PARTNERS FOR SUCCESS
2026-27

SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY

SPECIALIZED FOR SUCCESS

SSD's COMMITMENT TO FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Special School District (SSD) believes in shared responsibility for our students' education. We are committed to developing a strong collaborative relationship between home, school, and community to support the best outcomes for students. SSD believes that all families want the best for their student, are experts about their student, and have the capacity to support their student. Therefore, we are committed to eliminating barriers that limit access to meaningful engagement and seek to provide an environment that encourages partnerships with families and community partners.

The information in this **Partners for Success booklet** is provided to support families seeking to engage with staff on their student's educator team. While there is no perfect roadmap, this tool provides a guide to support two-way communication, self-determination, advocacy, and networking with several programs and agencies within St. Louis County.

We encourage you to use this tool as a starting point to navigate your student's unique educational journey. Don't hesitate to reach out to your team at SSD for assistance at every transition in your student's life, from early childhood to post-secondary. **We want to partner with you!**

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (FACE)

The **mission** of the SSD's Family and Community Engagement (FACE) is to partner with students, families, and staff to support students' specialized academic, social, and emotional needs to promote self-determination, equitable opportunities, and authentic inclusion. FACE utilizes high-quality, evidence-based strategies and supports to partner with families and school personnel for:

- 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, CtLC, and understanding the IEP process

For questions or to make an appointment, contact FACE Staff:

- **Adrienne Eaglin,** Director: 314.989.8311
- **LaDonna Ellis**, Family Engagement Coordinator: 314.989.8438
- **Esther Beard**, Community Engagement Coordinator: 314.989.8034

Email: face@ssdmo.org

Call: 314.989.8460

Visit: www.ssdmo.org/FACE

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:

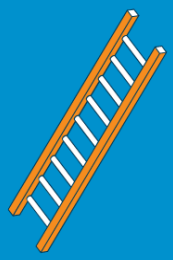
- Can you show me something you learned or did today?
- What was the hardest thing you had to do today?
- Tell me about the best part of your day.
- Tell me about what you read in class.
- Who did you sit with at lunch?
- How did you help somebody today?
- Tell me something that made you laugh today.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

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR STUDENT'S TEACHER

Below are questions families can ask to support monitoring student progress:

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

SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY

FACE Family and Community Engagement

Who do I contact with questions about my student's education?

Start Here

- Speak with your student's teacher or SSD case manager by calling their school.
- If the situation is not resolved, contact the school's administrator or the SSD special education coordinator for your student's building.
- Situations requiring support outside of the school building should include the SSD Director and district administrator at your student's school.
- Refer to the Information Navigation Ladder, found in the Family Engagement Guide.

SSD Supports

- **Family and Community Engagement (FACE)** staff are available to support families seeking services and information for their student.
- **Transition** staff can provide information to support your student in every stage of life.
  - www.ssdmo.org/transition
  - 314.989.8523
- **Student Services** provides a full range of related services, diagnostic evaluations, and student records.
  - www.ssdmo.org/StudentServices

Who do I contact with questions about community or government services?

- **FACE** staff are available to support families seeking information for their student.
- **IDD Gateway Resource Guide** is an interactive resource guide that links individuals to resources and information needed to support students with disabilities
- **Family Navigation Services** provide families with information on systems navigation, resources to meet their needs, and advocacy training.
- **Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis** provides an opportunity to have fun, be active, socialize, and enhance the quality of life of those with developmental disabilities.

Find links to these resources and more by visiting: **www.ssdmo.org/Supports**

Contact SSD's FACE:

- www.ssdmo.org/FACE
- face@ssdmo.org
- 314.9898460

Disclaimer: This is not a comprehensive list of resources. Please contact SSD's FACE to talk about these services, gain support contacting these agencies, and/or applying for support.

Other Services and Benefits

- **Medicaid** provides medical coverage for eligible low-income adults, children, and people with disabilities (birth-death).
- **Department of Mental Health (DMH)** provides services and supports for individuals with disabilities that occur before 22 years of age.
  - Service coordination -or- information specialist (if ineligible)
  - Community Waivers (must first qualify for Medicaid)
- **Vocational Rehabilitation** provides support for individuals with disabilities to fulfill their employment goals. Services can begin as early as 14, but usually 16+.
  - Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP)
- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** provides financial support to individuals with a disability based on financial need. Applications can be submitted online to determine eligibility.
- **Financial Planning**
  - **ABLE Accounts** are tax free savings for disability related expenses.
  - **Special Needs Trusts** allows individuals with special needs to have funds available to them without impacting access to governmental benefits

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2026-27 FIRST SEMESTER

SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY

FACE Family and Community Engagement

SEPT

8 - Lunch & Learn: After-Graduation Supports
9 - Family Cafe
16 - Virtual Open House
18 - Hub Huddle with CAASTLC

OCT

8 - In-Person Workshop: Preparing for Your Student's IEP Using Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC)
14 - Family Cafe
14 - Virtual Open House
16 - Hub Huddle with CAASTLC
27 - Virtual Workshop - Midwest Special Needs Trust

NOV

5 - Family Leadership Institute (Session 1)
10 - Lunch & Learn: Best Buddies Job Programs & Adult Friendships
11 - In-Person Workshop: De-Escalating Challenging Behaviors
12 - Family Leadership Institute (Session 2)
18 - Virtual Open House
18 - Family Cafe
19 - Family Leadership Institute (Session 3)
20 - Hub Huddle with CAASTLC

DEC

1 - Virtual Workshop - Social-Emotional Behavior
10 - Adult Transition Night
11 - Hub Huddle with CAASTLC

READY TO REGISTER?

Registration is required for most of these offerings. To join in on the fun, scan the QR code or visit **www.ssdmo.org/FACE**

NEED MORE RESOURCES?

The Family Toolkit helps families of students receiving special education services navigate SSD supports and services.
www.ssdmo.org/FamilyToolkit

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2026-27 SECOND SEMESTER

SSD SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ST. LOUIS COUNTY

FACE Family and Community Engagement

JAN

12 - Lunch & Learn: RISE Employment Programs
15 - Hub Huddle with FACE

FEB

2 - Virtual Workshop - Preparing for Your Student's IEP Using Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC)
11 - American Sign Language (Class 1)
18 - Virtual Open House
19 - Hub Huddle with FACE
25 - American Sign Language (Class 2)
27 - Family Academy

MARCH

10 - Virtual Open House
11 - American Sign Language (Class 3)
16 - Lunch & Learn: Summer Recreation
26 - Hub Huddle with FACE

APRIL

6 - Virtual Workshop: Understanding Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)
21 - Virtual Open House
23 - Hub Huddle with FACE

MAY

21 - Hub Huddle with FACE

NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT?

SSD's FACE is here to help! Whether you have questions about the special education process and your rights, need assistance in connecting with community resources, or want support in planning your student's transition to life after school, FACE is ready to partner with you every step of the way!

314.989.8460
face@ssdmo.org
www.ssdmo.org/FACE

READY TO REGISTER?

Registration is required for most of these offerings.
To join in on the fun, scan the QR code or visit
www.ssdmo.org/FACE

3 QUESTIONS TO ASK TO BE AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATOR

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

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

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

SSD SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

SPECIALIZED FOR SUCCESS

WHAT DOES EFFECTIVE FAMILY ADVOCACY LOOK LIKE?

To be an effective 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

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.

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.

Please complete this form with your student to share important details about them with members of their educational team. Use and sharing of this tool can support better collaboration and programming for your student's unique needs and future plans. To learn more about how our district is using this tool to promote self-determination, please visit: www.ssdmo.org/ctlc

_____ 's ONE – PAGE PROFILE

What do people like and admire about me?

FACE
Family and Community Engagement

What's Important to ME?

How You Can Best Support Me?

INFORMATION NAVIGATION LADDER FOR PARTNER DISTRICT FAMILIES

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

Additional Teacher Contacts

Effective Practice Specialists

Social Worker/Counselor

School Contacts

Special Education Services and SSD Technical High Schools
If you have questions about the special education services your student receives from SSD and your student attends North Tech or South Tech, please follow the communication sequence for partner districts.

WHO SHOULD I CALL?

Use the Information Navigation Ladder to fill in contact information for your student's education team. When written information found in the policies and handbooks don't answer your questions, it is usually best to start with your student's teacher.

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 Engagement (FACE):
    - face@ssdmo.org
    - 314.989.8460
- Federal Programs (Title I, EL, Homeless, Foster Care): 314.989.8542
- SSD and Partner District Contacts: www.ssdmo.org/PartnerDistricts
- Related Services: 314.989.8142
- Social Workers Office: 314.989.8142
- Student Records: 314.989.8170; e-records@ssdmo.org
- SSD Student Transportation Office: 314.989.7118
    - Central Garage: 314-989-7160
    - North Garage: 314-989-7753
    - South Garage: 314-989-7561

Please contact your student's school directly to learn about programs, staff/counselor supports and resources, workshops, leadership opportunities, and school-based community partnerships available in your home school and district.

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCE CENTER (IRC)

Are you looking for tools and resources to strengthen your student's skills?
The Instructional Resource Center, located at SSD's Central Office, is a free lending library available to SSD staff and families. The IRC offers instructional and curricular items, adaptive and assistive technology devices, professional materials, and more that can help impact and improve student learning.

Visit the IRC website at www.ssdmo.org/irc for more information and to browse the online catalog. You can also contact Amy Sauvage, Library Media Specialist, at 314.989.8308 or by email at asauvage@ssdmo.org.

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

- Monthly School Board Meetings (live and archived on YouTube)
- Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings
- Family Leadership Institute (FLI)
- Lunch and Learn with SSD
- Family Academy
- Virtual Open Houses
- Family and Community Resource Center (FCRC)
- Family Education Workshops
- Family Resource Hub
- Family Cafes
- Hub Huddles

FOLLOW US @ssdstlco

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

Adrienne Eaglin, Director of FACE
314-989-8311 | aleaglin@ssdmo.org

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