) A personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record;
(e) Other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name;
(f) Other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or
(g) Information requested by a person who the educational agency or institution reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relates.

Uses of Personally Identifiable Information:
The district may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without written consent of the parent/guardian(s) or the student or the eligible student in several situations. See 34 C.F.R. Part 99. Some important examples of when no consent to release information include (list not exhaustive):

1. To other school officials, including teachers, guidance counselors, nurses, and I.U. personnel within the District who have been determined by the District to have legitimate educational interests or are providing instruction or services to students. The District has determined that all school employees involved in the direct supervision of a student (academic or non-academic) (including support staff) have a legitimate educational interest in academic and health related student information if the information is necessary to ensure appropriate fulfillment of their professional duties and to ensure the health and safety of the student.

2. To officials of another school or school system or post-secondary schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll, subject to the requirements set forth in 99.34. Parents may request a copy of the record sent.

3. To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency, subject to the conditions set and 99.36, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

4. To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirement of 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal or State supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside agencies that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf.

5. Information designated by the District as Directory Information.

6. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent/guardian or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- Specified officials for audit and evaluation purposes
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- Organizations conducting studies for or on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- State and local authorities, within the juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law
- Contracted, consultant, volunteer, or other party to whom an agency or institution has outsourced institutional services or functions may be considered a school official under this paragraph---

(1) Performs an institutional service or function for which the agency or institution would otherwise use employees;
(2) Is under the direct control of the agency or institution with respect to the use and maintenance of education records; and
(3) Is subject to the requirements of §99.33 (a) governing the use and redisclosure of personally identifiable information from education records.

● (ii) An educational agency or institution must use reasonable methods to ensure that school officials obtain access to only those education records in which they have legitimate educational interests. An educational agency or institution that does not use physical or technological access controls must ensure that its administrative policy for controlling access to education records is effective and that it remains in compliance with the legitimate educational interest requirement.

When providing records to authorized third parties, the District will make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent/guardian(s) of the student or the eligible student of the transfer of the records at the last known address of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student. Per state law, the District will not provide any notice of transfer of records of a student to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

The District maintains student records in a locked storage room located at South Fayette High School. This storage room contains special education student records, gifted education student records, student health records, 504 Student Service Plan records, etc. Current original special education records with psychological records are maintained in the Department of Student Support Services. All district records of students (K-12) who were evaluated by the school psychologist(s) and found not to be non-exceptional are kept and are secured in the school(s)' offices. All records are kept in a secure location and access to files is limited.

PLEASE NOTE: SOUTH FAYETTE TOWNSHIP SCHOOL BOARD POLICY 216 PROVIDES RESIDENT STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS WITH NOTICE THAT THE DISTRICT MAY DESTROY RECORDS UNDER THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES AND TIMELINES:

● **Records that include a student's name, address, grades, attendance records, classes attended, grade level completed and year completed may be destroyed once 100 years have passed since the student's 24th birthday.**

● **Special Education records**, Section 504 records, Instructional Support Team (IST) records, and health records **may be destroyed once 10 years have passed from the date a student has graduated or reached graduation age** (if exiting the district before graduation) as long as there is no outstanding request to inspect and review the records and the records are no longer deemed useful to the school district.

● **Notice of destruction of these records is provided annually via this publication.** Educational records of a student are longer needed by the District to provide educational services at the end of one year following a student's graduation from the District. A parent/guardian may submit a written request for the destruction of all education records at that time.

● Destruction will proceed where parents or eligible students have not requested copies by November 1st of the year the records may be destroyed as per paragraphs A&B above. Parents or students over eighteen have the right to request a copy of their record before destruction.

Parents are reminded that copies of the records might be needed for the acquisition of Social Security benefits or for other purposes.

Amendment of Education Records:
A Parent/guardian or eligible student has the right to request amendment of a student's educational file if it is believed that any information is inaccurate, or in violation of a student's rights. The educational agency shall decide within a reasonable time whether to amend the record. If the school district decides not to amend the educational record it shall notify the parent/student of the right to and arrange an informal hearing. The hearing will be conducted by an official of the District without an interest in the outcome, who will be either the Assistant Superintendent or their designee. The parent may present relevant evidence. The District will issue a written decision based on the hearing.

Informal inquiries may be sent to: ferpa@ed.gov or ppra@ed.gov. The website address is: www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guide/fpcd

Complaints regarding violation of rights accorded parent(s)/guardian(s) and eligible students with respect to student records are to be submitted to Director of Student Support Services, South Fayette Township School District, at 3660 Old Oakdale Road, McDonald, PA, 15057-3544, in writing. All Complaints will be investigated and responded to in writing within a reasonable period of time. If complaints cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the District, complaints can be filed with the following

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

Questions regarding the above information or requests for a copy of the records policy may be referred to: Director of Student Support Services, South Fayette Township School District, 3660 Old Oakdale Road, McDonald, PA 15057-3544.

Screening and Evaluation

The South Fayette Township School District employs the following procedures for locating, identifying and evaluating the needs of school age students who may require special education programs and/or services. These procedures, as required by state regulation, are as follows:

As prescribed by Section 1402 of the Pennsylvania school code, the district routinely conducts health screenings for kindergarten (K) through 12th grade students and new students without history of recent exams: Vision (Gr. K-12); Hearing (Gr. K, 3, 7 and 11 and any student with a known history of hearing loss); Mandated Physical Exams (Gr. K, 6, and 11); Dental Screenings (Gr. K, 1, 3, and 7); Scoliosis Screening (Gr. 6, 7) and Body Mass Index (BMI) screening (Gr. K-12). Also, school nurses provide vision and hearing screenings for students who are referred for an evaluation or reevaluation regarding Chapter 14/Individualized Education Plan (IEP) special education services and Chapter 15/504 Student Services Plan accommodations.

Speech and language skills are screened in kindergarten and on a referral basis by speech clinicians.

Gross-motor and fine-motor skills, academic and social-emotional skills are assessed by the teachers and support staff. Screening activities include: review of group-based data such as cumulative enrollment and health records, report cards and academic skills scores. Identified needs from these screening sources, as well as information obtained from parents and outside agencies, is assessed, noted within the student's record and discussed with parents.

South Fayette Township School District has intervention/prevention teams in place to support students as a pre-referral system. At the elementary school (K-2) and the intermediate school (3-5), a child study team has been established as part of the pre-referral intervention process. The team consists of principals, guidance counselors, regular education teachers, reading specialists, school psychologists when needed and special education staff when needed. Parents are also part of this process and are contacted and strongly encouraged to participate in all phases of the child study team process. The Child Study Team assists teachers and parents with supporting students who are experiencing academic, behavioral, medical, emotional and social skills difficulties..

In middle school, the Academic Intervention Model (AIM) is utilized as the pre-referral intervention process for students who are in need of academic assistance. The AIM process is a team based intervention model. There are collaborative intervention team meetings with the parents to identify targeted interventions related to specific academic skill areas that need to be addressed for the student. Research-based intervention strategies are implemented for a period of time in the regular classroom setting to assist the student in an attempt to foster academic success. An implementation plan is developed and monitored by the student's team of teachers and reviewed and revised if necessary. If it is determined by the team that the interventions are not working and the student is not meeting success, the student may be referred for a multi-disciplinary team evaluation.

The South Fayette Student Assistance Teams (SAP) provides additional support used by the district to identify at-risk students. SAP teams are currently in place at the middle and high school levels. SAP is a cooperative effort with parents in utilizing the support staff, students, and community through contracted services with Allegheny County HSAO. It is a proactive prevention/intervention program that attempts to provide intervention before school performance is seriously compromised. The SAP Core Team of individuals are trained in the SAP Model and focus on screening/intervention for students who may be experiencing drug and alcohol, mental health, depression, and/or family issues, referrals to appropriate agencies or treatment facilities, aftercare for those returning from treatment, and crisis intervention as needed.

If appropriate, a referral process is initiated at each building level through the Child Study Teams, AIM Grade Level Teams, Student Assistance Teams (SAP), counseling departments, principals or the Department of Student Support Services Services. Assessment data is used by the team to meet the student's specific needs by recommending modifications or adaptations to the regular education program, creating interventions to address the problem and monitoring the student's response to intervention, or to document the need for further evaluation.

If it is determined that a student is in need of further evaluation, the student is referred for a multidisciplinary team (MDT) evaluation, which requires parent permission and includes parent input. Next, a "Prior Written Notice for Initial Evaluation and Request for Consent Form" is issued to the parent to sign giving the school district permission to conduct the evaluation. The school district has 60 calendar days to complete the evaluation. After the evaluation is completed, an evaluation report is prepared which includes specific recommendations for the types of intervention necessary to meet the needs of the student and to determine the child's eligibility for special education services based upon a disability.

When the evaluation report is completed parents are invited if necessary to a multidisciplinary team meeting to review findings and plan for the student's needs. After the MDT evaluation is completed, the parents are given a NOREP, which they sign to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the recommendation.

Parents of students who suspect that their child has a disability and is in need of special education may request an Intervention Team meeting or multidisciplinary team evaluation of their child through a written request to the building principal or Director of Student Support Services.

You may find information regarding the appropriate developmental milestone descriptors for infants and toddlers at the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website: http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/ActEarly/default.htm For additional

information regarding the signs of developmental delays, please contact the Director of Student Support Services at 412-221-4542, Ext. 429.

Services for School Age Students with Disabilities or Mental Giftedness:

The South Fayette Township School District provides a free, appropriate public education to students with disabilities or mental giftedness according to state and federal rules. To be eligible, the child must:

2. Be of school age.
3. Have a disability or mental giftedness *and* be in need of specially designed instruction.
4. Meet eligibility criteria for one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities as set forth in the Pennsylvania State Standards: autism, deaf-blindness, blindness, visual impairment, emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, other health impairment, traumatic brain injury, and speech/language impairment, orthopedic impairment, hearing impairment, deafness, multiple disabilities or intellectual disability. Services designed to meet the needs of eligible disabled students include:

a) The annual development of an individualized education program (IEP or Gifted IEP).

b) A triennial multidisciplinary re-evaluation for students with disabilities (except for those students with mental retardation where evaluation remains biennial).

c) A range of supports for students from itinerant level to supplemental level to full time level special education support within the school district or placement in a full-time special education disabilities class outside of the regular school.

The extent of special education services for disabled or mentally gifted students and the location for the delivery of such services are determined by the parents and the district staff at the IEP team meeting and are based on the student's identified needs and abilities, chronological age and the level of intensity of the specified intervention. The school district also provides related services, such as transportation, physical therapy, occupational therapy and assistive technology if they are required to enable the student with disabilities to derive educational benefits.

✓ Prior to initiation of services, parents of a student with disabilities are presented a "Notice of Recommended Educational Placement/Prior Written Notice" (NOREP) and parents of a mentally gifted student with a "Notice of Recommended Assignment" (NORA) with which they agree or disagree. If parents agree to the program outlined by the multidisciplinary team and the parent signs either the NOREP or NORA, then the program is implemented for their child. If parents disagree with the program being recommended, they have the right to request IEP facilitation, mediation and/or a due process hearing. Parents are issued their "Procedural Safeguards" which outlines in detail their legal rights as a parent of a child identified as having a disability or considered mental gifted. Lastly, if a child proves to have a disability or handicapping condition under PA Chapter 15 and the American Disabilities Act and it is determined the child is entitled to services and accommodations that are necessary to enable them access and safety when participating in programs and activities of the school, then a 504 Student Services Plan is outlined between the parent, district LEA and district staff. Parents are also given "Procedural Safeguards" for Chapter 15 504 Student Services Plans which outlines their rights as a parent of a student who has a disability and requires accommodations.

Detailed information regarding Chapter 14 special education, Chapter 16 gifted education and Chapter 15 504 Service Plan/Agreement procedures and services may be obtained by calling the Student Support Services Department at South Fayette Township School Schools, 412-221-4542, Ext. 429.

Services for Students in Nonpublic Schools:

Public school education may be accessible to resident students attending nonpublic schools on a dual enrollment basis in a special education program operated in a public school. A multidisciplinary evaluation which determines the child's eligibility for services must be conducted and, if eligible, an individualized education program plan (IEP) is developed. Parents of nonpublic school students who suspect that their child is disabled and in need of special education may request a multidisciplinary evaluation of their child through a written request to the building principal or Director of Student Support Services.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students:

The school district will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of school programs and extracurricular activities to the extent appropriate to the student's abilities. To qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental handicap which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

Services for protected handicapped students are distinct from those applicable to disabled students enrolled in special education programs. Protected handicapped students fall under Pennsylvania's Chapter 15, sometimes known by its federal name, Section 504 (of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act). In contrast, students with disabilities who qualify for special education services are covered by regulations contained in Pennsylvania's Chapter 14. While both Chapter 14 and 15 provide services to students, there are technical differences between the two. Additional information about evaluation procedures and provision of services to protected handicapped students is available by contacting the building principal.

Services for Preschool Age Children:

Act 212, the Early Intervention Systems Act, entitles all preschool age children with disabilities to appropriate intervention services. Young children experiencing developmental delay or physical or mental disabilities are eligible for early intervention services if it is determined that they meet eligibility requirements.

The **Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare** is responsible for providing services to infants and toddlers, defined as children from birth to three year of age. Contact the Early Learning Institute, 2510 Baldwick Road, Pittsburgh, PA, 15205-4104, 412-922-8322. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing services to preschool age children from ages three through five. Contact the **Allegheny Intermediate Unit, Project DART**, 425 East Waterfront Drive, Homestead, PA 15120, 412-394-5941.

Confidentiality of Student Records:
The privacy rights of parents and students are mandated by federal legislation known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA - C.F.R. Part 99), most recently amended in November 1996, state regulations (Chapter 14-Special Education Services and Programs, Chapter 12-Student Rights and Responsibilities) and district policy.

South Fayette Township School District Public Notice on Surrogate Parents For Students with Special Needs

Federal law establishes the right of a free and appropriate public education for all children with disabilities. To ensure that this right is realized for all such children, procedures are written into the laws to ensure that children with disabilities who are wards of the state, or whose parents are unknown, unavailable, or have had their parental rights legally terminated, have appropriate representation when educational programming decisions are made. This is provided through the recruitment, training and assignment of volunteer surrogate parents who represent the child during the educational process. In Pennsylvania, Intermediate Units have been given the responsibility of recruiting, training and assigning parents to children meeting the qualifications listed. The South Fayette Township School District works with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit #3 in providing this service.

Identification of Children Eligible for Surrogate Parents:
Special needs preschool and school-aged children receiving a free and appropriate education in a public school or an approved private school, who meet one of the following criteria, are eligible for the assignment of a qualified surrogate parent:

3. The Child is a ward of the state, or
4. The Child's parent(s) or guardian(s) are unknown or unavailable, or
5. The Child is an unaccompanied homeless youth.

To be identified as being in need of a surrogate parent, the preschooler or school-aged child must have special needs, or be thought to have special needs, and be in need of special education services in the South Fayette Township School District or IU operated program or be enrolled in an approved private/private school.

Qualification for Surrogate Parents:
Surrogate parents must meet the following qualifications:

- Be of a person of good character,
- Be at least 18 years of age,
- Possess reasonable abilities to make decisions regarding a child's educational needs,
- Be willing to acquaint themselves with the child's educational needs and with the special education system in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
- Have no vested interest that would conflict with the primary allegiance to the child they are representing. The surrogate parent should not be an employee of the agency responsible for the care of the child,
- Foster parents may be considered if they meet all other qualifications,
- Have Act 33 and Act 34 clearances from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
- Be willing to complete a training program conducted by the Allegheny Intermediate Unit.

Responsibilities of the Surrogate Parent:
The surrogate parent is expected to act in place of a parent for the student concerning his or her educational program. This involves:

c. Attending a planning conference to develop an individualized educational program,
d. Being familiar with appropriate procedures for due process and confidentiality of school records,
e. Receiving and responding to requests and notices concerning the evaluation and/or educational placement of the assigned student,
f. Making self-familiar with the unique educational needs of the assigned student.

The surrogate parent takes on certain quasi-legal responsibilities in order to serve the best interests of the child. The primary function is to represent the student in those circumstances in which decisions need to be made concerning the student's educational program or placement.

It is necessary for the surrogate parent to receive considerable training to familiarize him or herself with all aspects of the surrogate parent role. The demands of the role may be extensive and require the volunteer to make a significant commitment of time and learning in order to serve the best interest of the child.

If you are interested in being a surrogate parent for a child/youth with disabilities, please contact the Director of Student Support Services at 412-221-4542, Ext. 429.

English as a Second Language Services (ESL)

In accordance with federal law and state regulations, the South Fayette School District must identify all students who have "limited English proficiency" (LEP). These students typically have a primary language other than English that is used in their homes. Students identified with a limited English proficiency are eligible for EL instructional services to help them attain proficient skills in their use of the written and spoken English language.

All students must have a Home Language Survey completed by their parents prior to admission into the school district. This survey allows the South Fayette School District to identify possible LEP students. South Fayette Township School District EL teachers, will screen any student identified as possibly having a limited English proficiency and will provide direct services to students based on their level of need.

Parents or guardians who feel that their child may have a limited English proficiency should contact the EL Coordinator at 412-221-4542, Ext. 415 for more information.

Notice for Families Experiencing Homelessness

Homeless Students

Under McKinney Vento all school districts are responsible for identifying students experiencing homelessness and connecting them with the resources needed to ensure academic success.

Who is considered homeless? — Children or youth living in a shelter, transitional housing, hotel/motel, vehicle, campground, on the street or doubled up with friends or family due to a lack of alternate resources are considered homeless. An unaccompanied homeless youth is a child or youth that is not in the care of their parent or legal guardian and meets the definition of homeless under McKinney Vento.

Where can students experiencing homelessness attend school? — The law indicates that homeless students have the right to remain in their school origin (the school they attended at the time of the homeless episode or last school attended) through the end of the school year in which they find permanent housing, provided it is in the child/youth's best interest.

If through consultation between the school and the family and/or unaccompanied youth it is determined that remaining in the school of origin is not in the student's best interest, then the student has the right to immediately enroll in the school that non-homeless students living in the attendance area in which the child/youth is actually living are eligible to attend, even if they do not have all of the required documentation. Additionally, unaccompanied homeless youth have the right to immediately enroll in school, even if they do not have a legal guardian present.

What support can school districts provide to homeless students? — Homeless students are eligible for support and services to remove barriers to educational success. This may include transportation to the school of origin, free meals, referrals to physical/mental health providers, clothing to meet school requirements, access to school supplies and resources, assistance with credit recovery, tutoring supports, expedited evaluations and assistance to participate in school activities including parent engagement opportunities, sports, club, etc.

Homeless Dispute Process — If at any time there is a disagreement about homeless status or best interest for school placement, the district will notify the family in writing of their determination that the family/unaccompanied youth is ineligible for McKinney Vento services. At this time, the district will provide the family/unaccompanied youth with the ability to dispute their determination. Throughout the dispute process, the child/youth, including unaccompanied youth, will continue to be educated in the school of origin or immediately enrolled in the school they are seeking enrollment until the dispute process is finalized.

Transportation will continue throughout the dispute process. All disputes will be sent to the ECYEH Regional Coordinator who will issue a determination. If any party is unhappy with the determination, they can elevate the dispute to the state coordinator.

What if I think that I am eligible for services under McKinney Vento?

District Contacts:
Dr. Kellee Oliver
Director of Student Support Services
412-221-4542 Ext. 429
kjoliver@southfayette.org

Tanner Jones
District Social Worker
412-221-4542 Ext. 425
tbjones@southfayette.org

State Coordinator:
Storm Y. Camara
Pennsylvania Department of Education
Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program
333 Market Street
3rd Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333
Phone: 717-772-2066
scamara@pa.gov

Title I Performance Report

South Fayette Elementary School receives Title I funds annually. The funding is used to provide the Title I Reading Services to first grade and second grade students who are below basic or basic in their reading skills.

A highly qualified teacher, according to the United States Department of Education, is fully certified, has a bachelor's degree, a content area major and has passed a content area test. In addition, fully certified teachers in Pennsylvania have completed pedagogical coursework in education, including student teaching. We take pride in the tremendous skill and dedication of our faculty and staff.

Please note that, as parents, you have a right to request and receive timely information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher. If you have any questions about our Title I Program or about your child's teacher, please feel free to contact the Title I Coordinator at 412-221-4542, Ext. 337.

Department of Student Support Services: Student Support Services and Special Education Department: 412-221-4542

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