South Fayette Intermediate School

Student-Family Handbook 2026-2027

Dear Intermediate School Families:

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! The summer months passed quickly, and we are excited to start a new school year. We hope you and your families had a safe and enjoyable summer. We look forward to meeting our new students and families and reconnecting with those who attended the Intermediate School last year.

To stay up to date with District and Intermediate School news and events, please be sure to read "The Weekly Green Scene," an electronic District newsletter which is emailed to all families on Fridays. We also encourage you to follow us on X (@SFISLions) to get a glimpse of the great things that are happening at the Intermediate School.

We also encourage you to visit the District website's new "Campus Construction Update" section. Here you will find information on the Intermediate School's renovation and expansion.

We are extremely proud of our Lion educators and believe they are truly second to none. In order to prepare each child for their future endeavors, our staff is dedicated to growing students academically through effective differentiated instruction, exposing students to their own strengths and interests through our World of Work implementation, and helping each student to embody "The South Fayette Way–Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Responsible." We believe that these three focus areas will make our Lions unstoppable in achieving their goals!

If you have any questions or concerns throughout the school year, please do not hesitate to contact us. No question or concern is too small.

Respectfully,

Justin Liberatore
Intermediate School Principal

Abigail Russell-Mehta
Intermediate School Assistant Principal

South Fayette Intermediate School
1200 Lt. Will Way
McDonald, PA 15057

Phone: 412-221-4542
Fax: 724-693-8084
Website: www.southfayette.org

Justin Liberatore, Intermediate School Principal – Ext. 336
Email: jsliberatore@southfayette.org

Abigail Russell-Mehta, Assistant Principal – Ext. 328
Email: arussell@southfayette.org

Christina Sible, Principals' Assistant/Enrollment – Ext. 331
Amy Jessloski, Principals' Assistant/Attendance – Ext. 226
Jillian Ruda, School Counselor (A-L) – Ext. 349
Sarah Sweet, School Counselor (M-Z) – Ext. 316
Traci Goforth, School Nurse – Ext. 320

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VISION, BELIEFS AND MISSION
OF THE SOUTH FAYETTE SCHOOL DISTRICT

(developed by the Steering Committee and adopted by the Board of School Directors, 2022)

1. Vision Statement

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

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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 Gretchen Tucci, Title IX, Section 504 Coordinator, at 3700 Old Oakdale Road, McDonald, PA 15057, (412) 221-4542, extension 415.

5. South Fayette PTA

Email: PTA@southfayette.org
X: @SFPTA

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.

6. 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 Colors: Green & White
Mascot: Lion

7. 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** Amy Jessloski (isattendance@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 (AND Educational Trip/Tours)	**PAR**	-student physical/emotional/mental health (without a medical note) -parent/guardian request as approved by building administrator	10 total per school year (a result of a combination if any EDT days are taken) Each absence beyond the ten cumulative days will require an excuse from a physician or will be marked as unexcused.
Educational Trip/Tours	**EDT**	*Please see additional information below.* ***Educational Tours & Trips***	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.
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	
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	District communication sent Loss of driving privileges for high school students	District communication sent 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 three school days to present an excuse to the Student Center/Main Office.
    - At the Elementary and Intermediate School, students **must** be escorted by a parent and signed into school. This will constitute the parent excuse.
    - 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 three 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 principal.

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 a 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 3:25 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 in the main 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 intermediate students starting at 3:25 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 will 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.

8. Academics

South Fayette Township Intermediate School educators provide instruction that is aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards. Teachers differentiate instruction to support the academic growth of each individual student. Differentiation in the form of enrichment or remediation is provided when student data deems them appropriate. At SFIS, all students receive a well-rounded educational experience that includes coursework in the following areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Art, Arts Alive, Library, Music, Physical Education, and Technology Literacy.

English Language Arts
The Houghton Mifflin Harcourt *Into Reading* series is the main resource used at the Intermediate School to support students in mastering the content standards. Our comprehensive language arts curriculum includes instruction in phonics/spelling, vocabulary, reading comprehension, grammar, and writing. To monitor student progress and growth, Intermediate Schools students complete benchmark assessments, the *Into Reading Growth Measure*, three times a year.

Mathematics
The main resource used to provide students with standards-aligned mathematics instruction is the Pearson *enVisions* series. Math lessons aim to help students develop an automaticity with math computation while also developing their ability to think critically and solve problems by applying math concepts. At the Intermediate School, students will also gain practice in articulating their mathematical reasoning verbally and in written form. To monitor student progress and growth, Intermediate Schools students complete *IXL* benchmark assessments three times a year.

STEAM/Science & Social Studies
The Intermediate School science curriculum emphasizes a hands-on, inquiry-based approach where the children learn by researching and doing. STEAM is an acronym for Science,

Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics. This cross-disciplinary approach to project-based learning provides rich, real-world experiences for students. The science curriculum correlates to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. In conjunction with the science curriculum, the 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.

Special Area Subjects

Children in the Intermediate School receive instruction daily in one special area subject. Children are exposed to the fine arts through choral music, music appreciation, and visual art instruction. Students have the opportunity to take strings instrumental music instruction. Students can also take band instrumental music lessons in fourth and fifth grades.

In art classes, children have the opportunity to express themselves using different art media. They learn about various kinds of art by learning about different artists and their respective styles. The curriculum taught in library class encourages children to borrow books and read independently. The children also learn introductory library and research skills. Oral and written communication skills are emphasized.

In physical education, 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 children learn about nutrition, exercise and good health practices in their physical education class.

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 intermediate 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 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 building calendar.

9. Arrival at School

The Intermediate School day will start at 8:55 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 front entrance door.

Parent Drop-Off Area

The parent drop-off area is located in the front of the building. The front entrance is open from 8:30 a.m. until 8:55 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 front 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 at any point along the sidewalk in the front of the building.
- ✓ In order 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 a staff member or you need to come into the building, please park your vehicle in the front parking lot.**
- ✓ Parents are welcome to walk their children into the building, but in order 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. Please call the office to report drop off issues rather than engaging in a verbal confrontation with another parent.
- ✓ Drop-off starts at 8:30 a.m.
- ✓ The door at parent drop-off is closed and locked after 8:55 a.m.
- ✓ Students who arrive after 8:55 a.m. will need to enter through the front door of the building accompanied by a parent.

10. Arrival at School on Two-Hour Delays

The Intermediate School day will start at **10:55 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(s) should be dropped off at the front entrance.

11. Backpacks

Often Intermediate School 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.

12. Birthday Treats

Students are not 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.

13. Board Policies

All board policies are located on the District website and linked in the Appendix section of this handbook.

14. Books

Students are provided with consumable workbooks in English Language Arts and Mathematics. If a child loses his/her book, parents/guardians will be billed the replacement cost of the book.

15. Bullying/Cyberbullying

School Board Policy #249 prohibits bullying and cyberbullying by district students. The complete policy can be located on the District's website.

16. Bus Transportation

Children are transported to and from school by school bus. Parents/guardians who have questions about bus transportation 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 or by email 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 playdate with another child, it is the parent's responsibility to transport their 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.

Assigned Seats on the Bus

We consider the bus an extension of the Intermediate 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 School students to the back of the bus. 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.

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 his/her building principal.

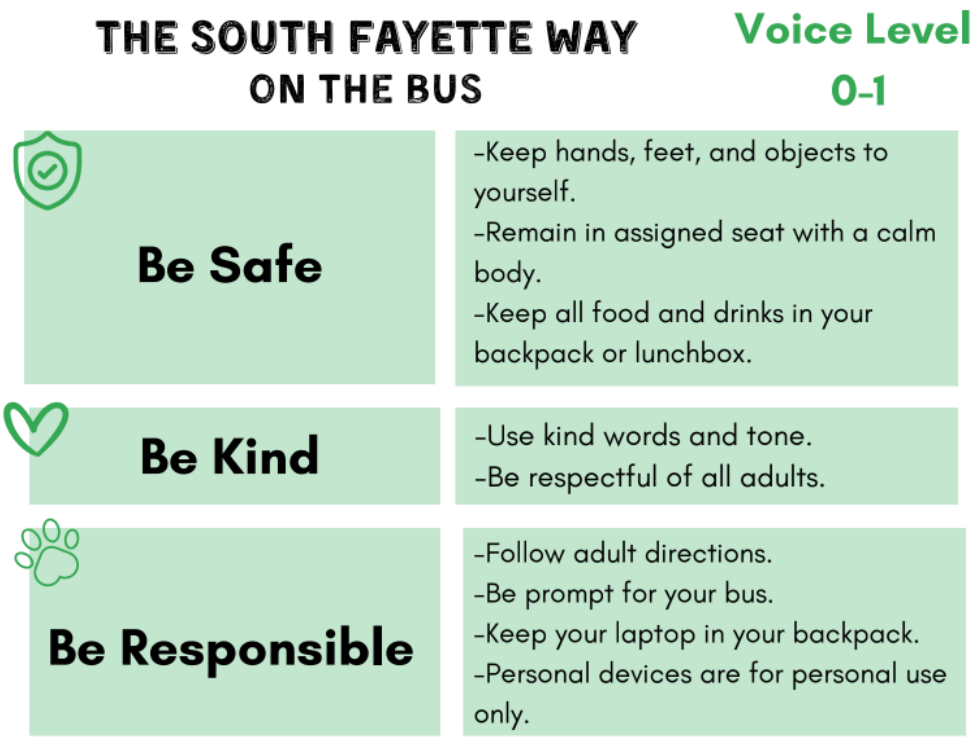
Parents should follow these procedures when reporting issues on the bus:

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 your building principal or the Director of Transportation (412-221-4542, x452).

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

17. Bus Behavior

Through our Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) framework, all Intermediate School students learn and practice universal bus expectations that align to the South Fayette Way, which encompasses being safe, kind, and responsible.



In addition to the expectations outlined above, please keep in mind that animals cannot be transported via school bus and 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 videotape 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.

18. **Cafeteria**

Student Meal Service (2026–27 School Year)

Service Hours & Location

- Breakfast and lunch are served daily in the cafeteria.

Menus & Ordering

- Monthly menus are posted at www.schoolcafe.com. Nutritional information including food allergy details are available in great detail on this site. It is the responsibility of the parent to check food allergies daily if their child has an allergy.
- Intermediate School students may enjoy breakfast free of charge (Pennsylvania statewide program).
- Lunch is only free to those families who qualify after completing an application each year or who receive written confirmation annually.

Build Your School Lunch

Students may choose:

- **One entrée**
- **Up to two fruit choices**
  One fruit choice may be 100% juice.
- **Up to two vegetable choices**
- **One milk**
  This may include regular milk or Lactaid when available.

What Makes It a Complete Meal?

To count as a reimbursable school lunch, the student must:

- Choose **at least three of the five meal components**:
  - Meat or meat alternate
  - Grain
  - Fruit
  - Vegetable
  - Milk
- Take at least **½ cup of fruit, vegetables, or a combination of both**

The entrée often counts as both the **meat/meat alternate** and **grain** components. Milk must be offered, but the student is not required to select it. These requirements are the same whether the student pays full price or receives free or reduced-price meals.

Easy reminder for students

Choose at least three.
Be sure one choice is a fruit or vegetable.

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 Bazant Pleil at 724-693-3019 or email at nbpleil@southfayette.org or login to www.schoolcafe.com and make restrictions to your student's account.
- 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).Families should apply at www.schoolcafe.com
- 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. Low balance notifications will be processed from the Food Service Director.
- To set up an account, visit www.schoolcafe.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)

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.Each student must have their own account and adult purchases cannot be processed under a student account.

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 USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, 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.

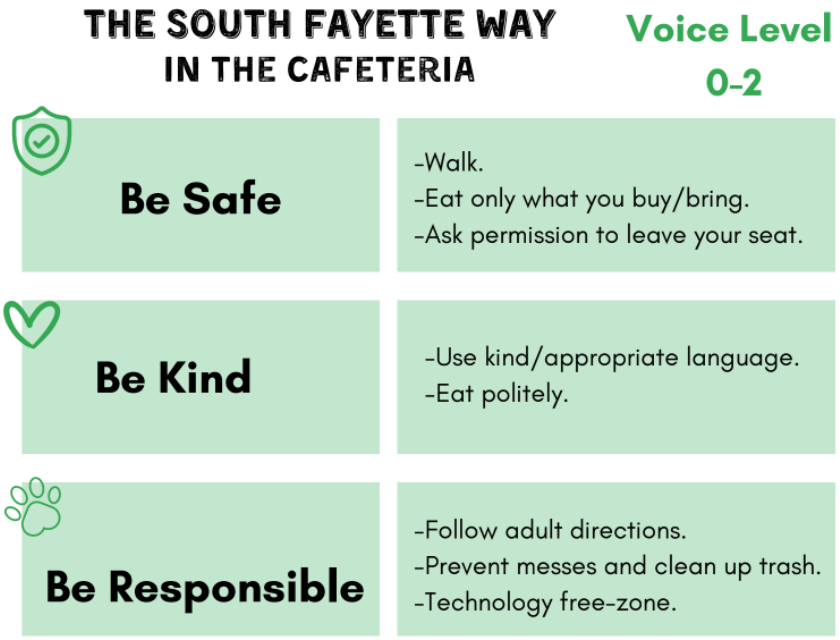
Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). 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, Mail Stop 9410, 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.

19. Cafeteria Behavior

Through our Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) framework, all Intermediate School students learn and practice universal cafeteria expectations that align to the South Fayette Way, which encompasses being safe, kind, and responsible.



The South Fayette Township School District employs lunch monitors to supervise Intermediate School students during lunch. Students are to interact with the cafeteria monitors in a respectful, appropriate manner. Inappropriate cafeteria behavior could result in a consequence such as a new assigned seat in the cafeteria seat or loss of recess privileges. When the misbehavior is serious or persistent, the monitor will submit a discipline slip to the principal. Please refer to the discipline portion of the handbook for possible consequences.

20. Cell Phones/Personal Electronic Devices

Beginning this school year, South Fayette will implement a **bell-to-bell personal communication device expectation**. Students may bring personal communication devices to school at their own risk. This includes cell phones/smartphones, smartwatches, personal tablets, earbuds/headphones, and AI-enabled smart glasses. However, during the school day these devices must be powered off or silenced and stored in a location authorized by school administration (locker or backpack). Devices may not be visible or accessible to students upon entering the school building and at any time during the instructional day, including study halls, lunches, and between periods. These expectations do not include the use of personal devices during bus transportation to and from the school.

The only general exception is that students in **grades K-5** may wear a smartwatch provided it is used only for telling time and allowing parents or guardians to track their child's location. Students with documented medical needs or other approved administrative exceptions will continue to receive appropriate accommodations.

If a parent or guardian needs to contact a student during the school day, call the school's main office. Likewise, students needing to reach a parent or guardian may do so through school office personnel.

AI-Enabled Smart Glasses and Wearable Technology
In addition to our bell-to-bell expectations, **AI-enabled smart glasses and similar wearable devices are prohibited in all South Fayette Township School District schools and at all school-sponsored activities under District supervision**, including field trips, athletic events, and on school buses.

This includes all wearable technology that contains integrated cameras or microphones, connects to the internet or cloud-based services, or uses artificial intelligence to capture, analyze, or generate audio, video, or images.

These devices can provide unauthorized AI-powered assistance during instruction and assessments and discreetly record classroom conversations and activities. As such, they cannot be permitted in our schools.

Privacy
Students and staff will notice that all locker rooms, restrooms, health suites, and other changing areas have been labeled as “Tech-Free Zones” meaning electronic devices are strictly prohibited in these areas at all times.

Per School Board policy, electronic devices include all devices that can take photographs; record, play or edit audio or video data; store, transmit or receive calls, messages, text, data or images; operate online applications; or provide a wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet.

Policy Enforcement
These expectations are established in accordance with School Board policy, the Student Code of Conduct, and applicable state and federal privacy and internet safety requirements. Violations may result in confiscation of the device, parent notification, and disciplinary consequences. Repeated violations or refusal to comply with staff directions may result in additional disciplinary action.

It should be noted that personal communication devices will not have access to the District's wireless network, and the District is not responsible for the loss, theft, damage, or misuse of any personal device brought to school.

21. Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Team

The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Team consists of educators and parents who are working together as a team toward the common goal of helping a child meet with success. The team members meet and focus on what resources can be used to increase a student's chance for success. Any intermediate student who is experiencing consistent academic or behavioral problems may be referred to determine if they are an appropriate candidate for a MTSS intervention. Parents as well as professional staff members may refer a student to the MTSS Team. Parents should contact their child's teacher if they wish to refer their child.

22. Communication with Parents/Guardians

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.

23. Computers

Every student at the Intermediate School will be issued a laptop as part of the District's 1:1 technology initiative. Students are responsible for bringing their fully charged laptop to school each day and must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Students 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.
- Students are prohibited from taking pictures of tests, texting other students their answers, or engaging in conduct that compromises academic integrity in any way.

- 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.
- Use of laptops is prohibited in bathrooms.
- Use of laptops is prohibited during emergency drills, as it may compromise the health, safety, and welfare of all students.

All district-issued laptops are networked throughout the school campus. Like students, all faculty members are also provided with laptop computers by the District.

To ensure an optimal learning environment for all students, the following process will be used when computer damage occurs:

- **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 will determine consequences, including but not limited to additional service fees and/or loss of device privileges**

When using the laptops, students are to only go to the websites assigned by their teachers. They are to treat the laptops gently so they do not damage the equipment. Parents and students are bound by the technology agreement presented upon issuance of the laptop.

24. Deliveries to Students

The Intermediate 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 (eye glasses, 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.

25. Discipline

Students are expected to follow school rules at all times. They are to keep their hands and feet to themselves, speak respectfully to others and show respect for individual differences. Teachers will handle the minor misbehaviors by verbally warning the student or assigning an appropriate consequence. When students are referred to the office for misbehaving, a building administrator may contact the parents/guardians because we believe that parents/guardians make a difference and that by working together we can improve student behavior. A school counselor may talk with the student.

Misbehavior that is frequent or that disrupts the learning environment will be referred to a building administrator. This includes disruptive classroom behavior, disruptive cafeteria behavior, or disruptive playground behavior. The consequences for these behaviors

could include temporary removal from class, lunch in the office, loss of recess, modified in-school suspension, after-school detention, Saturday detention or out-of–school suspension.

When a student's misbehavior is directed against persons or property but the behavior does not seriously endanger the health or safety of others, the student will be referred to a building administrator. Examples of such misbehaviors are fighting, vandalism, leaving school without authorization, or causing a false alarm. The consequences for these behaviors could include temporary removal from class, lunch in the office, loss of recess, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, restitution for damages, or after-school detention. The proper authorities could be contacted if warranted.

Detention

When the misbehavior is frequent and consequences given during the school day are not effective or if the misbehavior is more severe, the student may be assigned to after-school detention, modified in-school detention, after-school detention, Saturday detention, or out-of–school suspension.

The length of detention is determined by the principal. Students are expected to bring academic assignments to detention. When a student is assigned to after-school detention, the parent will be contacted via a phone call. The parent will need to pick up their child after the detention. If a student intentionally misses an assigned after-school detention, he/she may be assigned to Saturday detention or suspended from school for one day.

If a student's behavior poses a direct threat to the safety of others in the school, the student will be referred to a building administrator. These acts are clearly criminal and are so serious that they require immediate intervention and could result in the student being immediately removed from school, intervention by law enforcement authorities and action by the Board of School Directors. Examples of such misbehavior are extortion, verbal or written threats, bomb threat, possession/use/transfer of a dangerous weapon, assault, vandalism, theft, possession or sale of stolen property, arson, or possession of an unauthorized substance. These behaviors could result in expulsion, other action by the Board of School Directors, proper authorities being contacted, restitution for damages, and/or a fine imposed by the magistrate or juvenile court.

Suspension from School

Per State Board of Education Regulations, 22 Pa Code 12.6, Exclusion from school, suspension is the exclusion from school for a period of one to ten consecutive school days. Suspensions may be given by the principal or the person in charge of the school. No child shall be suspended from school until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety, and/or welfare of the school community is threatened.

The parents and the superintendent of the district shall be notified immediately in writing when the student is suspended. When the suspension exceeds three school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing. Students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within the guidelines established by the Board of School Directors.

Special Education students will follow the regular education code of conduct up to the 10th day of suspension (cumulative or given at one single time). However, on the 11th day of suspension, the IEP Team will reconvene to conduct a "Manifestation Determination."

Reconciliation Through Restorative Practices

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

26. Dismissal

Intermediate students will be dismissed daily to parents at 3:25 p.m. and parents need to arrive on time for dismissal. Parents who pick up their children on a daily or on a regular schedule should complete the SFIS Parent Pick Up Google form. Parents who pick up their children are to enter the school through the gym doors and present their photo ID. Children are dismissed to the gym and parents must wait there to pick up their children instead of going to the classrooms or waiting in the hallway. Please note that we do not dismiss children from the office at the end of the day. Children will not be dismissed to a waiting vehicle. Parents should park in the front parking lot if picking up their child(ren)at the end of the school day. Please note students will be dismissed to the buses starting at 3:30 p.m.

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 a 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. **Please remember that each student is permitted to have two (2) dismissal routines.** Thank you for your cooperation and help with this matter to keep all of our children safe.

27. Diversity and Equity

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 acknowledgement that educational excellence requires a commitment to equity in the opportunities provided to students and their resulting experiences.

28. Dress

Although there is not a dress code at South Fayette Township Intermediate 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. Tops with thin straps, tops that show excessive midriff, and short shorts are not appropriate school dress. Students are not permitted to wear hats or hoods 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. 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 Heely shoes with the wheels (shoes with the 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.

29. 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.

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30. Emergency Cancellation/Delay of School

School cancellations, virtual learning days, delays, and early dismissals will be posted on the South Fayette Township School District website, communicated through ParentSquare, 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**.**

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.

31. 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.

32. Emergency Numbers for Principals

In the event of an **emergency**, parents may contact Justin Liberatore, Intermediate School Principal, at extension 336 or Abigail Russell-Mehta, Intermediate Assistant Principal at extension 328. Voicemails are delivered to the principals email address.

33. ELD (English Language Development)

South Fayette Township School District offers a K-12 English Language Development (ELD) Program. The ELD 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, ELD instruction addresses the ELD and Pennsylvania Core 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 ELD 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 Language Development Program, please call Dr. Kellee Oliver, Director of Student Support Services, at 412-221-4542, extension 429.

34. Extended Day Services

Extended Day Services (EDS) offers a before and after school program at the Intermediate School 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. Extended Day Services is currently taking enrollments for this school year. For further information or to enroll your child, please call Extended Day Services at 412-221-1980 or find them online at www.extendedday.com.

35. Extracurricular Offerings

At this time, the Intermediate School offers a variety of before and after school extracurricular clubs. Information about our school clubs will be provided to families at the start of and throughout the school year. Parents need to complete an electronic form for each extracurricular activity in which they would like their child to participate. Only students with parent/guardian permission will be permitted to attend extracurricular clubs outside of the school day. No before- or after-school transportation will be provided. Students need to attend school at least a half day in order to participate in any extracurricular events. Please consult the attendance section above for more information on what constitutes a half day of school.

36. Field Trips

Students in grades 3-5 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 Township 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. All parents must provide their own transportation, as they cannot ride the school bus.*** For the safety of all students, students are to ride the school bus to and from the field trip. Parents will need to pay for their admission if there is a charge for the activity.

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 classwork to complete.

Any parent or guardian wishing to act as a chaperone for the field trip must submit the following clearances 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

37. Halloween/Fall Festival Party

The Board of School Directors approved the option of ***elementary/intermediate (grades K-5)*** students, employees and parents wearing costumes during the annual October party. We will celebrate Halloween/Fall Festival at South Fayette Intermediate with a grade-level party and/or parade sponsored by the PTA. The students, employees, as well as parents are permitted to wear Halloween costumes during the party and/or parade.

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 as well as face paint 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.

38. Harassment Policy

School Board Policy #248 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.

39. 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 sixth grade in September and you choose to have your private doctor perform their sixth grade physical, it can be done after June 30 of the previous year through the end of their sixth grade 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. **Hearing, Vision, Height, and Weight Screenings** are performed by the school nurse. Parents/guardians are notified if a student failed or needs a follow-up exam by their private physician.

40. Homework and Agendas

Homework is necessary to reinforce your child's schoolwork. Making homework a family commitment can help children develop lifelong study skills, self-discipline and independence.

Every Intermediate School student is provided with a homework folder and agenda to stay organized. Philosophically, we believe that it is the responsibility of the parent as well as the educational team members to teach the child to be a responsible learner.

Students will not be assigned homework on the following days: PTA family events, long weekends, and holiday breaks.

41. 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.

42. Illness or Injury

Traci Goforth,, Certified School Nurse, is in the Intermediate School for the entire day. When children are ill or hurt, they should report to the nurse's office. Mrs. Goforth 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 by email of this occurrence. 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 use of medication), nausea free, and/or diarrhea free for 24 hours from 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. Students with head lice must be treated with a lice shampoo and checked by the school nurse prior to returning to school.

43. Immunization Requirements

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

- **<u>Diphtheria</u>** 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.
- **<u>Tetanus</u>** 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.
- **<u>Acellular Pertussis</u>** 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.
- **<u>Poliomyelitis</u>** 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)
- **<u>Measles (Rubeola)</u>** 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.
- **<u>German Measles (Rubella)</u>** 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.
- **<u>Mumps</u>** 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.
- **<u>Hepatitis B</u>** Three properly spaced doses of Hepatitis B vaccine.
- **<u>Varicella</u>** 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:

- **<u>MCV</u>** 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.

44. 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 hurt feelings and is not something we want to promote in our school. If families are inviting a select group of students, parents/guardians will need to find an alternate way to distribute the invitations. Please note that teachers and principals' assistants are not permitted to give out children's addresses.

45. Lockers

Lockers are the property of the South Fayette School District and are provided to students for the storing of school related items and clothing. School lockers are not the property of the students, and lockers may be searched by school officials.

Students are assigned lockers. Students must use the lockers to which they are assigned and may not share lockers or use a locker not assigned to them. Students are not permitted to affix stickers or other adhesive items to the lockers, nor are they allowed to bring in a combination lock.

46. 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 at the bottom of the main stairwell. Items that are not claimed by the end of June will be donated to charity. Please note that donations will also occur throughout the year as storage space dictates. Children are not permitted to take items out of lost and found that are not theirs.

47. 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 kjoliver@southfayette.org or 412.221.4542 x429.

48. 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 Township School District requests that medicine be 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 need to also 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. 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 or it can be found on the South Fayette District's homepage.

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.

** 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 use of the medication. In addition, 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 to keep 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/guardian 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.

Elevator Passes for Medical Needs

Pending receipt of medical documentation for injuries impacting mobility, students may be issued key cards for elevator access. Students will be issued only one card that must be returned after recovery from the medical condition. Lost cards must be replaced at the parent/guardian's expense for a $10 fee. Medical documentation must be submitted to the health office for consideration.

49. 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.

50. Non-Resident

School Board Policy #202 permits students to enroll in the South Fayette Township 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 main office.

If occupancy is not established by the end of the 45 school days and the student and his/her parents desire to continue enrollment in South Fayette Township School District, then applicable tuition must be paid to the South Fayette Township 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 Township 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.

51. 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 watching the SFIS news show. The children may stand during the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and the Alma Mater. 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.

52. 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.

53. Orientation

Parents and students in grades 3-5 are invited to attend **Meet the Teacher** which is held prior to the first day of school. The purpose of the visit is to allow the children to meet their new teacher, visit their new classroom and gather information in regard to grade level curriculum.

54. 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 in regard to this or do not want your child to participate, please contact our school counselors.

55. 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.

56. Parking

All visitors to the building should park vehicles in the designated visitor parking spots. These parking spots are closest to the building in the parking lot directly in front of the building. 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 loading dock 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.

57. Personal Electronics, Toys and Collectibles

Students are not permitted to trade items, nor are they permitted to exchange items for cash. Unless expressly requested by a teacher or principal, children are **prohibited** from

bringing their own electronics, toys, games, trading cards, action figures, collectibles, etc. to school. We are **not** responsible for students' personal items that are lost, broken, or stolen.

58. Pets

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

59. Playground

Please note that the playground is not available for public use between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on days when school is in session. The playground is used by both the school and Extended Day Services.

60. 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, Lion Cards, 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.

61. PTA

South Fayette Elementary and Intermediate Schools have a very active and productive PTA. 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 and Intermediate Schools. 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. If you have further questions about the PTA, please email them at president@southfayettepta.org.

62. Recess

Students in grades 3–5 will have a 30-minute daily recess. Teachers may schedule educational breaks in the classroom as needed so that the children can use the restroom and/or get a drink.

Children will go outside for recess if the temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. The combination of fresh air and moving around helps the children to return to the classroom refreshed and ready to learn.

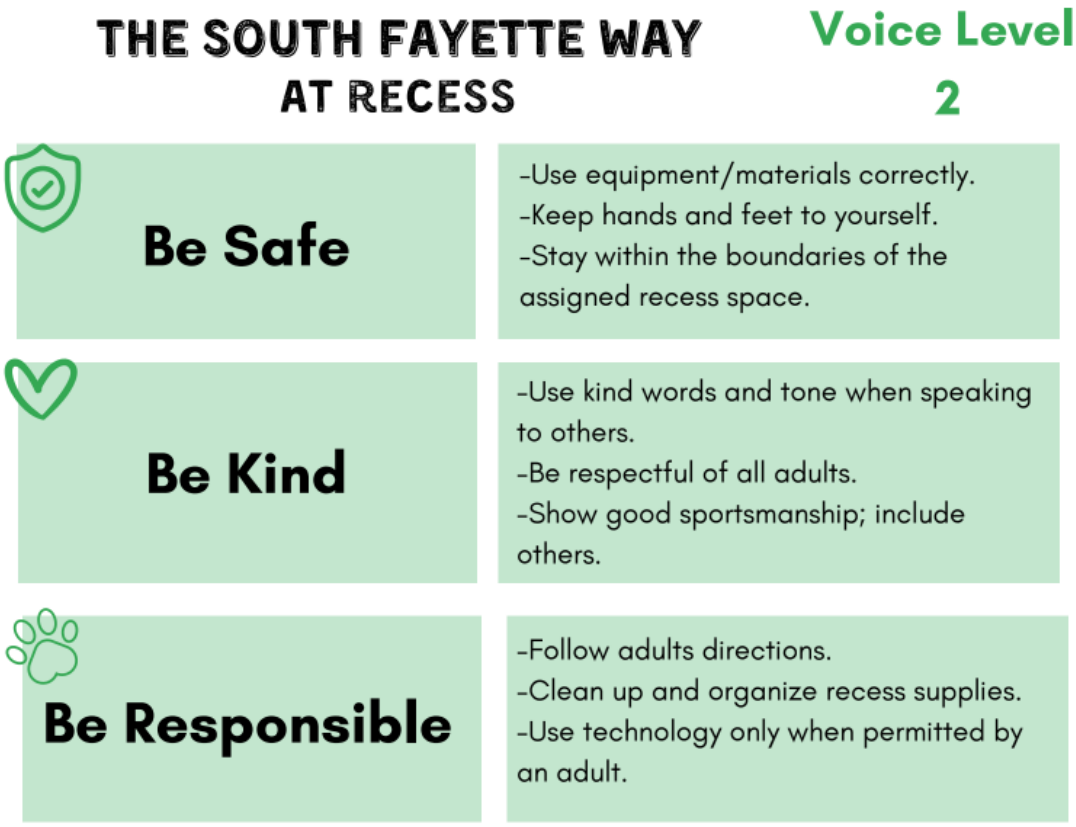
If your child has a medical condition that necessitates them staying inside for recess, please follow the procedures as listed below:

- If your child cannot play outside for one day, the parent/guardian must write a note to the school nurse stating the medical reason why your child needs to remain indoors. Only send a note when it is medically necessary. The school nurse will verify the request and give the information to the office. Additionally, the child may be permitted to have inside recess for one day at the nurse's discretion while the parent/guardian obtains a doctor's note for subsequent occurrences.
- For recurring medical concerns that necessitate a child remaining indoors for two or more days, parents/guardians must provide the school nurse with a doctor's note which includes a timeline for return to outdoor recess.

When your child cannot play outside due to medical reasons, he/she will sit in an assigned area with appropriate supervision. He/she may invite 1-2 friend(s) to participate in appropriate indoor activity such as a board game or craft.

63. Recess Behavior

Through our Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) framework, all Intermediate School students learn and practice universal recess expectations that align to the South Fayette Way, which encompasses being safe, kind, and responsible.



The South Fayette Township School District employs recess monitors to supervise Intermediate School students during recess. Students are to interact with playground monitors in a respectful, appropriate manner. Students who do not follow playground rules may be removed from the playground activity by the monitor for a short period of time. When the misbehavior is serious or persistent, the monitor will submit a discipline slip to the principal. Please refer to the discipline portion of the handbook for possible consequences.

Students are walked to recess by the playground monitors. After providing directions for the day, the children are dismissed to play on the playground. The monitors use a whistle to cue the students to stop what they are doing and listen to the monitors. At the end of recess, the monitors blow the whistle and students line up to return to the building. The

children are expected to put away the equipment they are playing with, quietly line up and listen to directions from the monitors. These procedures are necessary to ensure the safety of all children in the playing area as well as to ensure some order when returning to their classroom.

64. Report Cards

Report cards are issued every nine weeks to all students in grades 3-5. Final Intermediate School report cards will be sent to parents/guardians.

Students will earn a percentage grade in English language arts, spelling, and math. They earn an S (satisfactory) or an N (needs improvement) in science and social studies. The grading system for translating percentages to letter grades can be found below.

All students earn a rubric score in Writing ranging from 1 to 4. All students also earn an S (satisfactory) or an N (needs improvement) in the three math and three reading skill areas listed on the report card. Finally, students earn an S (satisfactory) or an N (needs improvement) for categories listed in the area entitled **Your Child in School**.

Grading System

A+	**100 – 98**	**C+**	**79 - 78**
A	**97 - 93**	**C**	**77 - 73**
A -	**92 – 90**	**C-**	**72 - 70**
B+	**89 – 88**	**D**	**69 - 65**
B	**87 – 83**	**F**	**64 - Below**
B-	**82 - 80**		

65. Safe2Say Something

Safe2Say Something is Pennsylvania's anonymous reporting system designed to help students and community members report serious safety concerns, including threats of violence, self-harm, suicide concerns, weapons, bullying, or other situations that may place individuals or the school community at risk.

Students are encouraged to use Safe2Say Something when they become aware of information that could impact the immediate safety or well-being of themselves or others.

Safe2Say Something is a valuable safety resource and should not be misused to report routine school concerns, interpersonal conflicts, rumors, or as a means of retaliation against others. Intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary consequences and may be subject to legal action.

Phone: 1-844-SAF2SAY (1-844-723-2729)
Website: www.safe2saypa.org

66. Search and Seizure

An administrator may seize any evidence indicating that a student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule that the administrator may find as a result of a search of a student's property, clothed body, or areas designated for a student's use if the search is proper and reasonable.

A student who refuses the request for a search by an administrator that is proper and reasonable may be disciplined under the district's discipline policy. Action may include suspension or referral to the board for an expulsion hearing.

67. 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.

68. Smoking/Tobacco Use Policy

School Board Policy #222 prohibits students from possessing and using tobacco products 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. The complete policy can be found on the district web page.

69. Student Records

The school district maintains the following student records:

- Permanent record folders for each student are stored in the main office and contain grades, attendance, standardized test scores, etc.
- Medical record for each student which is stored in the nurse's office and contains medical records for a 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 Student Support Services office. These records include IEPs, GIEPs or 504 Service Plans.

70. Visitors

All visitors must report to the Main Office upon entering the Intermediate School. Visitors are not permitted to go directly to the classroom without stopping at the Main Office to sign in and get a visitor's pass. All visitors to South Fayette Township School District will be required to produce photo identification 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.

Classroom visits during instructional time are **not** permitted without prior teacher approval. Children should walk to their classrooms in the morning unaccompanied by an adult. Parents should not visit with their child's teacher between 8:15 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. without a scheduled appointment because the teachers are preparing for the instructional day. We appreciate your cooperation in helping to make our school day run smoothly.

Periodically, Intermediate School 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 Main Office, and the administrative assistants will make sure these items make it to the child's classroom.

Parents, siblings and visitors are not permitted in the cafeteria or on the playground during lunch/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.

Any visitor must be accompanied by a staff member for the duration of their visit.

71. Web Page

Please visit the South Fayette Township School District at http://www.southfayette.org for the latest news. The web page is updated frequently.

72. 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. The complete policy can be found on the district website.

73. 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.

To develop a policy and initiate action plans, a committee of students, parents, school board, administration, food service department and public was formed to review current practices and develop guidelines for the future. Some procedures are implemented district-wide while others are unique to the individual building. Particular attention was given to the many food allergies that students may have, thus leading to limitations on food selections that must be considered both in the district food service department as well as in the individual classrooms.

Minimal changes will occur within the food service department as South Fayette met or exceeded most of the guidelines provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The following district-wide "actions" will be implemented:

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, 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 relative to nutrition, physical activity and health.

Important Information related to Student Wellness in the Intermediate 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 PTA sponsors three holiday parties – Fall Festival (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 be nutritious.

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:

c. Whether the student's teacher has met state qualifying and licensing criteria for the grade level or subject he/she is teaching;
d. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status;
e. The teacher's college major, the baccalaureate degree, and/or any advanced degrees earned by the teacher;
f. 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:

1. The right to a response from the District to reasonable requests, made in writing, for explanation and interpretations of the record; and
2. 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.
3. ***A reasonable fee of $.25 will be charged per page for <u>duplicate</u> 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 <u>both</u> 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**:

d) Social security number; or

e) 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 ---

7. The student's name;
8. The name of the student's parent or other family members;
9. The address of the student or student's family;
10. A personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record;
11. Other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name;
12. 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
13. 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):

d) 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.

e) 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.

f) 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.

g) 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.

h) Information designated by the District as Directory Information.

i) 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:

a. **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.**

b. **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.

c. **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.

d. 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:

- Be of school age.
- Have a disability or mental giftedness *and* be in need of specially designed instruction.
- 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:

5. The Child is a ward of the state, or
6. The Child's parent(s) or guardian(s) are unknown or unavailable, or
7. 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:

3. Attending a planning conference to develop an individualized educational program,
4. Being familiar with appropriate procedures for due process and confidentiality of school records,
5. Receiving and responding to requests and notices concerning the evaluation and/or educational placement of the assigned student,
6. 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

Kellee Oliver, Ph.D.
Director of Student Support Services
Ext. 429
kjoliver@southfayette.org

Conchetta Bell, Psy. D.
School Psychologist/Assistant Director of Student Support Services
Transition and 504 Plan Services Coordinator
Ext. 404
clbell@southfayette.org
Hunter Barnhart, M.Ed.
Assistant Director of Student Support Services for Grades K-8
Ext. 679

hlbarnhart@southfayette.org

Katelyn Romain
School Psychologist
Department of Student Support Services
Ext. 218
knromain@southfayette.org

Amy Brooks
Administrative Assistant
Department of Student Support Services
Ext. 428
ajbrooks@southfayette.org

Natalie Macek
ACCESS Coordinator/Administrative Assistant
Department of Student Support Services
Ext. 403
njmacek@southfayette.org

Appendix:

Unlawful Harassment (School Board Policy 103)
Weapons Policy (School Board Policy 218.1)
Tobacco Use (School Board Policy 222)
Hazing (School Board Policy 247)
Bullying/Cyberbullying (School Board Policy 249)
Educational Environment/Anti-Intimidation (School Board Policy 256)
Acceptable Use of Internet (School Board Policy 815)
McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act