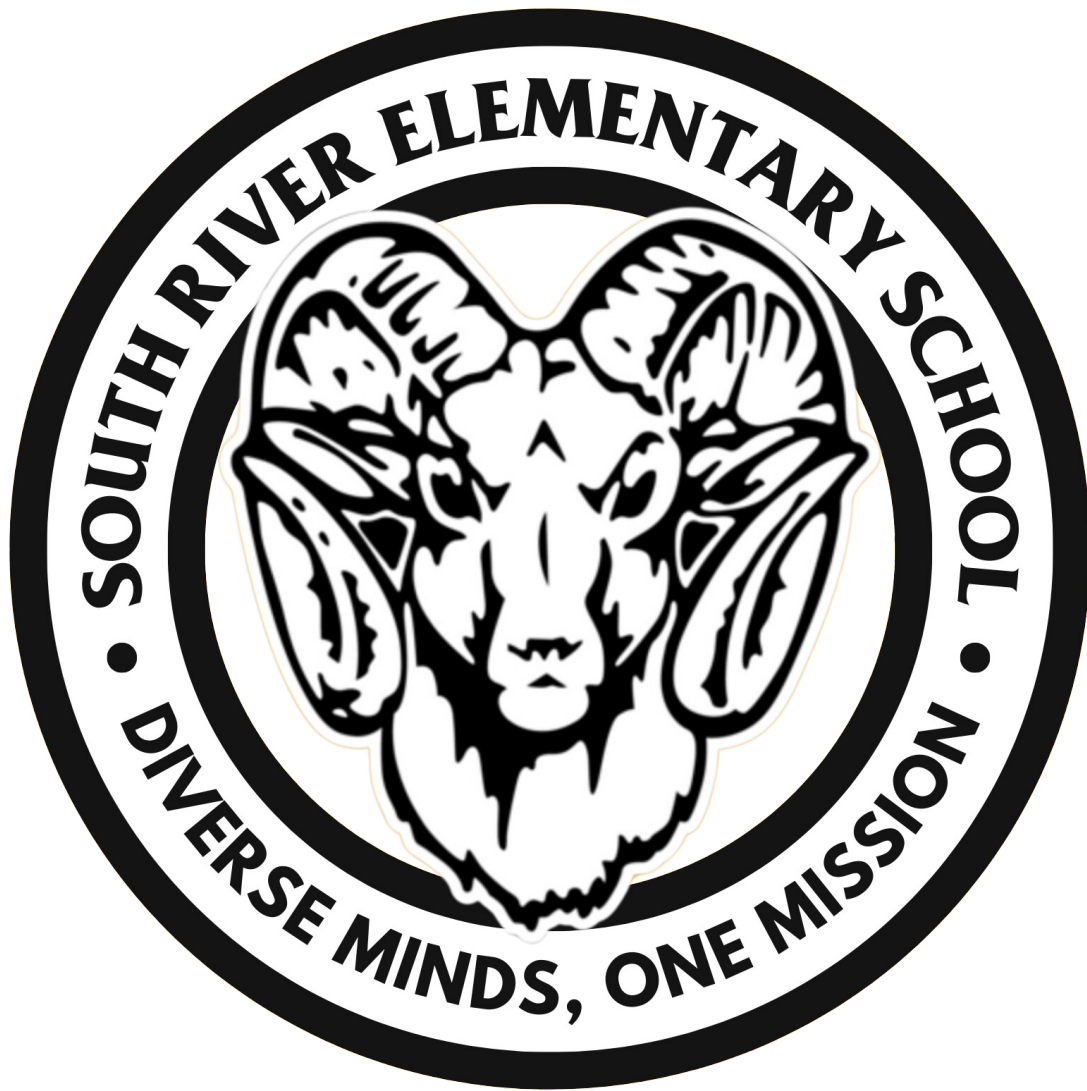




South River Elementary School
Student-Family Handbook
2026-2027

A Message from the Principal

Dear South River Elementary School Families,

Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year!

It is with great enthusiasm that I welcome you and your family back to South River Elementary School. Whether you are returning to our school community or joining us for the first time, we are excited to begin another year centered on learning, growth, and meaningful connections.

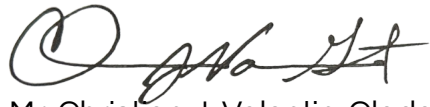
At South River Elementary School, we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environment where every child is encouraged to reach their fullest potential. Guided by our D.R.E.A.M.S. core values: Determination, Respect, Excellence, Attitude, Making a Difference, and Safety; we strive to help students grow academically, socially, and emotionally while fostering a strong sense of belonging.

Enclosed you will find the 2026–2027 Student-Family Handbook. This handbook contains important information regarding school procedures, expectations, policies, and resources that will help your family navigate the school year successfully. Please take a few moments to review it together with your child, as understanding these expectations will help ensure a positive and productive year for everyone.

A strong partnership between home and school is one of the greatest factors in a child's success. We value your support, communication, and involvement, and we look forward to working together throughout the year. Should you ever have questions, concerns, or need assistance, please know that our staff is always here to help.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. Together, we will make the 2026–2027 school year one filled with learning, achievement, and opportunities for every student to shine.

In Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Valentin-Gladden', written over a horizontal line.

Mr. Christian J. Valentin-Gladden
Principal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Topic	Page(s)	Topic	Page(s)
CALENDAR	3	STUDENT PERFORMANCES	18
CONFERENCES AND SCHOOL HOURS	4	STUDENT RECORDS	18-19
TRIMESTER DATES	4	TRANSFERS	19
ATTENDANCE	5-6	TRANSLATION SERVICES	19
RESPONSE TO CHRONIC ABSENCES	6-7	BUILDING SECURITY AND ENTRY	20
ARRIVAL	8	EMERGENCY DRILLS	21
BACKPACKS	8	EMERGENCY INFORMATION	21
BREAKFAST AND FOOD SERVICES	9-10	HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING	22
CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES	10	NJ YOUTH HELPLINE	22
CODE OF CONDUCT	10-14	PARKING	22
DISMISSAL	14	ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT	23
D.R.E.A.M.S. SCHOOL VALUES	15	COUNSELING	23
EXCLUSION FROM ACTIVITIES	15	HEALTH SERVICES	23-24
FIELD TRIPS	15-16	HOMEWORK	24
INVITATIONS	16	INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES	24
LOST AND FOUND	16	RESEARCH	24
NOTIFICATIONS	16	RIGHT AT SCHOOL	25
PARENT CUSTODY	16	GIFTED AND TALENTED	25
PERSONAL PROPERTY	16	SPECIAL EDUCATION	25
PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDING OF PUPILS	17	MAIN OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION	26
PROMOTION AND CLASSROOM PLACEMENTS	17	SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION CONTACT INFORMATION	26
RECESS	17	SCHOOL COUNSELOR CONTACT INFORMATION	26
SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYS	17-18	DEPT OF SPECIAL ED. CONTACT INFORMATION	26
SCHOOL PROPERTY	18	DEPT OF STUDENT SERVICE CONTACT INFORMATION	26

Calendar and Important Dates

DISTRICT CALENDAR

South River Public Schools District Calendar 2026 – 2027

Scheduled Instructional Days: 180; Staff Days: 181

September 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

19 School Days

October 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

21 School Days

November 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

13 School Days

December 2026

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

17 School Days

January 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

19 School Days

February 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

19 School Days

March 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

19 School Days

April 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

20 School Days

May 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

20 School Days

June 2027

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

16 School Days

Notes:

Three inclement weather days have been included in the calendar. In the event additional days are needed, they will be added at the discretion of the Superintendent. Unused inclement weather days may be given back at the discretion of the Superintendent beginning with 3/25, 5/28 and 6/1.

Sept 7: Labor Day

Sept 2: Staff Report for PD

Sept 3: First Day for Students (Early Dismissal for Students, Full Day for Staff)

Sept 4, 8: Early Dismissal for Students, Full Day for Staff

Oct 9: Early Dismissal for Students

Oct 12: Indigenous People Day Observed

Nov 4 – 10: Fall Break

Nov 11: Veterans Day Observed

Nov 20: Early Dismissal for Students

Nov 25: Early Dismissal for All

Nov 26 – 27: Thanksgiving Break

Dec 23: Early Dismissal for All

Dec 24 – Jan 1: Winter Break

Jan 15: Early Dismissal for Students

Jan 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Feb 12: Early Dismissal for Students

Feb 15: Presidents' Day

Mar 12: Early Dismissal for Students

March 25: Early Dismissal for All

March 26 – April 2: Spring Break

Apr 16: Early Dismissal for Students

May 28: Early Dismissal for Students

May 31: Memorial Day Observed

Jun 18: Juneteenth Observed

Jun 17, 21, 22: Early Dismissal for Students

Jun 23: Last Day of School (Early Dismissal for Students, Full Day for Staff)

EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS

The district schedules 7 early dismissal days each school year, and South River Elementary School has an additional 7 early dismissal days for Parent-Teacher Conferences. Parents/guardians are responsible for reviewing the district calendar and conference schedule to be aware of these dates. Families will also receive reminder emails and text messages prior to each early dismissal. Please note that the 21st Century After-School Program does not operate on early dismissal days.

CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice each year, in the fall and spring. Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule a conference with each of their children's teachers, as these meetings are an important opportunity to discuss student progress and support academic success. If concerns arise, parents or teachers should not wait for the scheduled conference dates to meet. On conference days, students are dismissed at 12:31 PM to allow staff time to prepare for conferences.

Fall Conference	October 20, 2026 at 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM October 21, 2026 at 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM October 22, 2026 at 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM October 23, 2026 at 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
Spring Conferences	March 9, 2027 at 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM March 10, 2027 at 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM March 11, 2027 at 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HOURS

Regular Day	8:10 AM - 2:45 PM (Doors open at 7:55 AM)
Early Dismissal	8:10 AM - 12:31 PM (Doors open at 7:55 AM)
Delayed Opening	10:10 AM - 2:45 PM (Doors open at 9:55 AM)

TRIMESTER DATES/TIMELINES

Progress Reports and Report Cards are available each trimester through the [Genesis Parent Portal](#). Parents/guardians are expected to review these important reports promptly when they are posted to stay informed of their child's academic progress.

Trimester Dates		Progress Report Posted	Report Card Posted
1	September , 2026 to December , 2026	October , 2026	December , 2026
2	December , 2026 to March , 2027	February , 2027	March , 2027
3	March , 2027 to June 23, 2027	May , 2027	June 3, 2027

Attendance

ATTENDANCE

Board Policy #5113 – Attendance, Absences and Excuses – which is located in the Policy Manual on the District’s website. Click on:

- Our District, Policies and Procedures
- Online Policy Guide
- Policies in the upper right corner
- Active
- Enter policy #5113

Frequent absences from classroom learning experiences disrupt the continuity of the instructional process and limit the ability of pupils to complete the prescribed curricular requirements successfully.

Please note that it is highly recommended that students do not miss school days for the purpose of vacation. If an absence occurs due to a vacation, teachers and staff will not provide independent school work as this is not comparable to regular school instruction.

Reporting Absences: Parents/guardians must notify the school **by 7:55 AM** each day their child is absent and provide the reason for the absence. Call the Main Office at **732-613-4073, ext. 7255 or 7256** to leave a voicemail. If a call is not received, the school will attempt to contact the parent/guardian. If unsuccessful, the District Truant Officer may be sent to the home.

Excused Absences: Upon returning to school, students must provide written documentation for excused absences (e.g., doctor’s note, court appearance, religious observance, Take Your Child to Work Day). Notes must include:

- Student’s name and grade
- Date(s) of absence
- Reason for absence
- Signature of parent/guardian or doctor

Only absences supported by documentation, as defined by the South River Board of Education policies, are considered excused by the district.

Students with an unexcused absence may not participate in extracurricular or co-curricular events on that day. Participation is only allowed if the student was present or absent for an excused, non-illness reason. Exceptions apply for academic programs.

Unexcused Absences: The school will attempt to notify parents/guardians about unexcused absences by the following school day. If a pattern develops:

- The school will investigate the cause
- An attendance plan may be developed in consultation with the family
- In serious cases, a referral may be made to outside agencies (e.g., DCP&P) if a child is suspected to be missing or at risk

Unexcused Tardiness: Students must be in school by 8:10 AM. Those arriving after must report to the Main Office and be accompanied by a parent/guardian.

- A parent/guardian or emergency contact must sign the student in if arriving after 8:10 AM
- Only Board-approved reasons will excuse tardiness
- Documentation for the late arrival is also needed for it to be excused.

Late Arrivals: If a student arrives late due to a valid reason (e.g., medical appointment), a parent/guardian must sign them in at the Main Office and provide documentation for it to be excused.

Picking Up Your Child Prior to Dismissal: Early release of students requires advance written notice from the parent/guardian stating the reason. Parents/guardians must sign the child out and provide a valid ID. Acceptable reasons include medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside school hours. Documentation is required for an excused dismissal.

In order to avoid classroom disruptions and loss of instructional time, we highly encourage students not to be released from school before 2:25, unless in case of an emergency and with clearance from the school principal. Parents/guardians who pick-up their child before school ends should notify the main office prior to picking up their child.

RESPONSE TO EXCESSIVE ABSENCES OR TARDINESS

The school is committed to working with families to ensure regular attendance and student success. South River Elementary School uses a tiered approach to address attendance concerns:

Intervention 1: One to Five Absences (Early Warning)

- Automated notification sent to parents/guardians
- Teacher check-in with student
- School counselor informed; monitors student for any known challenges
- Attendance handout sent home: Importance of regular attendance and tips for families

Intervention 2: Five to Ten Absences (Moderate Concern)

- Phone call or meeting with parents/guardians by counselor, social worker, or administrator
- Attendance Intervention Plan (AIP) created with input from student, family, and school team
- Referral to appropriate services if needed (nurse, mental health, community agency)
- Weekly attendance tracking shared with student and family

Intervention 3: Ten to Fifteen Absences (Significant Concern)

- Student Success Team (SST) meeting with parent/guardian, teacher, counselor, administration
- Revised AIP with measurable attendance goals and wraparound services
- Mentorship assignment
- Letter warning of potential truancy concern and district policies

Tier 4: Eighteen or more Absences (Chronic Absenteeism)

- Truancy documentation completed
 - Legal warning letter or truancy notice sent for possible court hearing
 - Family/community support team engaged
-

School Procedures and Expectations

ARRIVAL

Students are expected to line up in front of their designated grade-level door. Staff supervision begins at 7:55 AM. At that time, they will be permitted to enter the building and wait in the hallway outside their classroom under staff supervision.

To ensure the safety of all students, the line-up area is a quiet, orderly space - running, playing games such as tag or ball games, and riding scooters, skateboards, or bicycles is strictly prohibited. Violations of this rule may result in disciplinary action.

For the safety of students and staff, we kindly ask that parents and guardians drop off students at the flagpole and avoid blocking any entry or exit doors.

The school day begins promptly at 8:10 AM.

Entry Procedures:

Door # 1: Grade 5 Students Enter
Door # 2: Grade 4 Students Enter
Door # 3: Grade 3 Students Enter

Dismissal Procedures:

Doors # 2: Grade 5
Door # 3: Grade 3
Main Entrance Doors: Grade 4

After 8:10 AM, students must report directly to the main office, entering through the school's main entrance on Johnson Place. After 8:20 AM, parents **must** accompany their child to the main entrance and sign them in with the Main Office.

Morning Drop Off:

- Cars should only use the outer driveway for drop off
- Cars should pull all the way up to the front of the drop off line - this allows the flow of traffic to remain constant
- Parents, guardians, and/or visitors are not allowed to park in any parking spaces on school property
- Staff will assist with morning drop off procedures - drivers should not get out of their vehicles
- Please have your child prepared to exit the vehicle upon arrival

BACKPACKS

Each South River Public School student will receive one clear backpack at no cost. If preferred, families may purchase their own clear backpack instead. Additional or replacement clear backpacks will be available for purchase at each school's main office.

BREAKFAST

The South River Board of Education offers a free breakfast program for students who qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch. South River Elementary School participates in the "Breakfast After the Bell" initiative. Students who do not qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch may participate for a fee of \$1.90 each day if they choose to take one.

This fee would be added to their lunch account and can be paid directly to Maschio's the same way in which lunch is currently paid. Classroom teachers will not be collecting any money. Depending on the daily schedule, the children will eat their breakfasts sometime in the early part of the morning. The menu can be found on the school website. All meals will meet all government nutritional guidelines and be a great way to start their day.

Our district's food service provider accepts daily, weekly and monthly payments. Prepayments are preferred. The school district has implemented the Pay-For-It option of placing money on your child's account via the Internet. To access this website, go to payforit.net and follow the instructions. This program will allow you to track your child's purchases. Payment may also be made in the form of cash or check (made payable to the South River BOE). To ensure proper crediting to your child's lunch account, please send checks and cash in a sealed envelope with the child's first and last name, ID number and homeroom teacher's name, written on the envelope.

CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS & FOOD SERVICES

While in the cafetorium, students are expected to exhibit good manners and appropriate behavior. Students are required to sit at their assigned tables. The following lunchroom rules must be followed:

- Students enter the lunch area by walking to their assigned seats
- Students walk safely and listen to directions from adult supervisors
- Students act appropriately and respect people, food, and the eating area
- Students remain seated unless receiving permission to do otherwise
- Students talk quietly during the lunch period
- Students clean up their lunch table areas
- Student food deliveries are strictly prohibited
- Parents/guardians may not drop off fast food for any students

The South River Board of Education participates in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. Free and Reduced Price School Meals Applications are available online to all students at the start of the school year and are available at any time throughout the school year if a student's household size goes up, a family's income changes or starts receiving NJ SNAP, TANF or other benefits.

Our food service provider accepts daily, weekly, and monthly payments. The current fee for a full price lunch meal is \$3.75. Prepayments are preferred. The school district has implemented the Pay-For-It option of placing money on your child's account via the Internet. To access this website, go to payforit.net and follow the instructions. This program will allow you to track your child's purchases. Payment may also be made in the form of cash or check (made payable to the South River BOE). To ensure proper

crediting to your child's lunch account, please send checks and cash in a sealed envelope with the child's first and last name, ID number and homeroom teacher's name, written on the envelope.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

To support a focused and productive learning environment, cell phone use, including smart watches, smart glasses, tablets, etc., are not permitted during school hours, including in classrooms, hallways, the lunchroom, and restrooms. All electronic devices must be turned off or set to silent and stored in backpacks or designated areas as directed by staff. Unauthorized use during instructional time will result in disciplinary action, including possible confiscation and parental notification. Repeated violations may lead to additional consequences in line with the school's Code of Conduct.

The South River Board of Education adopted a Cell Phone/Electronic Use Policy that can be found on the district's Board of Education website.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

It is very important, for emergency and administrative reasons, that every student maintains an up-to-date address record at the school office. Immediately notify the school if you have a change of address and telephone number during the school year. You will be asked to provide an updated proof of residency for a new address.

CLASSROOM EVENTS AND VISITATIONS

Please consult with your child's classroom teacher before sending in items for a classroom party or other event. Many students have food sensitivities or allergies, and there is increasing concern as to the amount of non-nutritious snacking that students have access to. Healthy snack alternatives are encouraged during all class celebrations. Balloons are prohibited inside the school building. They are a distraction in the classrooms and have the potential to set off the alarm system. All classroom visits must be scheduled in advance.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Students learn best when they feel safe and supported in an inclusive learning environment. This year our students will follow our core values: D.R.E.A.M.S., by showing acts of **D**etermination, **R**espect, **E**xcellence, **A**ttitude, **M**aking a Difference, and **S**afety throughout the school year. Students will be recognized for positive achievements and actions throughout the school year. When students, parents, and teachers work together, a strong sense of pride is developed in which everyone can grow and be successful.

Students who choose not to accept these responsibilities are subject to disciplinary action. Consequences will vary according to frequency, severity, and nature of the incident. At any time throughout the process, intervention by other school personnel may be recommended. All discipline matters will be handled on an individual basis and administrative discretion may be used in the final adjudication of the discipline.

Fighting is not permitted in the school or on the school grounds. It may result in a conference with the student's parents/guardians and a suspension from school. A police report may also be filed as a result of this behavior.

Our school and school equipment is public property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property is cause for disciplinary action. The school requires that vandal damage be paid. If a student accidentally causes damage, they should report it to their teacher immediately, so that the damage is not misinterpreted as vandalism.

Suspension from school is assigned by building administration. It signifies that the student's behavior is so disruptive that the only reasonable way to deal with the situation is to remove the student from the school environment. While on suspension, a student is not permitted to be anywhere on school premises until the specified date and time of their return to school. During a suspension, the student will be excluded from all school functions, such as concerts or field trips. If your child is suspended, a parent/guardian is required to meet with building administration before he/she may return to school. Building administration reserves the right to apply a progressive discipline approach when deemed applicable.

2026-2027 SRES Code of Conduct					
Infraction	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Tardiness	Arriving late more than 4 times to school without an excused reason				
	Persistently arriving late to school without an excused reason				
Truancy	Being absent from school without a reason and without having a parent/guardian inform the school				
Disruptive/ Inappropriate Behavior	Persistently or habitually engaging in minor behavior that distracts from the learning environment includes assemblies, lunchroom, hallways, and classrooms (examples: talking out of turn, throwing small items, horseplay, inappropriate hallway behavior, dress code violation, using inappropriate or unkind words towards others, not listening to a substitute teacher)				
	Engaging in moderate to serious behavior that distracts from the learning environment includes assemblies, lunchroom, hallways, and classrooms (examples: using profanity/curse words, throwing items, walking out of the classroom, consistently not adhering classroom rules, rough play at recess)				
Gross Disrespect	Making inappropriate or offensive gestures, verbal or written comments, or symbols to others (examples: verbal put-downs, cursing, talking back).				

Disregard of School Rules	Demonstrating a lack for respect or care for the school wide rules (examples: walking in the halls without permission, not returning to class in a quick manner after going somewhere else in the school, not telling the truth)				
Inappropriate Use of Computer	Using the school computer for purposes that are not allowed by the teacher (example: you are supposed to be on iReady but you are playing a game)				
Insubordination	Defying or refusing to follow directions set forth by teachers, lunch aides, administrators, or other staff				
Physical Contact	Engaging in shoving, pushing, or otherwise being physical towards another (examples: body check, head tapping, tripping, neck slapping, intentionally bumping, but NOT horseplay) and/or engaging in unwanted or uncomfortable contact				
Possession of Unauthorized Electronic Device	Using a cell phone or other unauthorized electronic device during school hours when permission is not given				
Unauthorized Recording on a Device	Using a cell phone or other electronic device to record others				
Fighting	Engaging in a fight that is spontaneous, short, and/or results in cuts, scraps, or marks				
Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying	Intentional negative actions on the part of one or more students that cause discomfort with identity issues regarding race, color, national origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or other identifying characteristics, and that interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs. Intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, or written conduct or an intentional electronic communication that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being.				
Theft or Stolen	Taking or obtaining property of another without permission and/or knowledge of the owner				

Property					
Destruction of Property	Causing accidental damage to school and/or others' personal property				
		Causing intentional damage including graffiti and/or vandalism to property to the school, students, or staff			
Misconduct in the Cafeteria	Engaging in inappropriate or unsafe behavior while in the cafeteria				
Misconduct in the Restroom	Engaging in inappropriate or unsafe behavior while in the restroom				
Misconduct during a Drill	Engaging in inappropriate or unsafe behavior during any school wide drill (fire, bus, or security)				
Bias Language		Using culturally insensitive, prejudiced, offensive, and/or other harmful words towards a student or staff member			
Threat			Any communication or behavior that indicates someone may be a danger to the safety of students or staff. This could include an expression of intent to cause harm, or other behavior that could lead to harm to themselves or others. Threats can be verbal, behavioral, visual, written, electronic, or communicated in other ways.		
Assault			Attempt or actual purposeful attack on another		
Leveled Incident Response					
In addition to contacting parents/guardians for any level incident, the following are incident responses that can or will be applied. School administration has discretion regarding responses as they relate to individual circumstances.					
Level 1	Conference, Conflict Resolution, Reflection, Lunch Detention, Support Staff Intervention, Student Check In, Reteach Expectations				
Level 2	In conjunction with any of the level 1 responses, additional responses can include: Behavior Contract/Sheets, Community Service, After School Detention, Temporary Educational Setting, Student-Teacher Mentoring, Loss of Privileges				

Level 3	In conjunction with any of the level 2 responses, additional responses can include: Phone Conference, Alternative Educational Setting (1-3 days), Loss of Privileges, Police Notification
Level 4	In conjunction with any of the level 3 responses, additional responses can include: Out of School suspension (1-3 days), Required in person meeting, Referral to I&RS
Level 5	In conjunction with any of the level 4 responses, additional responses can include: Referral to Alternative Education Setting, Extended Out of School Suspension (4-10 days), Police Notification

Supportive Actions

- ☒ Reflection ☒ Conference with Culture and Climate Specialists ☒ Supportive Counseling with School Counselor
- ☒ Parent /Guardian Meeting/Conference ☒ Behavior Plan ☒ Community Service ☒ Student Reflection
- ☒ Student Contract/Agreement ☒ Safety Plan ☒ Mindfulness

DISMISSAL

Dismissal is at 2:45 PM. For the safety of our students and staff, we ask all parents/guardians to pick up their child(ren) at the flagpole or behind the fence and to avoid blocking entry or exit doors.

Parents picking up children prior to dismissal must sign the child out at the Main Office, accessed by the front door. You will be asked to show a valid ID – this is for the safety and protection of your child.

To minimize disruptions at the end of the school day, students will not be released after 2:25 PM. If an early pickup is necessary, please contact the Main Office in advance so we can ensure a smooth and timely process. This helps maintain a safe, orderly environment and reduces interruptions during important end-of-day routines.

All parents/guardians must complete a Dismissal Information Form, which can be completed via the Genesis Parent Portal. This form will indicate how your child will be dismissed each day; for example, walking home, attending a registered after-school program or service, taking an approved school bus route, or being picked up. This information ensures that we follow consistent and safe procedures for each student's dismissal.

All parents and guardians are responsible for notifying the Main Office of any changes to their child's regular dismissal arrangements. Changes must be made in writing through a new Dismissal Information Form submitted to the Main Office. Parents and guardians must designate in writing whether their child will be picked up or is allowed to leave school property and walk home unescorted.

After dismissal, students are no longer under supervision and are required to exit the school building unless they are participating in an approved after-school activity, during which they will be supervised by a designated staff member.

D.R.E.A.M.S. SCHOOL VALUES

At South River Elementary School, we believe in fostering a positive and supportive environment where every student can thrive. Our D.R.E.A.M.S. acronym represents the core values we strive to uphold each day:

- **D – Determination:** We work hard, stay focused, and never give up—especially when faced with challenges
- **R – Respect:** We treat ourselves, others, and our environment with kindness, empathy, and courtesy
- **E – Excellence:** We strive to do our best in everything we do—academically, socially, and personally
- **A – Attitude:** We come to school with a positive mindset, ready to learn, grow, and support one another
- **M – Making a Difference:** We contribute to our school and community through kind actions, leadership, and service
- **S – Safety:** We make choices that protect ourselves and others, helping everyone feel secure and supported

DRESS CODE

The dress code applies during school hours, at school activities, and on field trips. Students shall avoid extremes in appearance. Please refer to the district website for the District Policy #5132 (Student Dress and Grooming).

EXCLUSIONS FROM ACTIVITIES

Building administration reserves the right to restrict a student's participation in a district, school or classroom activity as a result of a disciplinary infraction.

Extracurricular/School Sponsored Activities on Days of Absence

Students shall not participate in a performance, exhibition, field trip, award assembly, concert or athletic event unless he/she has been present in school that day or has been absent for an excused reason other than for illness. No student is permitted to attend or participate in an after school activity, with the exception of academic programs, on the day they have an unexcused absence.

FIELD/CLASS TRIPS

South River Board of Education approved school sponsored field/ class trips are scheduled by various classroom teachers throughout the school year. These trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum and to introduce students to the resources of the community. Parents will receive notice of field/class trips in advance of the scheduled trip date and be asked to sign a field trip permission form. Failure to submit a signed permission slip will result in your child's exclusion from the trip.

At times money may be requested from each student to help defray transportation or admission costs. Often field trip destinations require non-refundable deposits. If a child submits payment for a field trip and then due to disciplinary penalties or a parental decision is not allowed to attend the trip, he/she may not receive reimbursement.

All students are required to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous manner. Students guilty of misbehavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

Chaperones are selected by the teacher and are expected to adhere to all school rules when volunteering on those days. Chaperones may not bring any other children with them when attending school functions. All chaperones must complete the Memorandum of Agreement regarding the district's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) policy.

INVITATIONS

Parents and guardians are advised that no invitations for parties will be passed out in our classrooms before, during, or after the school day unless there is an invitation for every child in the class. The same can be said for valentines, gifts, etc.

LOST AND FOUND

All clothing found in the school is placed in the lost and found box in the cafetorium. Money, eyeglasses, keys, jewelry, or any other articles of value are turned into the office. Students may claim items after proper identification. Items not claimed are discarded at the end of each school year.

NOTIFICATIONS

South River Public Schools uses Finalsite Mass Notification to communicate important information, including emergency school closures, delays, and other district updates, through phone calls, text messages, and email. Teachers and staff may also use ClassDojo to share classroom and school information. Families are encouraged to subscribe to all communication platforms to ensure they receive timely and important updates.

NO SMOKING

Smoking is prohibited on school grounds or in school buildings. Violators are subject to a fine and may also be subject to other appropriate disciplinary measures.

PARENT CUSTODY

In the case of students with divorced or separated parents, the primary custodian of the child must be documented and presented to the school as soon as such a determination has been made by the court. As such, no student will be dismissed to a non-custodial parent without written or verbal permission by the parent custodian indicated in the court documentation. In the case of equal or split custody, either custodial parent will be permitted to dismiss the student. Nevertheless, the school will notify the other custodial parent as a courtesy if no advance notice was presented prior to dismissal. Finally, upon request, and unless there exists legal restraints against such, the non-custodial parent will be provided access to all student records and school related activities. If there is not a court-order indicating custody, then both listed parents will have custodial rights.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

The school administration and staff cannot be responsible for valuables which students bring to school. It is recommended that students leave all valuables at

home. These include electronic games, personal audio equipment, and all types of collectibles. The school accepts no responsibility for lost or stolen articles.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDING OF PUPILS

Taking pictures/videotaping of district students and buildings for commercial purposes are prohibited without written approval of the Superintendent of Schools. "Commercial purposes" in this context is defined to mean for sale or for use in connection with the advertisement or promotion of goods or services.

Photographs/videotaping for such purposes as newspaper coverage of school activities must be authorized in advance by the Superintendent of Schools. Parents/guardians shall be notified each year that such photographs/videotaping may be taken and of the possibility that their child (ren) may be included. Parents/guardians may request that their child (ren) not be included in any photographs/videotaping taken for publication.

School personnel may take photographs/videotaping of students for instructional purposes and/or documentation of school events with approval of the Building Principal or his/her designee, and/or the Superintendent of Schools.

PROMOTION AND CLASSROOM PLACEMENTS

Promotions, placements and student retention are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, social, and emotional growth. The primary reasons for considering retentions are: (a) failing grades in academic subjects, (b) performance below grade level standards as measured by testing programs, and (c) excessive absenteeism or tardiness resulting in learning deficits. A student who has met some, but not all of the grade level benchmarks, may be "placed" in the following grade level. The student must demonstrate substantial growth on that grade level or be retained for that school year. Parents will be notified if there is the possibility of retention.

South River Elementary School does not honor classroom placement requests for specific teachers, staff members, or peers—including siblings or relatives.

Classroom assignments are determined by school administration and instructional staff based on multiple factors such as academic needs, classroom composition, social-emotional development, and overall school programming.

While families are welcome to share general information about their child's learning needs, requests for specific placements—whether involving particular individuals or classroom groupings—will not be considered.

RECESS

Recess plays a key role in a student's physical, social, and emotional well-being. It provides students with time to be active and to release energy. Weather permitting (and 32 degrees or higher), students will go outside to participate in recess activities. Please ensure that proper attire is worn. Recess may be cancelled at the discretion of the school principal.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS/DELAYS

Emergency/storm closings or delays will be broadcasted via our Mass Notification system which involves receiving a recorded message on a phone number of your choosing and an email message. Make sure you provide up to date phone numbers.

On delayed opening days, the elementary school will begin at **10:10 AM**. Students should not arrive at school prior to 9:55 AM when there is a delayed opening, as there will be no supervision until that time. In the event of an early dismissal because of extreme weather conditions, equipment failure, or public crisis, announcements will be made via ConnectEd.

Please note that in the event of an emergency school closure, the students will not be allowed to walk home unattended without parental permission. It is extremely important that the main office has your correct phone number, as you may have to be directly contacted regarding dismissal procedures for your child. It is very important that you discuss with your child alternate plans for emergency and early closing days.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are issued textbooks and other school materials to use in the educational program. Students are responsible for returning texts, instruments, Chromebooks, library books, and/or school materials in satisfactory condition. If materials are damaged, you and your child are responsible for the cost of repair or replacement. Students who do not return school property will be responsible for replacement costs. Students using school instruments or renting them through the school vendor are financially responsible for their return in satisfactory condition.

The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property, bicycles, scooters, skateboards, or any other personal devices brought to school. Students are encouraged to properly secure their belongings. Bringing these items to school is done at the student's own risk.

STUDENT PERFORMANCES

Throughout the school year, students participate in a number of after school and evening events. Typically, these include, but are not limited to, concerts, instrumental performances and plays. Although the starting times are specific, please understand that the ending time is not definite. Therefore, for the safety and security of your children, it is required that you either remain with your child or designate someone to serve as the responsible adult for your child to ensure they have a means to return home safely at the conclusion of the event. If this cannot happen, please communicate your circumstance with the building administration. Failure to do so could be considered negligence on your part and may result in police notification

STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day South River School District receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The South River School District official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask South River School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write to the Director of Student Services, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the South River School District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the South River School District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
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. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the South River School District as an administrator, supervisor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the South River Board of Education; a person or company with whom the South River School District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); A parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent or student assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the South River School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20212-4650

TRANSFERS

Parents/guardians are asked to request a transfer card for students leaving the school district. The school will send student records to the new school district upon their official written request.

TRANSLATION SERVICES

South River Elementary School will make every effort to arrange for translation services as needed. Please advise us if a translator is needed.

School Safety

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The South River Public School District prohibits discrimination based on the following protected categories: race; creed; religion; color; national origin/nationality; ancestry; age; sex/gender (including pregnancy); marital status/civil union partnership; familial status; affectional or sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; domestic partnership status; atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait; genetic information; disability (including perceived disability, physical, mental and/or intellectual disabilities); or liability for service in the Armed Forces of the United States. Should questions, comments, or concerns relating to this exist, the District's Affirmative Action Officer (AAO) should be contacted.

Dr. Joseph Trivisonno
Assistant Superintendent
District Affirmative Action Officer/Title IX Contact
Phone: (732) 613-4000
jtrivisonno@srivernj.org

BUILDING SECURITY AND ENTRY

The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority. South River Public Schools is supported by Class III Special Law Enforcement Police Officers (SLEOs) who provide on-site security throughout the school day.

To help maintain a safe and secure learning environment, all parents and visitors must follow these procedures:

- Use the front entrance buzzer to request entry into the building.
- Present a valid government-issued photo ID at the main office. Entry will not be permitted without proper identification.
- Sign in at the front security desk, receive a visitor's badge, and sign out before leaving the building.
- Enter and exit the building only through the main entrance.
- Visits to classrooms require prior approval from school administration. Parents and visitors may not go directly to classrooms.
- If you are visiting for a specific reason, please limit your visit to that purpose unless additional approval has been granted by the school administration.
- The Elementary School and Middle School have separate visitor sign-in procedures. If you need to visit both schools, you must sign out of one building before entering the other and complete the sign-in process at the second building.

For the safety and security of our entire school community, the school building and surrounding grounds are monitored by video surveillance.

BUS CONDUCT

To ensure the safety and well-being of all students who ride the school bus, the following rules must be followed at all times:

- Remain seated and facing forward while the bus is in motion
- Speak quietly and avoid unnecessary noise
- Only speak to the driver when absolutely necessary
- Keep hands, feet, and other body parts inside the bus
- Keep hands, feet, and belongings to yourself and out of the aisle or exits
- Do not litter or throw anything inside the bus or out of the windows

Parents and guardians play an important role in supporting safe bus behavior. Please help reinforce the following expectations:

- Review and emphasize district transportation policies with your child
- Do not ask the driver to make unscheduled or unauthorized stops
- Teach your child to cooperate respectfully with the bus driver
- Reinforce the importance of safe and appropriate behavior while waiting for and riding the bus
- Ensure your child is on time at the designated bus stop
- For safety reasons, parents/guardians are not permitted to board the bus; only students and authorized personnel may enter

Students must be familiar with the above-mentioned rules and regulations, which are established for their safety and the efficient operation of transportation services.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

To ensure the safety and preparedness of all students and staff, emergency drills are conducted regularly throughout the school year. These drills are essential in helping everyone understand the procedures to follow in the event of a real emergency.

Each month, the school will conduct both fire and security drills, some of which may take place in coordination with the South River Police Department. Please note that procedures may vary depending on the type of drill.

During security drills, a red light above the entrance doors will flash to indicate that the drill is in progress. It is essential that silence is maintained at all times so that staff and students can clearly hear and follow all directions. Staff and students will be promptly notified once the drill has concluded.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In case of emergency, each student is required to have on file at the school office the following information:

1. Parent(s) or guardian(s) name(s)
2. Complete and up-to-date address
3. Home phone, cell phone and parent/guardian(s) work phone numbers
4. Emergency phone number of friend or relative available during school hours
5. Physician's name and phone number
6. Medical alert information

Please advise the school immediately of any changes in the above information.

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

The South River Board of Education believes that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Board of Education Policies are available online. Please visit www.sriversnj.org to review the contents of this requirement. (Board of Education Policy # 5131.8) All chaperones and classroom parents must attend a Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) training session.

Any person may report harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying via our district website at:

<https://www.sriversnj.org/departments/student-services/hib-information>

District Anti-Bullying Coordinator:

Mr. Matt Crouch, P: 732-613-4014 ext. 6229, E: Mcrouch@sriversnj.org

School Anti-Bullying Specialist:

Ms. Saaz Grover, P: 732-613-4073 ext. 7257, E: SGrover@sriversnj.org

NEW JERSEY'S YOUTH HELPLINE, 2NDFLOOR®

The New Jersey Youth Helpline, 2NDFLOOR, is a toll-free, anonymous and confidential helpline available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to all New Jersey young people, ages 10 to 24. Youth can call 2ND FLOOR at 1-888-222-2228 to speak with professionals and trained volunteers who listen attentively, non-judgmentally and compassionately to issues and problems they are facing. Visit <https://www.2ndfloor.org/> for more information.

PARKING

Please be advised that South River Elementary School does not have on-site parking available for families or visitors.

Parking directly in front of the school is strictly prohibited and may result in a fine or towing at the vehicle owner's expense. Additionally, driveway areas must remain clear at all times to allow for the safe entry and exit of emergency vehicles and staff.

Under no circumstances should any vehicles park in the bus loop or in the designated bus parking spots. These areas are reserved exclusively for school transportation and must remain unobstructed to ensure student safety during arrival and dismissal.

We strongly encourage families to utilize legal street parking in the surrounding area while being mindful of local signage and regulations

Instructional Programs and Services

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS (HONOR ROLL)

Third and Fourth grade students who earn 3's and 4's in core content subjects (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies), as well as Outstanding or Satisfactory in Special Area classes, per trimester, will be recognized as honor students. Fifth grade students who earn A's and B's in core content subjects (ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies), as well as Outstanding or Satisfactory in Special Area classes, per trimester, will be recognized as honor students. Students who earn Honor Roll will receive a certificate of achievement and their name will be published on the school's website.

COUNSELING

Our school counselor is available to assist students who have concerns regarding academic, personal, social, and emotional concerns. Students are encouraged to make use of the counselor by arranging for an appointment through their teacher. Parents are also encouraged to contact the counselor to discuss student concerns. A consent form must be signed by a parent/guardian to arrange for on-going counseling.

HEALTH SERVICES

Students who have medical conditions may require a medical emergency plan. This is a one-page informational sheet that is developed with the student and his/her parents/guardians. It is reviewed annually and distributed to the student's teacher(s) on a need to know basis. The school nurse will personally review these emergency plans with each of the student's teachers and leave a copy with the teacher. These are also kept in the substitute folder as an informational sheet for substitute teachers.

The School Nurse performs height, weight, blood pressure, vision, hearing, and scoliosis screenings on students. Children who fail screenings are referred to the appropriate specialist via written referrals sent home to parents/guardians. Health information cards are also sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year; they are to be returned to the school within the first five days of school. They are filed in the Health Office for use by the School Nurse and staff for parental/guardian contact.

The Health Office is open to students throughout the day and all medications for students are kept in the office. No medications are distributed without a doctor's order and parental consent. The School Nurse is the only one allowed to administer medication. The Health Office must be contacted if a child has any unusual health problems or is absent from school due to a communicable disease or other serious illness. All medications, whether prescribed or over the counter (including cough drops), must come with a doctor's written order and parental permission. These forms can be obtained in the School Nurse's Office.

In the event of illness or injury in school, the nurse will make every effort to ensure immediate care and comfort of the child in question. The school nurse will render first aid care only and parents/guardians will be notified if it is necessary for the child to go home. The child must be signed out by the parent/guardian; parents or individuals assigned by the parents are responsible for transporting ill children home or to a physician or medical facility. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents/guardians will be contacted. If these individuals are not available, 911 will be called.

Advisory-Medical Insurance Coverage

At times, students sustain injuries during the school day or while participating in district sanctioned after school activities. Occasionally, medical emergencies warrant transporting students to the hospital via the local rescue squad thus resulting in the costs associated with the transport and/or hospital visit. Please be advised that parents/guardians are responsible for their children's health care, including emergency costs. When a crisis situation necessitates the use of emergency medical services, the resulting costs must be borne by the parents/guardians.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of the curriculum that was delivered in school and students are expected to demonstrate responsibility in completing all homework in a timely manner. In most cases, homework will be assigned to students on a regular basis. It is policy that no homework be given to students over the extended holiday breaks.

If a student is absent from school, he/she is expected to make up all the work that is missed. Parents may call the office in the morning to report the absence and request any missed classwork and homework. Due to time constraints, such work will not be available for pickup until the end of the day.

INTERVENTION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) Teams are available to provide interventions and program modification assistance to students experiencing difficulty in their classes. Any staff member may refer a student to the I&RS Team. Parent involvement is encouraged and supported. Parents wishing to seek this assistance may discuss their concerns directly with the child's teacher or the building principal. Through the I&RS Team, students experiencing difficulty are discussed and strategies for maximizing student success are developed.

RESEARCH

The Board of Education recognizes that educational research can be a valuable tool in identifying and applying strategies to enhance student achievement and in identifying factors that could prevent students from becoming contributing members of society. Surveys among student populations can be an important part of this research.

Students and parents/guardians retain certain rights, however, in the administration of student surveys. The board shall ensure that prior written consent is obtained from parents/guardians or emancipated students before any survey is administered that is funded in whole or in part by any program administered by the United States Department of Education, if the survey (analysis or evaluation) is designed to reveal information on any of the following:

Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents/guardians;
Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
Sex behaviors or attitudes; Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships; Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, or ministers;
Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian; or Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program)

Written informed consent shall also be obtained from parents/guardians or emancipated students prior to the administration of any academic or nonacademic survey, assessment, analysis or evaluation that would reveal the student's social security number.

Parents/guardians shall be given the opportunity to inspect any survey, analysis or evaluation that solicits information in any of the above areas. If parents/guardians object to their children's participation in the survey, the children shall be allowed to opt out.

Prior approval of the superintendent is required for all other surveys on topics not listed above. Anyone seeking approval of a proposed survey must provide the superintendent with details of the survey methodology, its specific educational purpose and a description of how results will be disseminated and applied. Reasonable timelines shall be provided by those conducting the survey for parents/guardians to access and review surveys of this nature. Student privacy shall be protected in the administration of a survey. The Board may conduct surveys that are in the best interest of the district. For all surveys the identity of the respondent shall remain confidential.

This policy and regulations shall be made available to the public at least annually at the beginning of the school year, especially to parents/guardians and to district staff. The public shall be informed within a reasonable period of time if substantive change is made to policy and regulations. The public shall also be informed of specific or approximate dates, if known, when surveys may be administered.

RIGHT AT SCHOOL

Right at School, an After-Before School Child Care service is offered from 7:00 A.M. until the school days starts and an afternoon care is offered from dismissal until 6:30 P.M. For additional information please email: southriverelem@rightatschool.com.

There is no before-school care on delayed opening days or after-school care on emergency early closings.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Gifted and Talented: The Gifted and Talented services will be offered to those students who meet the Board of Education approved entry criteria. Typically, this service will be held for 40 minutes per week and reflect units of study found within the Board approved curriculum.

Special Education: A full continuum of special education services are provided by South River Public Schools to meet the needs of students that are classified as eligible for special education and related services. We are committed to ensuring that programming decisions are informed by data. Additionally, understanding the research related to placing students in more restrictive programs, we ensure that all students are placed in the least restrictive environment.

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS (AFTER SCHOOL/SUMMER PROGRAMS)

The 21st Century Community Learning Center is a federally funded program supported by the New Jersey Department of Education for out-of-school-time programs in New Jersey, which include after school and summer enrichment.

South River Public Schools offers a variety of enrichment programs for students and families through the 21st Century Community Learning Center. There is no after school enrichment on early dismissal days, delayed opening days, or emergency closings.

To learn more or register your child, please visit:

<https://www.sravernj.org/21st-century-community-learning-center>.

Contact Information

School Administration

Principal	Mr. Christian Valentin-Gladden	(732) 613-4073, ext. 7256	cvalentin@srivernj.org
Assistant Principal	Mrs. Nicole Logan	(732) 613-4073, ext. 7255	nlogan@srivernj.org

Main Office

Administrative Assistant	Michelle Widman	(732) 613-4073, ext. 7255	mwidman@srivernj.org
Administrative Assistant	Kathryn McChesney	(732) 613-4073, ext. 7256	kmcchesney@srivernj.org

School Counselor / Anti-Bullying Specialist

Counselor	Mrs. Saaz Grover	(732) 613-4073, ext. 2368	sgrover@srivernj.org
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School Nurse

Nurse	Mrs. Lauren Wines	(732) 613-4073, ext. 7240	lwines@srivernj.org
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Department of English as a Second Language/World Languages

Supervisor	Mr. Kenneth Calderon	(732) 613-4073, ext. 5324	kcalderon@srivernj.org
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Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Supervisor	Ms. Lisa Cashin	(732) 613-4073, ext. 7216	lcashin@srivernj.org
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Department of Special Education

Supervisor	Mrs. Kelly Ferreira	(732) 613-4073, ext. 7104	kferreira@srivernj.org
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Department of Student Services

Director	Mr. Matthew Crouch	(732) 613-4073, ext. 6229	mcrouch@srivernj.org
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South River Public Schools

11 Montgomery Street
South River, NJ 08882
732-613-4000

Dr. Sylvia Zircher, Superintendent
Dr. Joseph Trivisonno, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Johnny Rosa, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

South River Board of Education

Mrs. Cynthia A. Urbanik, President
Mr. Kevin Nielsen, Vice President
Mr. Raymond Baszak
Mr. John Budzin
Mrs. Renae Bush
Mrs. Elizabeth Lell
Mr. Uche Onwudiwe
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Mr. Christian J. Valentin-Gladden, Principal
Mrs. Nicole Logan, Acting Assistant Principal