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September 26, 2014

Dear Parent(s),

The State of Michigan, under Section 21f of the State School Aid Act, has launched the choice for parents to request that their student(s), in grades 6-12, be enrolled in no more than two (2) online courses in place of a currently scheduled course. Southgate Community School District (SCSD) supports online learning, and as a District, we pride ourselves on forward movement on innovative uses of technology to support learning.

Online learning holds great promise as an instructional approach to expand and customize learning opportunities for students. However, it is substantially different from face-to-face instruction and usually works best when thoughtful planning supports individual enrollment decisions. I encourage you to talk with your student to examine if online learning is a good fit for her or him. Additional information is available on the Southgate Community Schools website at www.southgateschools.com

To help you prepare for making the decision about whether your student has the characteristics to be successful learning online, we recommend you review the *Parent Guide to Online Learning* at http://media.mivu.org/institute/pdf/parent_guide_2013.pdf.

The Guide examines how online learning supports next generation learning models, poses practical planning questions, provides a preparation checklist, offers advice for parents and includes an online learner readiness rubric. This guide will help you prepare for a conversation with your son or daughter.

Students may select online courses from the statewide catalog of online course titles available at <https://micourses.org/>. We are developing guidelines and procedures to accommodate student/parent requests to take online courses. We are excited about this opportunity, but equally cautious given the amount of media hype and misperceptions associated with online learning, especially from students.

If you believe your child would excel in this environment please contact your building administrator. Enrollment forms should be completed by April 1st for the online course/s for the following school year.

Please direct your questions related to online courses to pastorj@sgate.k12.mi.us. For an explanation of the process being used by Southgate to implement the new policies that expand online learning options for students

Sincerely,



Jill Pastor
Director of Curriculum/Federal Programs