



PARENT
HANDBOOK
2023-2024

August 2023

Dear River Springs Families,

Welcome to River Springs, home of the Navigators! River Springs is a welcoming and inviting school located in the Dutch Fork cluster of schools. Parents, students, teachers, and the surrounding community are all active participants that help our students achieve their personal best. I encourage you to explore our parent handbook to learn about our school.

This handbook has been created just for parents and guardians of River Springs Elementary students. Inside this book, you will find great information about our school, answers to frequently asked questions, and tips that will help you and your family get the most out of your River Springs experience.

Thank you for trusting our staff at River Springs Elementary with your child(ren). We are always working together to build the future.

Sincerely,

Mr. Matt Gams,
RSES Principal

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Absences

Regular school attendance is necessary if a student is to make academic progress. A student should be in school every day he/she is able. A note is required for each absence or tardy and should be sent within **three days** of the student's return to school. You can also access our online excuse form on our school's website or email Teri Applegate at Tapplega@lexrich5.org. South Carolina attendance regulations state that students may not miss more than 10 days of school whether the absences are lawful or unlawful. Examples of lawful absences are:

1. Medical excuse/legal excuse
2. Death in immediate family
3. Observance of recognized religious holidays
4. School-related activities that have had prior approval
5. Other absences for extenuating circumstances approved by the principal or designee

Attendance

It is also vital that students arrive at school on time to school each day. Our doors open at 7:15 am. The first bell rings at 7:45 AM. This is a warning bell that class will begin in 5 minutes. A second bell rings at 7:50 AM. Students arriving after 7:50 AM are considered tardy and an adult must sign them in at the office.

If your child accumulates excessive tardies, three consecutive absences or five or more unexcused absences, an Attendance Improvement Plan will be created with the Assistant Principal. Students with extended absences related to medical reasons may be eligible for homebound instruction. For more information regarding homebound instruction, please contact our Assistant Principal at 476-4400.

Early Dismissal

If your child is sick and needs to leave school early or if you wish to pick up your child during the school day, you must come to the office to sign your child out of school. When it is necessary for someone else to pick up your child, **written authorization from the parent is required to ensure the safety of your child.** The school reserves the right to require proper identification when a child is signed out. Each minute of instructional time is important, and we encourage you not to schedule appointments during school hours. A student will be marked absent if signed out for the day before 11:30 am. Except in the case of appointments or emergencies, we ask that you not come in to sign out students after 2:15 PM. Frequent early dismissals result in the loss of valuable instructional time. An administrator must approve any early dismissal after **ten dismissals** have been accrued during the school year. We ask that you please watch the newsletter for important dates such as standardized testing to avoid interruptions on these days.

Emergency Procedures

River Springs has a detailed plan for dealing with emergency situations. Please be assured that a school official will attempt to notify parents if their child has been injured. The parents of uninjured students will be notified either by telephone or by a note sent home with the student indicating the nature of the emergency. When possible, these students will be sent home by their usual mode of transportation.

Emergency School Closing

When inclement weather occurs, district administrators attempt to make a decision regarding the school's opening in a timely manner. This decision should be broadcast by 6:30 AM on Columbia area radio and television stations. Parents will be asked to complete an Emergency Closing Form. Please make your child aware of the information indicated on the form.

Notify the teacher immediately if any changes are made. Please do not plan for your child to use the telephone under emergency conditions. Your child's teacher will follow your instructions for an emergency dismissal that you recorded on the pink or blue dismissal card you filled out at the beginning of the school year.

Notes Required from Parents

The school requires notes from parents with signature explaining the following:

- ◇ absences/Access to electronic form is on our website
- ◇ requests for early dismissal
- ◇ requests to miss recess or physical education (Doctor's note is needed)
- ◇ permission for field trips
- ◇ permission to go home with another student
- ◇ prolonged absences from school
- ◇ any change in the usual method of transportation (Handwritten note required with the signature is required)
- ◇ authorization to administer prescription medicine (health room has a specific form)
- ◇ allergic reactions
- ◇ specific medical treatment or special health needs

Phone Messages

Please make all arrangements for after-school activities and transportation with your child before school each day. Students are allowed to use the office phone for emergencies only with written permission from their teacher. Please promote your child's development of responsibility by making certain that he/she understands that forgetting—whether lunch, homework or other items—is not considered an emergency. Parents may leave messages for teachers on their school voice mail. If you would like a parent- teacher conference, please make arrangements in advance for a time convenient to both of you when the daily instructional program will not be interrupted.

General Information

Behavior Expectations for Success

The River Springs family comes together each day to learn and to work. In order to help all of our students make appropriate behavioral choices, we have established the GATOR goals. Our hope is that the students will accept responsibility for following our GATOR goals each day. If behavior problems surface, they are resolved first between teacher and student. Teachers will communicate with parents regarding any behavioral issue that is ongoing or serious in nature. If problems cannot be worked out satisfactorily at the classroom level, students may be referred to a member of the administrative team. An administrator will intervene immediately should any case of severe misbehavior occur.

Bright Arrows

Lexington/Richland Five will be using a system with the capability to communicate directly with every family in the district in a fast, efficient manner. Bright Arrows has the ability to call hundreds of phone numbers in a matter of moments to notify families of school closings or delays due to inclement

weather or other unforeseen circumstances. In addition, schools have the capability to use Bright Arrows to contact families of students who attend their schools with news such as upcoming teacher/parent conference days, PTO meetings, late bus information and other school-based news. In order for this system to work efficiently, parents must make sure they notify the school of any change in phone number(s). The district will continue to use local media outlets such as television and radio stations as well as the breaking news email group to inform parents of emergency closings or delays.

Cafeteria Information

We are fortunate to have a wonderful cafeteria staff that provides a nutritious lunch for students each day for minimal cost. One carton of milk (plain or chocolate) is included with lunch. You are free to deposit money in your child's account with a check or cash at any time and in any amount. It is preferred that you use www.linqconnect.com system. When your child's account is running low in funds, a note will be sent home in your child's daily or weekly folder. Your child's PIN # is his/her own personal number. No one (including other students, siblings or parents) will be able to take money out of your child's account. Applications for free or reduced-cost meals will be sent home the first day of school. **Please remember that a new application must be completed each year.** Parents are invited and encouraged to eat lunch at school with their child at any time (*When the D5 Visitor Policy is lifted due to Covid*). Adults may purchase a lunch from the school cafeteria or you may bring a lunch from home. Parent tables are provided along the window side of the cafeteria. You may join your child for lunch at that table, however, due to space limitations, no other classmates may join you.

Additionally, only food items prepared in the cafeteria may be served to students in the cafeteria. This includes birthday treats. Please see your child's teacher about other alternatives to make your child's birthday special. One option to consider is purchasing ice cream for all the students in the class.

Child Abuse

Any teacher, nurse, counselor or other school professional acting in an official capacity who has reason to believe a child under the age of 18 has been subjected to or adversely affected by physical, mental, or emotional abuse/neglect must report this to the County Department of Social Services or appropriate law enforcement agency in accordance with the SC Child Protection

Directory Information and School Records

As stated in School Board Policy JR, student records will be handled in a manner consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended. If a student transfers and enrolls in a school other than River Springs Elementary School, his/her educational records will be transferred to that school or school system upon request by the school/school system. The parent/eligible student has the right to request a copy of the record that was disclosed. Parents/eligible students also have a right to request an amendment of educational records if they believe the record contains information that is inaccurate or misleading.

Health Room

The health room is operated daily under the supervision of a registered nurse. The school nurse is responsible for maintaining a health record on all students. The health room is designed to be an emergency station to care for minor illnesses or injuries that occur at school. Injuries or health concerns that occur **outside of school** should be **treated at home** or **by your health care provider**. The school nurse cannot diagnose or prescribe treatment. This is the responsibility of your family physician or health care provider. There are times when a student should remain at home for his/her own welfare and for the protection of others. Students with a **temperature of 101** or greater must **remain home** until their temperature has been under 101 for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. Students with

vomiting or diarrhea must remain at home until they have been symptom free for 12 hours and been able to tolerate a meal. For other conditions that would require your student to remain at home please see DHEC's "School Exclusion List" for students who are in 1st through 12th grade and DHEC's "Childcare Exclusion List" for students who are in K3, K4, K5, or who are medically fragile.

These exclusion lists may be located through the district's web site. If a student develops a communicable disease, the parent should notify the school nurse. This will allow the nurse to alert the teachers to observe other students for symptoms or to notify appropriate persons if needed. Parents should also notify the school nurse of any special health needs. In the event that a student becomes ill or injured and needs to go home, the persons listed on the health card will be contacted and expected to come for the child immediately. For this reason, the school should be kept up-to-date on any changes in phone numbers of those persons to be contacted in an emergency.

In an effort to reduce the spread of contagious illnesses, our teachers and staff are asked to support students with minor cuts and injuries in their classroom. This also includes the loss of a tooth, minor nosebleed, and potty accidents.

Medications

Medications to be taken during school hours must be brought to school and delivered to the school nurse or designated adult in the ORIGINAL container with all labels intact. Over the counter medications should only be sent to school for a specific condition your child is known to experience. Whenever possible, medications should be given before or after school. All medications (including over the counter medications) must be accompanied by parental permission and written authorization from the prescribing physician or health care provider. Herbals, food supplements, alternative medicinal products,

and other items that do not have FDA approval also require a written order from a prescribing health care provider. The permission for school administration of medication form is available at **your child's school** and through the district's web site. A record of all medications administered at school will be kept for each student. Only those students who have met all of the requirements to self-medicate, will be allowed to keep medications on their person.

All other medications will be kept at school and must be picked up by a responsible adult when the medication is discontinued, expired, or at the end of the school year. Medications are not sent home with students. At the time a prescription is filled, ask your pharmacist to prepare a separate bottle labeled for school use. If medications are needed on a field trip, the parent/guardian is encouraged to provide the medication in the original pharmacy-labeled bottle with only the dosage(s) needed for the trip along with the consent form signed by the health care provider. The nurse cannot repackage any medications and will need to send the student's medication bottle containing all of their medication on the field trip if a bottle containing only the required dose is not provided. If over the counter medications are necessary, please purchase and send the smallest size available for this medication along with the consent form signed by your health care provider. If your student will require medication on the field trip that is not currently being given at school you will need to turn the medication, along with the required consent forms into the school nurse one week prior to the field trip. This allows time for the nurse to verify that there are not any problems with the medication and/or consent forms and to train the teacher to properly assist your student with their medications.

*At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to
a child's success is the positive involvement of
parents
-Jane D. Hull*

Home-School Communication

River Springs Elementary wants to keep you informed throughout the school year. Your child will be bringing home a white folder with school papers and other information. Please review the materials with your child, sign the appropriate papers, and have your child return them the following day. In an effort to conserve resources, our school will be sending our newsletter and other information to parents via email typically on Thursdays. Please contact the front office to ensure your contact information is correct. If you prefer to receive a paper copy of any information that is communicated to parents, please contact your child's teacher.

Instructional Program

The elementary instructional program in District Five elementary schools focuses on language areas (reading, writing, and research), math, social studies and science. Students also attend weekly classes in music, art, physical education, French, and computer lab. The library serves classrooms and teachers. It also provides individual students opportunities for independent reading time and research. Special education classes and programs for the gifted are also part of the curriculum. Remedial intervention services are offered for qualifying students. Also available are the services of a psychologist, guidance counselor, speech therapist and registered nurse.

Academically Gifted Program

AGP is designed to maximize the potential of gifted and talented students by providing programs and services that match the unique characteristics of these students. At RSES, AGP students are served through a Content Model for gifted instruction. In the content model, gifted and talented students attend a reading and math class daily where they receive instruction at a pace, depth and complexity appropriate for gifted learners.

At River Springs Elementary, AGP students in grades 3-5 will receive instruction through their ELA and mathematics. Gifted and talented students may be found within any racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group; within any nationality; within both genders; and within populations with disabilities. Identification is a multi-step process, which consists of referral, screening, and assessment of eligibility by a district evaluation and placement team. The State of South Carolina has established three dimensions of giftedness as criteria for placement in the academically gifted program.

In order to qualify for placement in gifted/talented programs, a student must meet the eligibility criteria in TWO out of the following three dimensions:

Dimension A- Reasoning

Students must score at or above the 93rd national age percentile on the composite or one of the subtests of a nationally normed aptitude test. Students may be eligible for placement on the basis of aptitude scores alone if they score at or above the 96th national age percentile on the composite score of a nationally normed aptitude test.

Dimension B- Achievement

Students must score at or above the 94th national percentile on approved subtests on a nationally normed reading and/or math achievement test (MAP) or a qualifying score determined annually by the State Department of Education on PASS ELA and/or mathematics. Students are NOT eligible on the basis of achievement scores alone.

Dimension C- Academic Performance

Academic Performance is only applies if student has already met Dimension A or B. For placement in grades 3-6, a student must achieve a specific performance standard on verbal or non-verbal performance tasks (South Carolina Performance Tasks) administered in the spring of each year. Beginning in grade 7, a 3.75 grade point average in the academic disciplines is used in lieu of the performance tasks.

*No private testing will be accepted for eligibility, but those results may be considered for referral purposes.

Guidance Program

The elementary guidance and counseling program of School District Five is designed to help all students acquire the skills necessary to be responsible, productive and successful members of society. This is accomplished through a wide range of preventative, educational, and responsible services. Counselors are student advocates whose purpose is to help all children achieve optimal growth in their intellectual, physical, social and emotional development, gain the maximum from their educational experience, and be prepared to meet the challenges of a diverse and changing world.

The guidance program is both an integral part of and an independent component of the total education program. Guidance standards adopted by our school board set expectations for students in the areas of personal wellness, interpersonal skills, and career development. In order to provide students, the opportunity to develop these competencies, counselors teach guidance lessons, conduct small group counseling sessions that are growth-centered, problem-centered or crisis-centered, counsel individually with students, consult with parents, consult with teachers and coordinate special programs.

Classroom guidance lessons focus on the three standard areas and may include such topics as understanding feelings, peer relations, conflict management, understanding individual strengths/abilities and career education. Small group counseling activities are designed to help students develop coping skills to deal with difficult or unchangeable life events, increase problem-solving abilities, and to develop confidence in decision-making. If you would like to review any guidance materials or have concerns about your child's participation in group guidance activities, please contact the school's guidance counselor. Parents may withdraw their child from group guidance activities by notifying the principal and counselor in writing.

The guidance program guarantees the student access to the counselor and the counselor access to the student. Students may see the school counselor through self-referral, parent referral, teacher referral, or administrative referral. School counselors adhere to the American Counselor Association's Code of Ethics and the South Carolina State Dept. of Education's guidelines in protecting the confidentiality of students. The school counselor is available to discuss concerns that parents have about their child, their child's school experience, or the district's guidance and counseling program. Counselors are willing to share information about child and adolescent development, learning styles, exceptional children, the academic program, behavior management, parenting styles and community resources. Please feel free to contact our school counselor at any time if you wish to discuss these areas.

Library/Media Center

Instruction in library and study skills is provided by the librarian. Library books are checked out and time is provided to participate in other library-related activities. The librarian also coordinates the use of print and audio-visual materials with classroom teachers to supplement the instructional program. In addition, the librarian organizes the use and dissemination of technology equipment throughout the school.

Posting of Grades

In order to insure parents are aware of their child's current academic progress, grades for academic assignments will be posted by teachers to PowerSchool soon after grading. Teachers will post minor assignment grades within 5 school days and major assignment grades within 10 school days. Minor assignments (such as classwork and quizzes) are assignments that count once in the gradebook and major assignments (such as tests and projects) are assignments that count twice. ***As a reminder, please see the Registrar in the front office to get your child's log in information for Parent Portal.***

Speech/Vision/Hearing Testing

Evaluation for speech, hearing and vision is conducted by district personnel according to SC Department of Education guidelines. Requests for specific tests may be made by parents or teachers to the Director of Special Services at 476-8222.

Special Education

District Five provides educational opportunities for all students, including those with physical, mental, emotional, and learning disabilities. Each elementary school offers a combination resource program taught by certified teachers. These programs provide special services to students who spend most of their school day in their regular classrooms. Students needing more than three hours a day of special instruction or those needing programs for specific disabilities may be served at other schools within the district. The district provides transportation when students must participate in classes outside of their regular attendance area.

School-Wide Policies

Classroom Visits

RSES encourages classroom visits and parents being part of the educational process. In an effort to reduce instructional interruption, we ask that classroom visits be pre-arranged with the teacher. Please help us provide continuous instruction by scheduling times to visit teachers during the instructional day.

Delivery of Items to Students

Flowers, balloons, and other similar items will not be accepted by the school for delivery to students.

Dismissal

If you are unable to pick up your child from school by 3:00 PM due to an emergency situation, we have developed an agreement with our after-school program, Later Gators, to ensure children are supervised in an appropriate manner. This is for use only in emergency situations. When any student is not picked up from school by 3:00 PM, they will be sent to the Later Gators program here at River Springs. There will be a charge of \$25.00 per day that must be paid at the time of pick-up.

Students who are not picked up by 3:00 pm and it is not an emergency situation will go to the front office. Parents will need to come inside to sign them out.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in a manner that will not disrupt classes. Hats, shoes with cleats, bare midriffs, halter tops, tank tops, see-through shirts, and shirts or other clothing with vulgar or inappropriate symbols or words are not permitted in the building. We do ask that students dress appropriately for participation on days that they will be attending physical education class. Flip-flops and other open toe shoes are not appropriate wear for physical activity. Please check your child's schedule so that they may dress accordingly.

Food Items at School

School Board Policy ADF “School Health Wellness,” requires that, during the instructional day, food brought from home to be shared with students must be commercially packaged and purchased from a store. No homemade items will be served to students. Additionally, we ask that parents not send foods of minimal nutritional value to school for the purpose of sharing them with other children. **Please be advised that large, store bought cupcakes do not meet nutritional guidelines and will not be served.**

The wellness policy states that food brought in to share among students

- ◇ at or under 200 calories;
 - ◇ at or under 35% of total calories from fat;
 - ◇ at or under 10% of calories from saturated fats;
 - ◇ Zero trans fat (< 0.5 g per serving)
 - ◇ at or under 35% of calories from total sugars; and
 - ◇ at or under 200 mg sodium.
- must
meet the
following
guide-
lines:

Due to the prevalence of allergies, an ingredient list must accompany all food items.

Items are available through the school cafeteria for birthday celebrations. Please contact our cafeteria manager 2 weeks ahead of time for possible options.

Field Trips

Educational field trips are planned to provide experiences correlated with subjects studied in the classroom. Students are required to have written permission from a parent or guardian prior to going on field trips. All trips are chaperoned by school personnel who may be assisted by parent volunteers. Parents interested in chaperoning must have an approved volunteer application on file. If a bus is used for transportation, a fee will be charged to cover the expense. All fees are paid on student quick pay (Rycor).

Money at School

Payments should be paid online through Student Quick Pay or Rycor for field trips or class events. Cafeteria payments can be made online at www.lingconnect.com. If your child brings cash to school for specific reasons such as purchasing ice cream or tuition for Later Gators, please label an envelope with the child's name and the label the purpose for the money.

Parent Contact Information

The school office must have a telephone number where parents can be reached during the school day, even if that number is unlisted. This is particularly important when emergencies occur. If the number is unlisted, the office staff should be told so that number is used only by authorized persons. Please notify the office staff when changing address, telephone number, place of employment, or email address.

Peanut Butter

New Peanut Butter Guideline for Elementary Schools

School District Five strives to address the needs of students with food allergies by working cooperatively with students, parents, and staff to minimize the risks of accidental exposure to food allergens while at school. Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the district will no longer serve peanut butter in elementary school cafeterias:

1. Elementary schools in School District Five will now serve WOWBUTTER, a soy-based nut-free alternative. To read more about WOWBUTTER ingredients and nutritional facts, visit the company's website at www.wowbutter.com.
2. While the district will no longer serve peanut butter in elementary schools, students can still bring peanut butter and other nut products to school for their own consumption. Schools have procedures in place to avoid contact between students with allergies to peanut butter and those opting to bring peanut butter to school for their own consumption.
3. Parents/guardians are responsible for student health and medical care during activities, events, or functions outside of the school day or normal school operations.
4. Parents will notify schools detailing the presence of a food allergy in their student(s) and will provide the necessary medication, working with school nurses on administration of medicines.
5. Students should not consume food or drink given to them by other students. In the case of a reaction, students should immediately communicate with teachers, administrators or other appropriate adults at school.
6. The district makes every attempt to notify PTO and other groups about its peanut butter guidelines.
7. For more information on food allergies, including how to read food labels, how to educate your students and others on food allergies, and nut-free options for school snacks, visit: FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education): www.foodallergy.org.

Release of Parent Information

The mother and father are the joint natural guardians of their minor children and are equally charged with the welfare and education of their minor children. The mother and father have equal power, rights, and duties, and neither parent has any right paramount to the right of the other concerning the custody of the minor or any other matter **affecting the minor unless** deemed otherwise by the court. Each parent, whether the custodial or non-custodial parent of the child, has equal access and the same right to obtain all educational records and medical records of their minor children. Neither parent shall forcibly take a child from the guardianship of the parent legally entitled to custody of the child. Under certain situations, student information may be released with or without parental consent. At the official request of law enforcement officers, a student's name, address, parent/guardian name, telephone number, emergency telephone number if the home number is not working, and date of birth may be released.

Report Cards and Conferences

Elementary report cards are issued every nine weeks to students in grades K-5. Parents will be invited to schedule a conference with their child's teacher to discuss the progress made during the first grading period. In addition, student work will be graded and sent home regularly. As the parent/guardian, you are encouraged to request a conference whenever you believe there is a need.

School Improvement Council

A School Improvement Council meets regularly at the school. Parent elections are conducted each spring at the school. As outlined by state law and board policy, duties are assisting the principal with preparation of the School Improvement Report, planning the school budget, recommending curriculum standards, and establishing and evaluating instructional goals.

Visitors and Volunteers

We welcome visitors and volunteers at our school. However, for the safety and security of all students and staff, we do require that you go through the office every time you visit to sign in through our Ident-A-Kid system. Entry will only be granted to visitors who are signed in and wearing an Ident-A-Kid sticker. Please do not be offended if a staff member asks to see your sticker. We ask staff members to look to make sure every visitor has a Ident-A-Kid sticker prominently displayed. You must wear the sticker to be visible to all, please do not carry the sticker.

If you are visiting for lunch, please plan on leaving following the conclusion of your child's lunch period, unless you have pre-planned arrangements with your child's teacher. In addition, we ask visitors in the cafeteria to not take pictures or videos during their visit. It is acceptable to take a picture of you and your own child(ren), but not of others.

Recess is a time for students to interact with their same age peers. Due to safety and confidentiality reasons, visitors are asked to not attend recess with students. Teachers are actively supervising students during this time.

Healthy Hygiene

All visitors will engage in hand hygiene which includes, but is not limited to, washing hands with soap and water for at least twenty (20) seconds. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol can be used if soap and water are not readily available.

Wireless Communication Devices

Per district guidelines, elementary students may possess personal wireless communication devices in school, on school property, during after school activities (e.g. extra-curricular activities) and at school-related functions. **However, students may not use wireless devices such as cellular phones, Smart watches, or any other communication devices during school hours (7:15 -2:40).**

Cellular phones or smart watches that ring or vibrate during school hours will be considered “in use”; therefore, phones should be turned OFF during school hours to avoid being confiscated by teachers or administration.

Consequences for using personal wireless devices (phones, watches, etc.) during school hours:

First Offense: Warning / Return to Parent

Second Offense: School Consequence / Return to Parent

Third Offense: School Consequence / Return to Parent

Fourth Offense: Wireless device confiscated through end of the semester

Transportation Information

Car Riders/ Daycare

Parents who bring children to school by car or pick them up from school in the afternoon are asked to use the entrance on Connie Wright Road and stop at the curb closest to the school to pick up or drop off. For safety reasons, students will not be allowed to walk through the parking lot unless escorted by a parent.

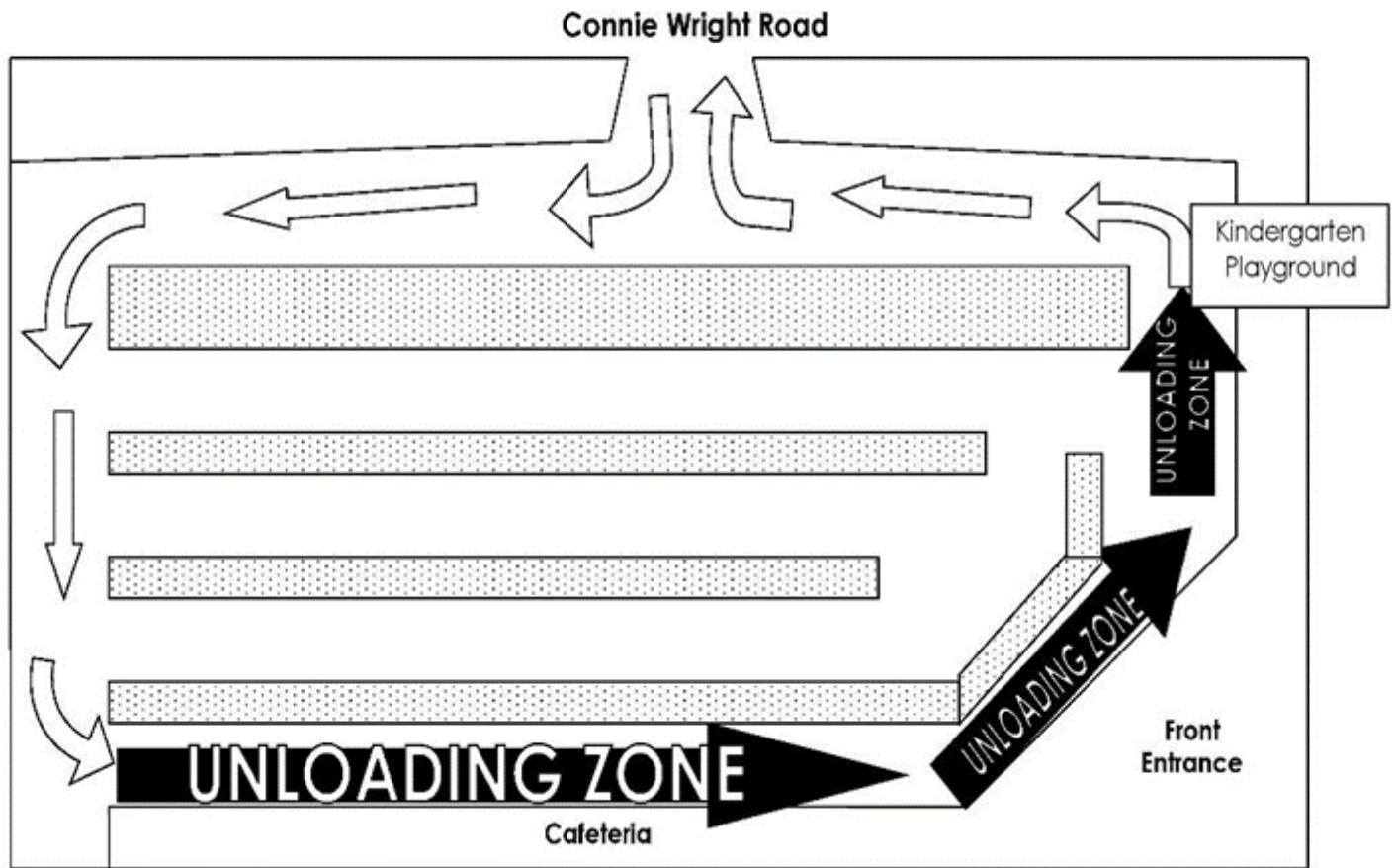
Students who arrive and depart from school by car should be dropped off and picked up in the driveway area at the front entrance of the school. We make every effort to ensure that the car rider line runs in the most efficient manner possible while taking every measure to ensure the safety of our students. Please assist us in these efforts by adhering to the following car rider line procedures:

- ◇ The first car in the line should pull all the way up to the end of the sidewalk adjacent to the kindergarten playground.
- ◇ Students should unload from their vehicles along the entire length of the sidewalk running in front of the school. Please do not release your student(s) from the car until 7:15 am each morning.
- ◇ The unloading zone spans from the first car stopped at the kindergarten wing to the start of the sidewalk at the point where cars round the corner to the front of the school.
- ◇ If at all possible, the unloading zone does not change on days when there is inclement weather. We ask that students come prepared with appropriate rain gear when needed so that they may unload the entire length of the sidewalk. Wait time is drastically increased if students unload only under the awnings.

- ◇ Students should unload even if a staff member or student helper is unavailable to open the vehicle door.
- ◇ Arrange your vehicle so that students may load and unload on the passenger's side only for safety. Please make sure that students are ready to unload when you enter the unloading zone. Students are able to exit their cars in a more efficient manner when seat belts are off, books and other materials are gathered, and shoes are tied. Please take care of signing papers and writing checks prior to entering the unloading zone.
- ◇ The use of a cell phone is strongly discouraged when operating a vehicle in the parking lot. Talking on a cell phone does have the potential to negatively impact a driver's attention to detail and reaction time.
- ◇ We ask that you not pull around other cars waiting in line to unload. We have a lot of activity in the parking lot area and in front of the building during arrival times. Keeping a single file line is one measure we take to ensure the safety of all students as they arrive to school.
- ◇ If you choose to walk your child into the building in the morning, we ask that you park in a designated parking spot. Please remember to sign in through Ident-A-Kid before proceeding to your child's classroom.

Please do not pull up on the curb or park your vehicle in the handicapped parking spaces in front of the crosswalk. These spaces are reserved for our students and visitors with disabilities. Under no circumstances may students be dropped off in the parking lot area. An adult must walk them across at the designated area.

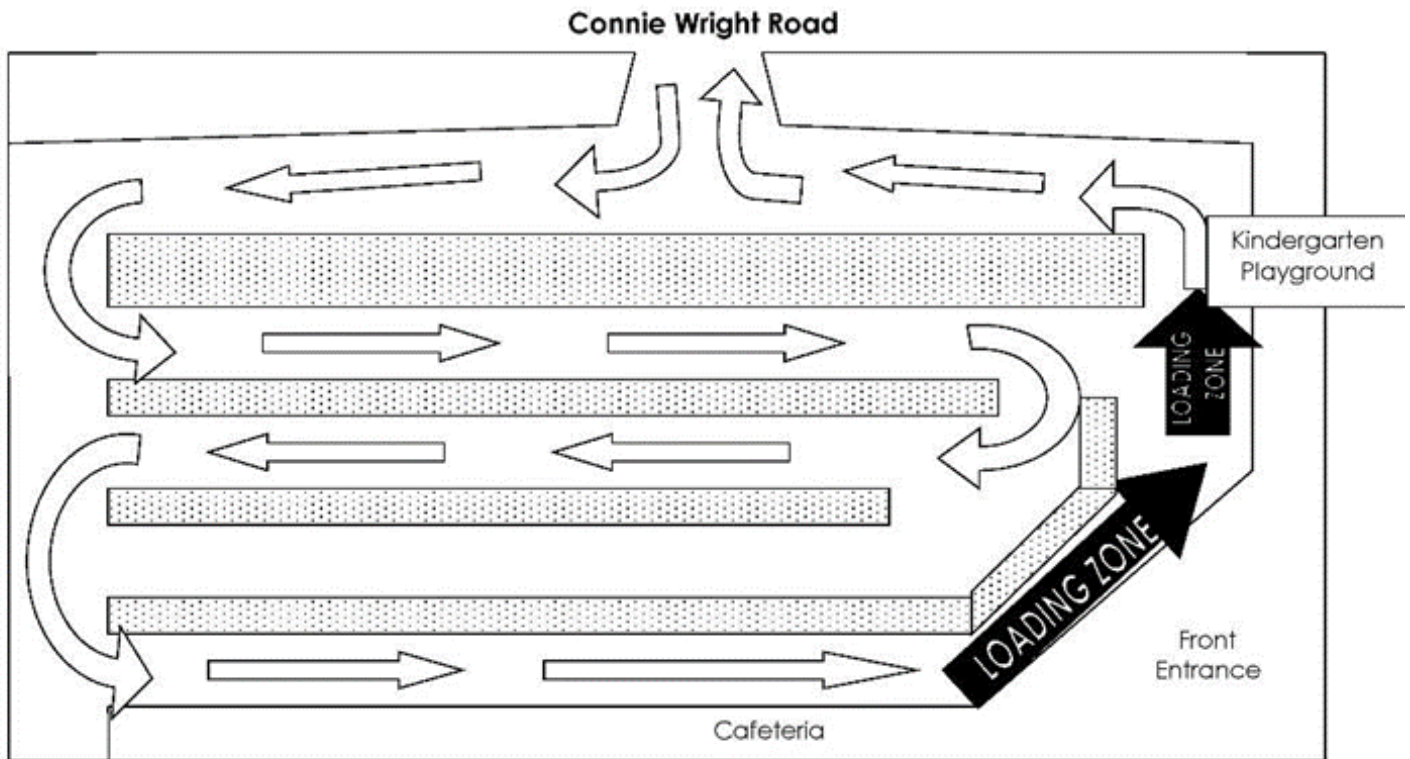
Morning Car Rider Procedures



TWO KEY POINTS:

1. The number one thing you can do to help the car rider line move smoothly and quickly is to pull up to the kindergarten playground or the car directly in front of you (whichever you get to first!).
2. Please encourage your child to get out wherever you end up along the Unloading Zone. Sometimes when it is cold or wet, parents want to unload right in front of the school. This causes a backup and disrupts the flow. Thanks!

Afternoon Car Rider Procedures



TWO KEY POINTS:

1. The number one thing you can do to help the car rider line move smoothly and quickly is to pull up to the kindergarten playground or the car directly in front of you (whichever you get to first!).
2. Please place this sign in the front window of your car. Thanks!

School Bus Transportation

The safety and security of students, staff, and schools is a top priority for School District Five. In an effort to ensure a safe bus ride for all students, the school district has made the following provisions:

The school bus is an extension of school activity. Therefore, students must conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior. The bus driver has the responsibility for supervision of students on the bus. The driver may stop the bus at any time that misbehavior or threatened misbehavior limits safe driving. The driver will report students who create a disturbance on school buses and the Transportation Supervisor may suspend bus transportation to a student whose conduct is persistently and/or flagrantly detrimental to safety and order on the bus. Under no circumstances should a bus driver require a misbehaving student to leave a bus without assuring that the student is under appropriate adult supervision. This may require the driver to alter the normal route to exclude such student.

To and From the Bus

1. Parents or guardian are responsible for the safety and conduct of children traveling between their home and school bus stop.
2. If a student has to walk along the highway in approaching the bus stop, he/she should always walk on the shoulder.
3. Students should walk, not run, when crossing the highway. Students should wait on their side of the roadway and await the signal to cross from the driver.
4. Students should not run alongside the bus when the bus is moving. He/she should wait until the bus stops and then walk to the door.

Waiting for the Bus

1. Students should leave home and be at the stop at least 5 minutes before the bus arrives.
2. Students are allowed to only ride their assigned bus.
3. While waiting, the student must respect the property of the residents, wait in a quiet and orderly manner and stay out of the street.
4. Students should line up in an orderly fashion when the bus arrives and refrain from pushing or charging the bus when it arrives.

School Bus Loading Procedures

1. Be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes before scheduled arrival.
2. Never run to catch the bus.
3. Stay 6 to 8 giant steps (10 feet) away from the road while waiting for the bus.
4. Move toward the bus only when the driver signals it is safe to do so.
5. When crossing the road to board a bus, remain on the left side of the road until the driver motions that it is safe to cross. Check traffic. Walk straight across the road 10 feet in front of the bus.
6. Go directly to your seat upon boarding.

Safe School Bus Unloading Procedures

1. Stay in your seat until the driver signals it is okay to stand.
2. Before stepping off the bottom step of the bus, look to the rear of bus to make sure no vehicle is trying to pass on the right side.
3. Once you are off the bus, move at least 10 feet from the bus immediately. Students planning to cross the road should walk forward 10 feet toward the front side of the bus.

4. Wait for the bus driver's signal to cross the road.
5. When the driver signals, walk forward and stop again in front of the bus where the driver can see you, but near enough to the road that you can see in both directions.
6. Wait for the bus driver's signal again.
7. Walk - never run - across the road keeping watch on the traffic.
8. Never walk behind the bus.
9. Never get closer than 10 feet to any side of the bus.
10. Never try to pick up something you have dropped on the outside of the bus. Tell the driver, so he or she can pick it up for you.
11. Help to look after the safety of small children.
12. After unloading from the bus, go home immediately, staying clear of traffic.

Rules for Riding the School Bus

1. No glass containers on the bus.
2. No spitting, eating, or drinking on the bus.
3. No profanity, verbal abuse, harassment of any kind, obscene or sexual gestures.
4. No standing while the bus is in motion.
5. Keep your feet, body, and bags out of the aisle – it serves as an emergency exit.
6. Band instruments, projects, and other objects cannot take up seating space or block the aisle.
7. Do not ride a bus that you are not assigned to without permission from the Transportation Department.
8. Do not ride any bus during a suspension of bus privileges.

9. No hanging any part(s) of your anatomy out a window.
10. No throwing or shooting any type of object.
11. No play fighting or horse playing.
12. Do not vandalize the bus or ignite any flammable object.
13. Do not hold onto the bus from the outside.
14. Do not possess weapons, explosives, laser pens, or laser pointers.
15. Do not tamper with any bus equipment or controls.
16. Do not make excessive noise or engaging in disruptive behavior.
17. Students must obey and respect the directions of the driver.
18. Students must not exhibit behavior that could disturb the other students or the driver.
19. Students may talk quietly, but avoid loud, boisterous behavior, including singing, clapping, stomping, yelling or anything that could distract the driver.
20. Spraying of cologne, deodorant, body spray or any other types chemicals or aerosols, pump spray, or lotion is prohibited while on the bus.
21. Students must never tamper with the emergency exits or any other part of the bus equipment, including fire extinguishers and first aid equipment unless there are reasonable grounds to believe that an actual emergency situation exists.
22. Students may only board and exit the bus at their designated stop.
23. Students must be at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to their scheduled pick-up time.
24. Students may not go from one school to another school to catch the bus.

Student Behavior

From the time a school bus arrives at a bus stop in the morning, until the bus returns to that bus stop after school, students who ride the bus are, by law, under the control of school officials while on a school bus; the bus driver is the school official that has control of the students. In 1979, South Carolina passed a law against misbehaving on school buses and disobeying the instructions of school bus drivers.

Students who misbehave on school buses will be punished according to the rules in the Student Behavior Code and the laws of this state. The bus driver is authorized to give directions, issue directives, assign seats, and to prohibit any item from the bus that may threaten the safety or welfare of any person. The driver's decision is subject to review by the District's Department of Transportation. When necessary, a student may be removed from the school bus in order to prevent or determine inappropriate behavior.

Establishing a Bus Stop

Bus stops are determined by the District's Transportation Department. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to assist the Transportation Department to determine the safest and most feasible bus stop for their children.

* Students living within 1.5 miles of the school are ineligible for transportation

* Student(s) living less than .5 of a mile from the route must meet the bus at the route.

* School bus stops must have at least .2 of a mile between them. Parents are encouraged to ensure their house address is easy to identify - especially during hours of darkness. Mailboxes should be marked with 3" reflective numbers so drivers (and substitute drivers) can easily identify the stop location. The residential address markers available at the Ballentine or Spring Hill Fire-Rescue Department are

ideal for this purpose.

General School Bus Procedures

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties must safely transport all bus riders to and from school. Students will be denied the privilege of riding the bus if their behavior is unacceptable or infringes on the rights of other bus riders. It will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to see that the student is transported to school during this time. The parents or guardians of a child being transported on a school bus are responsible for the safety and conduct of the child prior to the arrival of the school bus at the child's designated school bus stop for pick up and transport to school, and after the school bus drops off the child and departs the child's designated school bus stop when transporting the children from school. The state's responsibility includes the arrival or departure of the school bus, which is defined as the time that the school bus assigned to the school bus stop activates the required pedestrian safety devices, stops and loads or unloads students, and until the school bus deactivates all pedestrian safety devices.

To ride a different bus or get off the bus at a different stop or to have a friend ride your bus requests must be given to the Transportation Department. If space is available and parental permission given, Transportation Department may approve request. Students may not load or unload at school other than their assigned school unless prior approval is given to the parent or guardian and the school administrator.

Situations may arise in the operation of the school bus that are a concern to parents or other community members. These concerns should be resolved at the lowest possible level of decision making by the individuals closest to the concern; therefore, concerns are best dealt with through communication with the appropriate Area Transportation Supervisor.

Students and parents should not attempt to discuss bus rule violations or suspension matters with the bus driver at a bus stop. Any student who attempts to board the bus while suspended, or interfere with the operation of the bus may be prosecuted under applicable South Carolina law. Rather than trying to solve disagreements with drivers or students or at school bus stops, parents should contact the Area Transportation Supervisor.

Bus Discipline

To ensure the safety of students who ride school buses, School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties has trained bus drivers in the Assertive Discipline Program. This program is based on bus riders' adherence to rules for appropriate conduct and the appropriate consequences that will follow if these rules are not followed. No disciplinary action shall be taken without all procedural rights being afforded to students and their parents as provided by Federal Law, State Law, S.C. Board of Education regulations, and the policies of the District; however, it may be necessary to remove a student from the bus in order to determine inappropriate behavior or to maintain good order and discipline.

The bus driver is responsible for supervising all students on his/her bus. He/she may stop the bus at any time that misbehavior or threatened misbehavior offers a hazard to safe driving. Students creating or being involved in activities causing discipline problems on a school bus, including while entering, exiting, or waiting for a bus, will be given appropriate disciplinary action pursuant to the District's Behavior Code procedures. In addition to disciplining students according to the District's Behavior Code procedures, the Transportation Supervisor may suspend a student from riding the bus. Bus suspensions do not run concurrently with out-of-school suspensions nor do they include weekends or holidays. When necessary, the driver or supervisor may return the bus to the Transportation Department, school or other safe location in order to return the bus to safe operating conditions.

If a student damages a school bus, the student will be charged the assessed repair rate set by the State Department of Education. The student responsible for the damage will be suspended from riding the bus until restitution is made. Appropriate action for disabled students who violate bus rules will be taken by the principal and may involve other intervention as indicated by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) Committee or as required by law.

Video/Audio Monitoring on School Buses

In order to promote the safety and welfare of students and staff members while they are on school buses, the Transportation Supervisor or his/her designee is authorized to place video cameras on State and District buses. Therefore, while inside a State or District bus, all occupants are subject to video and audio monitoring. The following procedures are to be followed:

Students and parents are hereby notified that students are subject to being videotaped on a school bus at any time and the tapes are the property of School District Five. The Transportation Supervisor may periodically review randomly selected videotapes to ensure proper school bus conduct. The videotapes may be viewed by staff members with a legitimate need for access or used as training for school bus drivers. Requests for viewing by parents and other persons must be made to the appropriate Transportation Office who may permit a parent to view that portion of a bus videotape which concerns his/her child. Copies of video tapes will not be given to person or persons outside School District Five.

Kindergarten and 4 Year Old Kindergarten Students

Kindergarten students will not be released from the bus if a parent, appropriate guardian, sibling or designated individual is not at the bus stop. If an appropriate authorized individual is not at the bus stop, the kindergarten student will be returned to the elementary school and parents/guardian notified. Parents must arrange for their student to be picked up at the school. Forms for registering designated individuals are available through the schools or Area Transportation Office.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Notification of Rights under the 2015-16 The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents (including legal guardians) and students over 18 years of age (eligible students) certain rights with respect to students' education records. "Student education records" include any records maintained by a school or the district that are directly related to the student. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review a student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access Parents or eligible students* should write a letter to the school principal and identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access to those records and will notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where they may inspect them.
2. The right to request an amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend an education record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading by writing the school principal. In that letter, they should not only clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, but also specify why they believe it is inaccurate or misleading. They should also provide any evidence to support their claim. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a district-level hearing regarding the request for amendment. The school will provide additional

information regarding the district's hearing procedures when they notify the parent or eligible student of the decision. After the hearing, if the district still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his/her view about the contested information.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent FERPA allows the district to disclose education records to school officials with a legitimate educational interest in the information contained in the record without consent from the parent or eligible student. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health and law enforcement staff); a person serving on the School Board; and a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor or therapist). A school official has a legitimate educational interest if that official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request and without consent, the district forwards and discloses education records to officials of another school district in which a student seeks/intends to enroll, specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes, appropriate parties in connection with financial aid, organizations conducting certain studies for the school, accrediting organizations, to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, to appropriate offices in cases of health and safety emergencies, and to state and local authorities within a juvenile system.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA The name and address of the federal agency that administers FERPA is as follows: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-5920. *An eligible student is defined as a student who reaches 18 years of age or attends a post-secondary school.

Students and parents should not attempt to discuss bus rule violations or suspension matters with the bus driver at a bus stop. Any student who attempts to board the bus while suspended, or interfere with the operation of the bus may be prosecuted under applicable South Carolina law. Rather than trying to solve disagreements with drivers or students or at school bus stops, parents should contact the Area Transportation Supervisor.

Frequently Asked Questions

I'd really like to get involved at RSES, but I don't really know anyone to ask. Who can I contact?

Great! Please call our front office at 476-4400. We will get your information and pass it along to our PTO Volunteer Coordinator. We will find just the right spot for you. You can also email PTO at RSESPTOSC@gmail.com

If there is bad weather, how will I know if school is going to be released early?

If the district finds it necessary to release school early to ensure student safety, all parents will get an automated phone call on the contact numbers that we have available.

Telephone Consumer Protection Act

Compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) – Use of Automated Telephone Notifications

Under a federal consumer protection law, schools need parent/guardian permission to receive automated or prerecorded calls to a cell number. At the beginning of the year, you provided contact information, including the number to which these automated calls should be directed, that the District will use to keep you informed. Should you choose to revoke consent to receive automated calls/texts on your cell phone, you may do so by notifying the District of your revocation. Please contact the Registrar at your child's school for that purpose. If you revoke consent for automated and prerecorded calls to your cell number, you may not receive time-sensitive information / emergency.

The District requires that you provide notice of any changes in contact information (physical address and telephone numbers) to the District within ten days. This includes any change in the cell number you provided to the District. Correct contact information is needed so that the District may provide you with information regarding school operations and any specific concerns related to your student. Should you fail to provide the District updated contact information, including notification that a cell phone number you have given the District has been disconnected or reassigned, please be aware that the District disclaims liability for any alleged damages resulting from your failure to do so.

Parent Involvement Policy – District Written Policy

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties welcomes input and suggestions from our community and from our parents concerning Title I programs and funding. The following is a DRAFT of a District Parent Policy we are considering. We are asking parents and community members to review the document and give us feedback, suggestions and/or recommendations for revisions as we work to make this a document that reflects the climate and the needs of our community. Please forward your comments or suggestions to Sara R. Kearns, Coordinator of Academic Assistance and Professional Development, School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties, 1020 Dutch Fork Road, Irmo, SC 29063; FAX to 803-476-8215; or, drop suggestions by the District Office.

District Five encourages, supports, and values the participation and involvement of parents and families in the educational experiences of their children. The District recognizes each parent as their child's first teacher and acknowledges the powerful influence of parents on their child's life.

The District, therefore, is committed to developing family-friendly schools, offices, and programs to welcome and serve parents and families in positive and supportive environments.

Parents are involved in the development of the LEA (Lead Education Agency) plan and the process of school review and improvement by being part of a planning team that develops an overall Parent Involvement Policy. In addition, all parents are surveyed. This plan is distributed to all parents with children participating in Title I schools and to the community at large. An annual evaluation of the effectiveness of parent involvement will be conducted.

District Office staff provides technical assistance, coordination, and support to participating Title I schools. To assist these schools, District Office staff will be available to assist in the writing of the Title I grant, assist in procurement, attend school improvement/renewal team meetings, assist the schools in implementing effective parent involvement activities and Parent-Teacher organization meetings. Additional responsibilities will be to provide assistance in any area requested to bring about school improvement and increase parental involvement. The District will assist each school in the development of a school-level Parent Involvement Policy. District

Office staff will also see that state and federal guidelines are followed.

The schools and parents will build the capacity for strong parental involvement by entering into School-Parent-Student Compacts with staff and families of students attending Title I schools. Compacts are signed by the Principal, Teacher, Parent, and Student. Efforts to increase parent involvement will also include annual conferences to accommodate varied family schedules. In addition, an annual meeting for parents/families of students served in Title I schools will be held to provide information on Title I legislation, instructional programs and the desired outcomes for students of Title I Targeted Assistance schools. Parents will impact policy-making via opportunities to serve on School Improvement Councils, completion of parent surveys, preview of Title I plans in each school Media Center and/or serving as mentors or through other volunteer efforts. Schools will provide a number of Parenting activities during the year such as Technology, Literacy, Math/Science, Fine Arts, Testing, Cultural Celebration, Academic Information, and other student performance/academic presentations.

The Parenting Program served through Title I will coordinate and join together with other programs by inviting parents to attend parenting classes, Adult Ed classes, workshops and seminars offered by the District and/or state. Additional efforts will be made to work with other community programs to provide information and assistance regarding Title I Targeted Assistance programs. Regarding funding, the District will reserve not less than one percent (1%) of the total Title I allocation to carry out parental involvement to include family literacy and parenting skills.

Regarding funding, the District will reserve not less than one percent (1%) of the total Title I allocation to carry out parental involvement to include family literacy and parenting skills.

Our mission

The mission of River Springs Elementary School, in partnership with parents and community, is to ensure that all students become productive citizens of a global society and confident lifelong learners through a challenging and developmentally appropriate curriculum that encompasses the intellectual, emotional and physical needs of children in a stimulating and safe environment.

Contact Us

Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any questions.

We are happy to help!

115 Connie Wright Road

Irmo, South Carolina 29063

Phone: 803.476.4400

Web: www.lexrich5.org/rses



River Springs Elementary School

115 Connie Wright Road

Irmo, South Carolina 29063