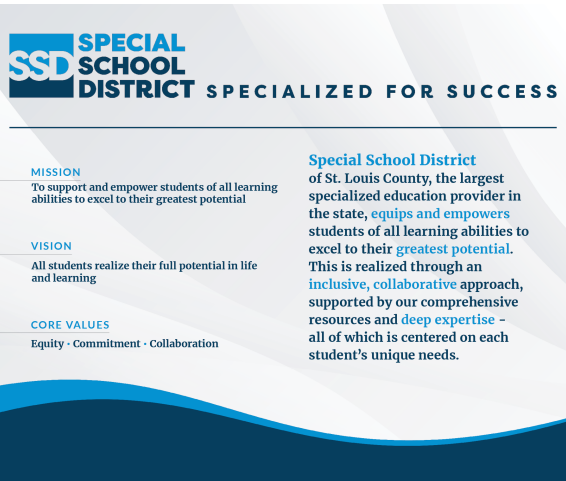


FAMILY ENGAGEMENT GUIDE



SPECIALIZED FOR SUCCESS





SSD's COMMITMENT TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Special School District (SSD) believes that the responsibility for the education of a student is shared between the family and the school. Parents and families of all economic, racial and ethnic, cultural, and educational backgrounds can have positive effects on their student's learning. SSD recognizes the importance of eliminating barriers that limit family engagement, and believes that it is important to provide an environment that encourages partnership with families.

Special School District welcomes the support of families and encourages involvement in their student's learning both at school and at home.

We hope you find the information in the **Family Engagement Guide** to be helpful when communicating with your student's teacher and the school team. The administration, teachers, and staff of SSD are here to help in every transition of your student's life, from early childhood through post-secondary.

PARENT EDUCATION AND DIVERSITY AWARENESS (PEDA)

The **mission** of the SSD Parent Education and Diversity Awareness Program champions meaningful inclusion, diversity awareness, and family engagement through supporting and working with everyone who touches the student's life. The **PEDA** program utilizes a number of strategies and services to reach and support all families and stakeholders. PEDA supports our stakeholders through:

- Consultation
- Resource and referral
- Problem-solving
- Collaboration with community agencies
- Parent Advisory Council (PAC)
- Support and leadership development
- Free Family Workshops/Training (topics include transition, behavior supports, and understanding the IEP process)

For questions or to make an appointment contact PEDA Staff:

Latrisa Morgan, Administrator, Student Support Services: 314.989.8438

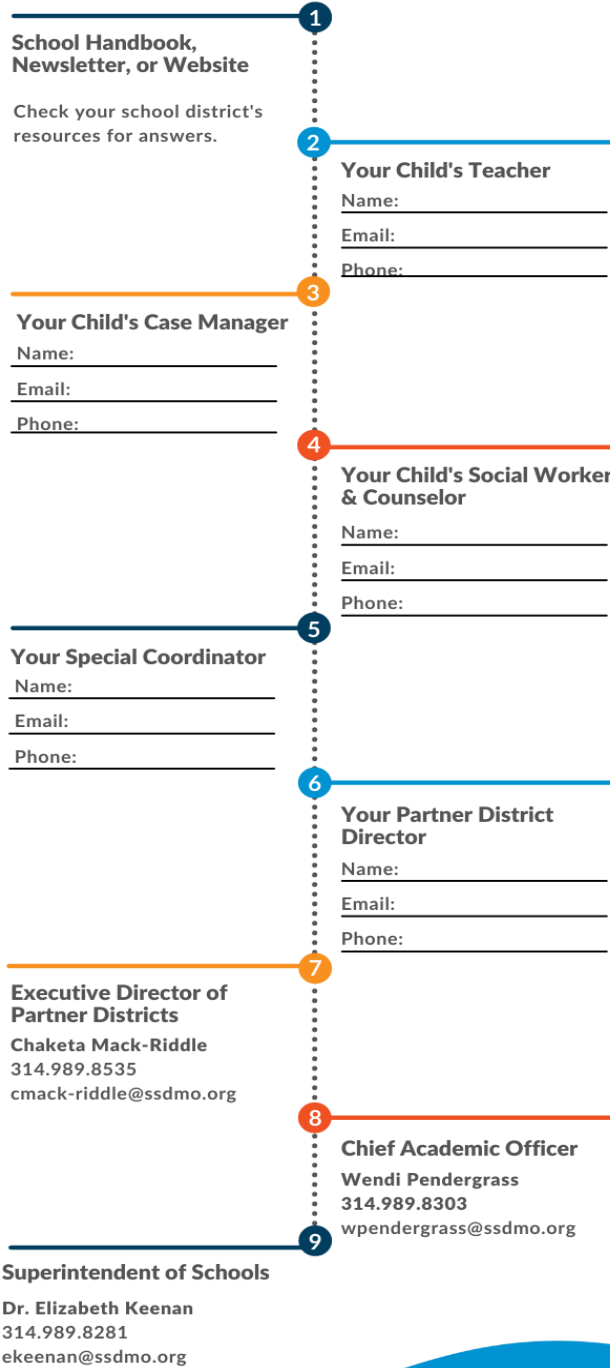
Debra Fiasco, Administrator PEDA Liaison, South Tech, Southview, & Vocational Skills Program: 314.989.8108

Email: ssdpeda@ssdmo.org

INFORMATION NAVIGATION LADDER



As you look for information about supporting your student's special educational success, follow this optional order of contacts.



WHO SHOULD I CALL?

Use the chart to fill in contact information for your child's educator team. When written information doesn't answer your questions, it is usually best to start with your child's teacher. **Family Tip: Share your preferred communication method with your child's educator team!

Additional Contacts

SSD Central Office: 314.989.8100

SSD School Board: 314.989.8149

District Nurse: 314.989.8484

District website: www.ssdmo.org

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Office: 314.989.8411

Family & Community Outreach Manager, Adrienne Eaglin: 314.989.8311

Federal Programs (Title I, EL, Homeless, Foster Care), Esthere Scott: 314.989.8542

Parent Education & Diversity Awareness, Latrisa Morgan: 314.989.8438

Related Services: 314.989.8142

Social Workers Office: 314.989.8142

Student Records: 314.989.8170

SSD Student Transportation Office: 314.989.7118

Central Garage: 314-989-7160

North Garage: 314-989-7753

South Garage: 314-989-7561

You may also want to contact your school directly to find out about programs, staff/counselor support resources, workshops, leadership opportunities, and school-based community partnerships available in your particular district.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR STUDENT

Sometimes, just knowing what questions to ask can make all the difference in helping you support your student's success. Here are a few suggestions to get you started.

- Can you show me something you learned or did today?
- What was the hardest thing you had to do today?
- Tell me about the best part of your day.
- Tell me about what you read in class.
- Who did you sit with at lunch?
- How did you help somebody today?
- Tell me something that made you laugh today.
- What rules are different at school than our rules at home?

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

Below are questions families can ask that support monitoring student progress.

- What is the best way for us to communicate?
- Is my child performing at a proficient level (up to standard) in basic skills? If not, is my child above or below? (If it's below, ask: What is your plan for helping my child catch up? How can I help?)
- What assessments does my child complete? How often? How do the assessments support my child's post-secondary goals?
- What do my child's test scores show? What are his/her strengths and weaknesses?
- Can we go over some examples of my child's work? Will you explain your grading standards?
- How can we work together to help my child?
- Does my child seem to like school and get along with classmates?

5 ROLES FAMILIES PLAY TO ACCELERATE STUDENT LEARNING



COMMUNICATE HIGH EXPECTATIONS for student performance. Teachers can help families by sharing information about standards and skills.

MONITOR THEIR STUDENT PERFORMANCE by regularly checking in with them and the teacher. Teachers can support families by proactively engaging with them about student progress.



SUPPORT LEARNING AT HOME by reinforcing what is being taught in schools. Teachers can help families through consistent partnership and communication.

GUIDE THEIR STUDENT'S EDUCATION from preschool to college. The school community can support by connecting them to resources and activities to support their unique needs.



ADVOCATE FOR THEIR STUDENT to ensure they get the necessary support needed. Teachers can engage in two way communication and create feedback-friendly environment

3 QUESTIONS TO ASK TO BE AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATOR



WHAT DOES EFFECTIVE FAMILY ADVOCACY LOOK LIKE?

Is this the right person to help me in this situation? Will my approach motivate and encourage the person to cooperate?

1

To be an effective parent or family advocate, I should know:

- General and current information about student progress
- How to communicate in a way that can bring about desired results
- The person to contact to get information (See Navigation Ladder)
- Rights and responsibilities
- The services and resources available
- Policies that govern those services

What would help my student improve? What do I want the person to do for my student or me?

2

When should I advocate for my student?

When you have concerns about your student's education that have not been addressed.

When you recognize gaps in services that may hinder your student's ability to learn.

What can I do to partner with staff to help my student?

3

How do I know when I need partnership support?

When you are unsure about roles and responsibilities.

When there are gaps in your understanding of policies and procedures.

When you do not feel that you have been understood.

Q: What does it mean to advocate for my student?

A: An advocate is one who supports or promotes the interests of another. A parent or family member can be their student's best advocate.

INSTRUCTION RESOURCE CENTER (IRC)

Are you looking for tools and resources to strengthen your student's skills?

The IRC, located at SSD Central Office, contains thousands of professional books, journals, flashcards, books on tape, educational games, software, and adaptive and assistive devices that are available for checkout to families and students served by SSD for use in their homes.

Visit the IRC website at <https://www.ssdmo.org/Domain/138> for more information, to browse the online catalog, and for hours of operation. You can also contact Heather Mulford, Library Media Specialist at 314-989-8308 or by email at kmmulford@ssdmo.org.

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

- Monthly School Board Meetings (live and archived on YouTube)
- Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings
- SSD Family and Community Resource Center
- Fred Saigh Parent Leadership Institute
- SSD Parent Education Workshops

FOLLOW US @ssdstlco



Should you have any suggestions about ways that SSD can further support your families' engagement efforts, please contact:

Adrienne Eaglin 314-989-8311
aleaglin@ssdmo.org
Family and Community Engagement Manager

Michelle Franklin 314-989-8034
mfranklin@ssdmo.org
Family and Community Engagement Support

Special School District Notice of Non-Discrimination and Accommodation

Special School District does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation against an individual based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation, ancestry, disability, veteran status, age, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by federal or state law in its programs, activities and employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Direct inquiries and complaints under this policy to Special School District's Director – Compliance Liaison, 12110 Clayton Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63131, telephone (314) 989-8100 or to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 320, Kansas City, Missouri 64106, telephone (816) 268-0550, fax (816) 268-0599, TDD (800) 877-8339, email OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov. Information about the existence and location of services, activities, and facilities accessible to impaired persons can be obtained from the Special School District's Director – Compliance Liaison at the phone number and address listed above. 6/2018