

# Southview Student/Family Handbook 2026-2027



**SOUTHVIEW  
COUGARS**

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## Southview School

11660 Eddie and Park Road

Sunset Hills, MO 63126

314-989-8900 (office)

314-989-8904 (fax)

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## Special School District Notice of Non-Discrimination and Accommodation

Special School District is committed to maintaining a workplace and educational environment that is free from discrimination and harassment in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, services, activities, and facilities. In accordance with law, the District strictly prohibits discrimination and harassment against employees, students, or others on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, ancestry, disability, veteran status, age, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law in its programs, activities, or employment.

Direct inquiries and complaints under this policy to:

Student Matters:  
SSD's Compliance Liaison

-or-

Employee or Visitor Issues:  
Chief Compliance Officer

12110 Clayton Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63131  
Telephone: 314.989.8100

U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights  
One Petticoat Lane  
1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 320  
Kansas City, Missouri 64106  
Phone: (816) 268-0550, fax (816) 268-0599, TDD (800) 877-8339,  
Email: [OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov](mailto: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 Compliance Liaison (Student Matters) or the Chief Compliance Officer (Employee or Visitor Issues) at the phone number and address listed above.

Complaints can be made verbally or in person and will be transcribed. Procedures for receiving a complaint cannot prevent a complaint from being accepted. Outside agency forwarded complaints will be identified. The complaint procedures must not indicate that there was an attempt to resolve nor can the complaint process be a prerequisite for accepting a complaint.



Welcome to the 2026-27 school year at Southview School!

Our administrative staff and faculty are committed to helping every student reach their fullest potential by supporting progress toward state and district standards, IEP goals, and post-secondary aspirations. This handbook provides essential school information, district policies, and the Student Code of Conduct.

An electronic copy is being provided to all families so that both students and caregivers are aware of expectations. We encourage you to take a few moments to review it together at home.

We are excited to welcome Caitlin Leibovitz back for her second year as Assistant Principal. With her deep background in special education, Caitlin remains dedicated to supporting our students and building an inclusive, safe school community. We look forward to her ongoing leadership and dedication in the year ahead.

If you have any questions about the handbook, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support. Together, we can create a safe, engaging, and successful learning environment for all students.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Niki Tedoni  
Principal  
Southview School



Dear Families,

The safety and security of your children is the District's number one priority. As part of our continued enhancement of security procedures within the District, a web-based visitor registration system is being implemented in all of the SSD schools. The visitor management system enhances school security by scanning a visitor's driver's license or government identification card, comparing the information to a national sex offender database from all 50 states and printing a visitor badge that includes a photo, the visitor's name, date and time.

A key feature of the system is that a visitor only has to have his or her license scanned once. Once the license is scanned, the visitor's name, date of birth and picture are stored in the system and the next time he or she visits the office, staff will type in the visitor's name and print the visitor badge. Once you are in the system, you do not have to have your license scanned again on your next visit to the school.

It is important to note that the system only scans the visitor's name, date of birth and photo for comparison with a national database of registered sex offenders. Additional visitor data from the driver's license is not gathered nor is the system connected to any other system such as the Department of Motor Vehicles. Therefore, any other information connected to the visitor's driver's license is not part of the system and is not accessible to any of the users.

The safety and security of our students is our highest priority, and the visitor management system provides a consistent way to aid in keeping away people from school who may present a danger to students. Therefore, all visitors to the school must be scanned into the system and obtain a visitor badge. The visitor badges must be returned to the office at the conclusion of the visit. If you have any questions about the system, do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you in advance for your cooperation as we continue to enhance the safety of our schools.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Niki Tedoni

# Southview School

Special School District of St. Louis County  
11660 Eddie and Park Road  
Crestwood, Missouri 63126

Welcome both new and returning families to the Southview 2026-2027 School Year! We are looking forward to an exciting year. Please set aside some time to review the 26-27 Student/Family Handbook with your child.

**Student instructional hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Students may not be signed in before 8:45 a.m. The school office will unlock the doors at 8:40 a.m. Office staff are available by phone Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please refer to the school calendar for details regarding school closures and holidays.

Here are some helpful phone numbers:

## **Administration**

**Principal-** Dr. Niki Tedoni 314-989-8903  
**Assistant Principal-** Caitlin Leibovitz 314-989-8905

## **Southview School Office**

Sharon Reynolds 314-989-8900 **Fax** 314-989-8904  
Taundra Jones 314-989-8901

## **Health Office**

Andrea Kuehn 314-989-8933  
Stephanie Brandriff 314-989-8932  
Health Office Fax 314-989-8912

## **Social Work**

Becky Schultz 314-989-8974  
Sara Schmitt 314-989-8951  
Katie Lange 314-989-8925

## **Transition Facilitator**

Lauren Rongey-Llanos 314-989-8969

## **Transportation**

Central Garage 314-989-7165  
South Garage 314-989-7562

**All Board Policies may be viewed at the SSD website:**  
<http://www.boarddocs.com/mo/ssdmo/Board.nsf/Public>

# Southview School

## 2026-27 Family Calendar

To access academic or staff calendars, visit [www.ssdmo.org/calendars](http://www.ssdmo.org/calendars).



### JULY 2026

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |

JULY 3: District Closed, Independence Day Observed

### AUGUST 2026

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |    |    |    |    |

AUG. 20: Back to School Kick Off Night, 4-6 PM

AUG. 24: First Day School

### SEPTEMBER 2026

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |    |    |

SEPT. 7: No School, Labor Day

### OCTOBER 2026

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |

OCT. 9: Picture Day

OCT. 21: End of First Quarter

OCT. 22: No School, Professional Development Day  
Start of Second Quarter

OCT. 23: No School, Fall Break

### NOVEMBER 2026

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |    |    |    |    |

NOV. 3: Virtual Instruction Day / Election Day

NOV. 26-28: No School, Thanksgiving Break

### DECEMBER 2026

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |    |

DEC. 10: Picture Re-Take Day

DEC. 17: End of Second Quarter / First Semester

DEC. 18: No School, Professional Development Day

DEC. 22-31: No School, Winter Break

Current as of: July 25, 2026

# Southview School

## 2026-27 Family Calendar



### JANUARY 2027

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |    |    |    |    |    |

JAN. 1: **No School**, Winter Break (continued)  
 JAN. 4: Students Return  
 JAN. 18: **No School**, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

### FEBRUARY 2027

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |    |    |    |    |

FEB. 12: **No School**, Professional Development Day  
 FEB. 15: **No School**, Presidents Day  
 FEB. 26: End of Third Quarter

### MARCH 2027

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |    |

MARCH 1: Start of Fourth Quarter  
 MARCH 15-19: **No School**, Spring Break

### APRIL 2027

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |

APRIL 16: **No School**, Professional Development Day

### MAY 2027

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |    |    |    |    |

MAY 20: High School Graduation, 6 PM  
 MAY 21: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion, 1 PM  
 MAY 27: Last Day of Student Attendance  
 End of Fourth Quarter / Second Semester  
 MAY 28: **No School**, Professional Development Day  
 MAY 31: **District Closed**, Memorial Day

### JUNE 2027

| S  | M  | T  | W  | T  | 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 |    |    |    |

JUNE 4: Last Possible Day of Student Attendance with Snow Days\*  
 JUNE 7: Extended School Year (ESY) Begins  
 JUNE 18: **District Closed**, Juneteenth Holiday  
 JULY 1: Extended School Year (ESY) Ends

\*SSD will utilize up to four traditional snow days, which will not have to be made up as they are already built into the calendar. If school is canceled for more than four days due to weather, starting on the fifth snow day the District will implement Alternative Methods of Instruction (AMI) virtual learning. Families will receive communication from the District about classwork/projects/activities that will need to be completed on AMI days.

# **SSD Commitment to Excellence**

## **SSD Vision...what we want to be**

All students realize their full potential in life and learning.

## **SSD Mission...why we exist**

To support and empower students of all learning abilities to excel to their greatest potential.

## **SSD Core Values...what is important to us**

Equity  
Commitment  
Collaboration

## **Southview Vision Statement**

We prepare students for their post-school outcomes by creating productive members of their community.

## **Southview Mission Statement**

The Southview Learning Community provides a safe learning environment in which all students are treated with dignity and respect. Through high quality research and data-based interventions; we ensure individualized academic improvement and social-communication development for students age K-21 in order to attain successful post-school outcomes.

## **Southview Core Values**

All learn in a safe environment.  
All are treated with dignity and respect.  
All seek continuous improvement.  
All are held accountable.  
We will do what is best for kids.

## **Southview Cougar Creed**

Remember to ROAR – Respect Others, Accept Responsibility

## **Welcome!**

Southview School is an elementary and secondary setting for students in the Special School District of St. Louis County who have intensive special education needs. Southview School serves a diverse student population, ages 5-21, and provides significant supports to meet individual student needs as outlined in the individualized education plan.

It is the belief of the administration that the participation of the entire educational team is crucial. Staff members, families, and students are involved in decision making that impact students. Collaboration strengthens the structure of the school and increases the quality of instruction.

Classrooms are grouped into teams to facilitate collaboration for instructional planning, to provide support in developing adaptations and modifications, and to create a decision-making structure for the school's daily operations and long-term planning.

The Parent-Teacher Organization is composed of parents/guardians and staff of Southview School and we encourage our families to get involved with this organization. The purpose of this team is to develop family support and programs, assist in student activities, and conduct fund raising activities to support the students and their families at Southview.

## Family Information

Our students are most successful when school and home work together to create an environment where learning can take place in a safe and secure environment. You may support your child's education by participating in the following:

**IEP Participation:** One of the most important activities concerning your student is the individualized education plan (IEP) process. This is the written document that describes your student's education program. It is developed collaboratively at least annually. This is a dedicated time for you to share your knowledge of your student with the team.

A copy of the Procedural Safeguards and Parent's Bill of Rights will be provided to all Parents/Guardians annually by Southview School.

**School Hours:** Our student instructional hours are 9:00 am-3:30pm. Buses begin unloading at 8:45 am. Students may not be dropped off/signed in prior to 8:45 a.m. The school office will unlock the doors at 8:40 a.m. All students should be picked up by 3:30 p.m.

Office staff are available by phone Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please refer to the school calendar for details regarding school closures and holidays.

### **Parking Procedures:**

When visiting the school and/or picking up your student there are visitor parking spaces in front of the main office doors. Please do not park or drop off in the bus lane. All students must be walked into the office and signed in/out by family or designee.

**Attendance:** In order for students to be successful, it is essential for students to attend school regularly. **Please notify the school office at 314-989-8900 as soon as possible if your child will be absent.** We will call home if we don't hear from you to verify that your child is home. We may contact you when your child misses 5 days and then again at 10 days to discuss strategies to improve your

child's attendance. As a reminder, regular school attendance is a state law, we will make truancy referrals as necessary.

**Communication:** Home-school communication is critical to student success. Please communicate regularly with your student's teacher. Your student's teacher will provide you with his/her contact information. Keep staff informed of changes in address, phone number and/or email address. Please return all paperwork and permission slips to your student's teacher.

**Procedure of Updating Address and Enrollment Information:**

When changes occur in your students' address and/or enrollment information, please contact Southview secretary, Taundra Jones at 314-989-8901. All students must be enrolled in their home district/district of residency to attend Southview School.

**Social Work Services:** Social work services are provided as outlined by your student's IEP. Social workers provide a wide-range of services including: helping to coordinate assistance from agencies, coordinating care-team meetings, and supporting students in moments of crisis. You can support the school by notifying social workers of extenuating circumstances within the home, signing release of information forms, updating medical info, and updating the names of outside service providers. **(Therapies/meetings provided by outside agencies cannot be provided at school.)**

**Food Service:** Breakfast and lunch are available for all students. The free/reduced breakfast and lunch program is available for eligible students.

**Families must apply each semester.** On-line payments are available through the Parent Portal. You must complete the necessary paperwork in the office before you can access this service. Staff are unable to microwave lunches for students. Due to health regulations, treats brought for school events must be "store bought" and cannot contain peanuts. Please inform the school nurse and classroom teacher if your student has a food allergy. A doctor's order is needed for any change from the regular school menu or for any restrictions.

**The Family & Community Engagement (FACE) Program:** The Family & Community Engagement Program champions meaningful inclusion and family engagement through supporting and working with everyone who touches your student's life. You may contact them at 314-989-8108 or online at [ssdmo.org](http://ssdmo.org). They offer you the SSD Parent Connection Newsletter, Parent Workshops, and resources for camps and activities for students. They also offer The Family and Community Resource Center, an educational resource for families and community members. The center has books, videos, newsletters, etc., about disabilities. You may have materials shipped to Southview and we will send them home with your child. Please contact them at 314-989-8431 for more information.

**Student Progress:** Student progress is documented through instructional data and collected at predetermined intervals. Progress reports and report cards are sent home quarterly. Please contact your case manager if you have questions about your student's data or collection procedures.

### **Student Grading Policies/Make up work**

Teachers create opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery in curricular standards, as well as social skills practices. Student grades are determined by both mastery and participation and vary based on students grade and instructional level. Teachers will provide make-up work as needed for students who have absences that will impact grades per quarter. Please contact your student's case manager for specific grading details/policies.

**School Dress:** Although we recognize our students enjoy expressing themselves as individuals, students may not wear:

- Insignia/slogans on clothing that are offensive/gang related/profane
- Clothing advertising illegal substances or alcohol
- Halters, off the shoulder tops, low necklines, bare midriffs, short skirts, underwear tops, muscle shirts, transparent/net and tight garments
- Pants that sag below the waist
- Hats, do-rags, or hoodies or any item covering the head etc. (unless approved by administration)
- Clothing worn that brings undue attention, causes a disruption, or poses a safety hazard.

Clothing should be appropriate for the weather. Please write names on personal items for easy identification. If students wear inappropriate clothing to school, staff will offer an alternative or families may be asked to bring alternative item(s).

**Pets:** Only pets associated with an approved agency and coordinated with the school administration are able to visit. For the safety of our students and staff, please keep all pets at home.

**Visitor/Observation Procedures:** Please call at least 48 hours in advance to schedule a classroom observation, school tour, or a meeting with teachers or administrators. Upon arrival, all visitors must sign in at the front office and complete an observation/confidentiality form. An administrator will escort you to the appropriate classroom.

To minimize disruption to the learning environment, we kindly ask that you refrain from interacting with your child or other students during the observation. Observations are limited to one class period and may be scheduled once per month.

Please note that therapies or meetings provided by outside agencies cannot be conducted while at school.

**Safety/Security:** To help ensure a safe and secure learning environment, all exterior doors are locked by 9:00 a.m. During school hours, visitors should use the east front entrance and press the buzzer located on the right wall. Be prepared to state your name and the purpose of your visit before being admitted into the building.

If you are dropping off or picking up a student, please sign them in or out at the office. When dropping off, escort your child into the building and ensure they are in the care of a staff member before leaving.

If someone other than a parent or guardian is picking up your child, please notify the office in advance. The individual must be listed as an emergency contact and will be required to show a valid photo ID.

SSD uses a visitor management system that screens all visitors against registered sex offender databases using their government-issued identification.

Students and staff participate in regular safety drills, including fire, intruder, and earthquake drills, in accordance with the district schedule. Please ensure the office has a current emergency contact form on file for your student in case of an emergency.

**Early Dismissal:** If your student is leaving early a written/signed permission note from the parent/guardian is required. Please include the time your student will be picked up and by whom. Identification may be required when signing out a student.

**Personal Property:** Students should only bring items necessary for the instructional day. Please leave all personal electronics, toys (including fidget spinners), jewelry, and other non-essential items at home. If a student brings an item that is deemed disruptive to the learning environment, it may be held by the teacher, principal, or designee until the end of the school day.

Students are not permitted to trade, borrow, buy, or sell personal items on the bus or at school. Staff are not responsible for lost, stolen, or unreturned personal belongings.

Additionally, students are not allowed to wear hoodies over their heads, beanies, hats, earbuds, or similar accessories during the school day unless specifically permitted through an individualized student plan approved by the teacher and administrator.

**Cell Phone Use:** Students are not permitted to have cell phones on their person during the school day. Each classroom teacher will implement a check-in/check-out procedure for cell phones at arrival and dismissal.

**Community-Based Instruction (CBI):** CBI supports students in grades 9 and above by providing opportunities to practice classroom skills in real-world community settings. Teachers design trips that align with instructional activities and are guided by specific lesson plans and clearly defined learning goals.

**Field Trips:**

At times, your student may participate in a school field trip. When this occurs, the multi use permission form must be signed and on file to participate. Please ensure that emergency contact information is up to date in the system.

**Special Olympics:** Students participate in Special Olympics activities such as bowling, bocce ball, track and field etc. Permission forms are necessary for student participation. Please ensure that emergency contact information is up to date in the system.

**School Closing:** Inclement weather (high heat index, snowstorms, excessively low temperatures) may result in the closing of school. If the school is closed, announcements will be made on the internet and/or television. The SSD information line, 314-989-8450, will provide school closure information. The School Messenger automated phone system will also attempt to call emergency contact numbers.

**Emergency School Closing During the School Day:** Dangerous weather or building conditions may result in the closing of school during the school day. If the school is closed, announcements will be made on the internet and/or television. The School Messenger automated phone system will attempt to call emergency phone numbers; so please keep the school informed of all address/phone number changes. It is important to develop a backup plan for emergency situations.

**Emergency Preparedness:**

All Southview staff have access to emergency preparedness guides in each classroom, and safety drills are conducted regularly in alignment with the district schedule.

**PTO/PAC:** Please consider getting involved with the Parent-Teacher-Organization at Southview or the Parent Advisory Committee through the Special School District. Contact Taundra Jones at 314-989-8901 for additional information.

**All SSD School premises are smoke free.**

**Transportation:** SSD provides free transportation to Southview School as a related service when deemed appropriate in the IEP. It may take up to Ten (10) business days to set up/make changes to transportation. Please contact the school to make changes in transportation; do not contact the garage directly about permanent changes.

In the event your student will be absent from school due to a short-term absence (illness, funeral, vacation etc.), please contact the garage if your child will not be riding the bus/cab to school. You can help ensure that transportation runs smoothly for our students by doing the following:

- Please have your student ready for pick-up **ten minutes** prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Please contact the bus garage if the bus has not arrived and it is more than **15 minutes** past the scheduled pick-up time.
- Please assist your student on and off the bus when necessary. The transportation provider will not leave the bus to come to the door of the home.
- Please be at the designated stop to receive your student. Students will not be permitted to leave the bus at a point other than the designated stop.
- If your student has medication that needs to be given to the school nurse, please give the medication to the bus driver and he/she will give it to school staff.
- Please ensure that you have planned for someone to receive your student. If there is no one home to meet the bus, the transportation provider will deliver the student to the local police department.
- Please notify your student's school as soon as possible if you will be moving. It will take up to 10 days to change transportation.
- Notify the staff of any unusual circumstances that should be brought to the attention of the driver, i.e. medical attention, behavior issues, medication, etc.
- If there is a disruption, the bus will stop and the police will be contacted.

Please be advised that:

- You should be notified of any changes in pick-up time at least one day prior to the effective date of the change.
- You will be notified of any change in drop-off time of more than 15 minutes.
- Buses operate on a definite schedule.
- Busses, which arrive on schedule, are not required to wait if the student is not at the stop.
- Buses will not return for students who have missed the bus.
- Buses will not leave the stop before the designated time.
- Students must be picked up and dropped off at the same address **every day**; morning and afternoon addresses may be different but are to be consistent each day.

As a reminder, transportation changes do not go into effect immediately.  
Families are contacted when changes are finalized and put into place.

**Please contact the bus garage if your child will not be riding the bus in the morning or if the bus has not arrived by the assigned pick-up time.**

**Transportation Contacts:**

**South Garage 314-989-7562** \* contact for regular bus routes

**Central Garage 314-989-7165** \* contact for cabs, EMT etc.

**Immunizations:** Students must comply with Missouri immunization laws, which state that students may not attend school until the required documentation is received. If immunization records are not on file, parents or guardians must provide an official copy of the student's immunization record prior to the first day of attendance. Students who do not have the required immunization documentation on file will not be allowed to attend school.

Exemptions may be granted for medical or religious reasons. Official exemption cards must be obtained from a healthcare provider or the Department of Health and submitted to the school before the first day of classes.

If you have questions about immunization requirements, please contact the school nurse for assistance.

**Medication:** In keeping with the Special School District policy, please follow these guidelines:

- Parent/guardian completes the "Parental Authorization for Giving Medication" form.
- If over the counter medication is needed at school, parents/guardians must provide school with a doctor's order including dose and frequency, a parent permission form and a new, unopened bottle of medication.
- Medicine should be brought to the school and given to the nurses, **Do Not Send With Students.**
- Only medication prescribed by an *authorized prescriber* will be given at school.
- Only those medications that **must** be given during school hours will be given at school.
- Medications must be brought to school in the newest, correct pharmacy-labeled container with instructions for administering the medication at school.

**Please Note:** Many medications have been labeled to be given three or four times a day. Special School District's medication policy states that all medication must be labeled with specific instructions for dispensing the medication during the school day. We will not be able to dispense medication that is not labeled with the specific time it is to be given at school. This

procedure may require that your doctor write two (2) prescriptions—one for school/one for home or your pharmacist may divide the medication into separate containers and label them accordingly.

- If you are unable to deliver medicine directly to school, please contact the principal or the nurse.
- When your child's *authorized prescriber* orders a change in medication, dosage or frequency of administration, please obtain a new prescription label with the correct information.
- If sending medication by bus, a parent/guardian **MUST** hand the medication to the bus driver and the bus driver will deliver the medication to the nurse or administrator.

**Student Illnesses:** Please keep your student home if any of the following symptoms are present:

- Student is unresponsive and/or unable to maintain an awakened state
- Fever of 100 °F and above (taken orally)
- Temperature that is abnormally low (a rectal temperature less than 95°F)
- Persistent coughing
- Abnormal nasal drainage
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing combined with a fever
- Vomiting more than once
- Diarrhea
- Unusually loose or watery stools
- Unidentified or widespread rash
- Suspected communicable disease such as flu, chicken pox, scabies, impetigo, etc.
- Persistent or unusual pain
- Any draining or infected sores
- Red, crusted and/or draining eyes
- Head lice

If your student exhibits any of the above symptoms at school, you will be notified to make arrangements to pick him/her up from school. Please ensure emergency contacts are accurate for this purpose.

**Students may not return to school until they are free from all symptoms for a 24-hour period.** (Note: If your student is sent home with an illness, we may cancel transportation for the next school day).

**Return to School Following Serious Illness or Hospitalization (Student Protocol):** To ensure safety and continuity of care for our students, the following guidelines will be followed in the event your student becomes seriously ill and/or hospitalized:

- The nurse will contact the parent/guardian of any seriously ill or hospitalized student who has had an extended period of absence and inform them that she will be mailing home, a Release of Information Concerning Serious Illness or Hospitalization Form.
- The nurse will request that the parent complete the top portion and the parent/guardian will then request that the Licensed Care Provider complete that remainder of the form before the student returns to school.
- This form must be submitted to the nurse when the child returns to school. The principal will discontinue transportation during the child's absence from school.
- Transportation will be resumed via principal contact when the student is released by the Licensed Care Provider to return to school.
- If the requested health information is not submitted to the nurse, the principal, social worker, and nurse will determine what further steps need to be taken.

The District's medical consultant, the Lead Nurse, and the school nurse may assist in determining the appropriate care for the returning student. If a change of placement needs to be considered, an IEP team meeting will be held.

### **District Wellness Program**

The Board recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive District wellness program. SSD will provide developmentally appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education, as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence-based.

**Wellness Committee:** The District will establish a Wellness Committee that consists of at least one (1) parent, student, nurse, school food service representative, Board member, school administrator, member of the public, and other community members as appropriate. If available, a qualified, credentialed nutrition professional will be a member of the Wellness Committee. The District's Health Services EPS and Executive Director of Special Education Schools will serve as the District Wellness Coordinators. Wellness coordinators, in consultation with the Wellness Committee, will be in charge of implementing and evaluating this policy. Meetings, records and votes of the Wellness Committee will adhere to the requirements of the Missouri Sunshine Law. The committee will meet as necessary, but at least four (4) times annually. Wellness program coordinators are responsible for ensuring that each school in the District is in compliance with this policy.

**Nutrition Guidelines:** It is the District's policy that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with the Missouri Eat Smart nutrition guidelines. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to law. The District will create procedures regarding all foods available to students throughout the school day in the following areas:

- National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program meals.
- A la carte offerings in the food service program.
- Vending machines in all District schools.
- School stores, Classroom parties, celebrations, fundraisers, reinforcers, and school events.
- Snacks prepared or served in school programs.

**Nutrition Promotion and Education:** The District will provide nutrition education aligned with the state standards and Missouri's Frameworks for Curriculum Development in Health/Physical Education in all grades. In addition, the District will disseminate nutrition messages and other nutrition-related materials to students, staff and the community through a variety of media and methods. The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will develop procedures that address nutrition education and promotion.

**Physical Activity and Education:** The District will provide physical education and opportunities for physical activity aligned with the state standards and Missouri's Frameworks for Curriculum Development in Health/Physical Education in all grades. The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the Wellness Committee, will develop procedures to address physical education and physical activity.

**Other School-Based Activities:** The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the Wellness Committee, are charged with developing procedures addressing additional school based activities to promote wellness.

**Evaluation:** The Wellness Committee will assess all education curricula and materials pertaining to wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the State and District's educational goals and standards. Wellness program coordinators shall be responsible for devising a plan for implementing and evaluating the District Wellness Policy and are charged with ensuring that schools meet the policy's goals. Wellness program coordinators will report to the Board annually regarding the content and implementation of the wellness program and make recommendations for modifications to this policy as appropriate. The report will be made available to the public on the District's website or by other appropriate means.



Dear Families,

Southview School implements school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS defines and encourages respect and responsibility throughout the curriculum. PBIS is based on a problem-solving model and aims to prevent inappropriate behavior through teaching and reinforcing appropriate behaviors.

Our school-wide motto is “R.O.A.R.” (Respect Others Accept Responsibility). Our school-wide positive behavior support plans assists us in establishing and maintaining a school climate where the social culture and behavioral supports reinforce an effective learning environment for all students. ROAR is a fun and easy way for our students to remember that we are all to be respectful and responsible.

Our school-wide expectations are:

- **Respect/Responsibility**
- **Cooperation**
- **Honesty**
- **Friendship**

These expectations are taught in each classroom and practiced throughout the entire school. All members of the Southview community participate in reinforcing these expectations and the teaching of appropriate social skills. Members of our school community include paraeducators, secretaries, administrators, social workers, nurses, guidance counselors, food service workers, custodians, bus drivers and aides, therapists and teachers. You, as parents and guardians, are integral members of the Southview community also! You can talk to your student about the school rules. Ask your student about the rules using words, gestures, pictures or communication devices. Reinforce the

school rules in the home and during family activities to promote generalization of learning for your child. **Remember: Cougar's ROAR!**

We also reinforce positive behavior with our Southview **PAW** incentive. Students can earn PAWs (red paper paws) for showing respect to others and accepting all types of responsibility. Students demonstrate this through eye gestures, head or body movements, through augmentative communication, greeting others appropriately, accepting redirection, completing tasks independently, showing empathy or going above and beyond individual and school expectations. Students can earn multiple **PAWs** by being good citizens in our school community. Any staff member can give a student a PAW when they see them going above and beyond in the school or community. When PAWs are received, the students go to the office to accept a small reward and then place their PAW on the large, red PAW Bulletin Board for all to see. Every morning the PAW recipients from the previous day are recognized during morning announcements. By collecting PAWs, students earn their way into the clubs.

There are four clubs that students can advance through by earning PAWs. The first is the Cub Club; a student needs to earn 1-9 PAWs to become a member. Next is the Cougar Club; students need to earn 10-19 PAWs. The next level is the Super Cougar Club; students need to earn 20-29 PAWs to become a member. Finally, a student can become a Member of the Pack when they earn 30+ PAWs. Advancement through the club levels is done at the quarterly Award Rally.

Southview utilizes a PBIS matrix (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports matrix), which is a tool to help students understand and follow behavioral expectations in different school settings. The matrix outlines clear expectations with consistent language framed around Southview's core values.



# Braiding Character Education and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports



## Core Ethical Values and Performance Values

These two aspects of character are mutually supportive. The core ethical values enable us to treat each other with fairness, respect, and care, and ensure that we pursue our performance goals in ethical rather than unethical ways. The performance values, in turn, enable us to act on our ethical values and make a positive difference in the world. We take initiative to right a wrong or be of service to others; we persevere to overcome problems and mend relationships; we work selflessly on behalf of others or for a noble cause, often without recognition or reward. In all realms of life, good intentions aren't enough; being our best requires work.

These school-based strategies do not replace the important contribution that parenting practices make to performance character development; nor do they reduce the need for schools to reach out to families as partners in encouraging their children's effort and learning. But these 10 practices, especially taken together, can help to shape a school and peer-group culture that maximizes the motivation to learn and achieve, even in students who might not bring such dispositions to the classroom.

At Southview we will focus on one character trait each quarter. Quarter 1- Respect and Responsibility, Quarter 2- Cooperation, Quarter 3- Honesty, Quarter 4-Friendship. These traits were selected via a student survey conducted by a group of Southview high school students. All Southview students had input based on their individual communication styles. Staff will use lesson plans that combine PBIS and Character Education's best practices.

## **Alternative Methods of Instruction (AMI) Plan**

### **SSD Schools, Programs and Sites**

**Implementation:** This plan is designed to be used in exceptional or emergency circumstances which includes inclement weather, utility outages or an outbreak of contagious disease.

**Availability:** AMI will be available to all students during a closure as listed above.

**Attendance:** AMI can be used for up to 36 hours during the school year based on the state requirements. Attendance will be tied to successful completion of course assignments taking place during an AMI day.

#### **AMI Daily Plan:**

- Families will receive communication from the student's teacher with the instructional plan for AMI days. This will include instructions for accessing synchronous instruction/office hours and access to the Google Classroom for asynchronous learning activities.
- Classroom teachers/case managers will provide a one-hour synchronous instructional session. One asynchronous activity per content area will be provided in the Google Classroom. The Google Classroom should have three activities per content area provided in the case of multi-day closures. Asynchronous activities will be refreshed after each AMI day.
- Special area/elective teachers will provide synchronous instruction not exceeding one hour per day. One asynchronous activity per content area will be provided in the Google Classroom. The Google Classroom should have three activities per content area provided in the case of multi-day closures. Asynchronous activities will be refreshed after each AMI day.
- Related services providers will designate a one-hour period for office hours where students and families can drop in for support and questions. Related services providers include SLPs, OTs, PTs, social workers, school counselors, and ABA associates. Providers will designate asynchronous learning activities for students on their caseloads to be loaded into the Google Classroom.
- Paraprofessionals will participate in synchronous learning with their assigned teacher.

#### **Attendance:**

- Classroom teachers will enter attendance in SIS as they typically do for AMI days based on student participation in either synchronous or asynchronous activities.

AMI Plan will be adjusted as necessary based on stakeholder feedback.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE and CODE OF CONDUCT**

It is essential that the District maintain a classroom environment that allows teachers to communicate effectively with all students in the class and allows all students in the class to learn. To assist District staff in maintaining the necessary classroom environment, the Board has created a discipline code that addresses the consequences, including suspension or expulsion, for students whose conduct is prejudicial to good order and discipline in the schools or impairs the morale or good conduct of other students.

The District's Code of Conduct is detailed in Board Policies JG Student Discipline and JG-R Student Discipline Regulations.

[JFCF – BULLYING](#)

[JG – STUDENT DISCIPLINE](#)

[JGGB-CRISIS PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION](#)

[JGGC-SECLUSION PROHIBITED](#)

[JGGD-USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT](#)

[JG-R \(Regulation\) – STUDENT DISCIPLINE](#)

[JHDC – STUDENT SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION, AND INTERVENTION](#)

[JHDC-R \(Regulation\) – STUDENT SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION, AND INTERVENTION](#)

[KL-R \(Regulation\) – PUBLIC CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS](#)

All Board Policies may be viewed at the SSD website.

[SSD Board of Education Policies](#)

## Discipline Referral Process

At Southview, we firmly believe that discipline serves as a means to support the growth and development of our students while ensuring a safe and enriching learning environment for all. Our intention is never to impose punishment for its own sake, but rather to equip individuals with the necessary tools for both academic success and personal growth. We take the time to understand the unique needs of each student and approach their challenges with patience and appropriate support, aiming to enable every student to thrive.

Our ultimate aspiration is to inspire self-discipline in every student, fostering a lifelong trait that will benefit them beyond their academic years. We strive to approach student behavior without bias, acknowledging that it often arises from underlying issues or events in their lives, be it related to their homes, families, peers, social media, or the community. Our approach to discipline revolves around fostering growth rather than imposing punitive measures. We consistently convey the message that all students have the capacity to make positive choices that lead to success.

Our discipline policy is designed with the ultimate goal of teaching students the skills necessary to monitor and correct their own behavior, thereby ensuring an engaged and productive learning environment. We understand that maintaining students' active participation in the learning process is crucial. As a staff, we are committed to administering discipline rules consistently, fairly, and equitably.

Creating positive relationships with our students is the foundation of effective classroom management. Teachers and staff members bear the responsibility of cultivating a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Through the use of community building circles, we aim to foster a caring community that takes care of and supports one another. We firmly believe that classrooms characterized by strong, positive relationships between students and teachers foster engaging learning environments. We recognize that learning flourishes within a community where students collaborate with one another and develop the skills necessary to thrive in both society and the workforce. Consequently, any form of classroom disruption or actions that impede the educational process are not deemed acceptable.

In the case of a classroom disruption the following table outlines our discipline referral process:

Staff are expected to address minor behavioral concerns using proactive classroom management strategies and redirection. When behaviors escalate, become unsafe, significantly disruptive, or persist despite interventions, the student should be referred to the support room and proper documentation procedures should be followed.

For the 2026-27 school year, all staff within the SSD schools have been trained in Ukeru practices. These practices are built on an approach of Comfort vs Control and are grounded in ideas and research around trauma-informed care and conflict resolution. These practices include techniques to potentially reduce the need for physical restraint.

When appropriate, administration will consult with staff, collect documentation and then determine appropriate next steps, and communicate outcomes. Possible outcomes may include administrative consultation, in-school suspension (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS), or other interventions aligned with building/district policy and student needs. When making disciplinary decisions, our administrative team carefully considers a range of factors to ensure fairness and understanding. Some of these factors may include:

- Student's age and cognitive ability: We consider the developmental stage and cognitive abilities of the student involved, recognizing that disciplinary measures should be age-appropriate and aligned with their understanding.
- Circumstances surrounding the incident: We thoroughly examine the specific details and context of the incident in question, understanding that each situation is unique and requires a comprehensive evaluation.
- Previous serious disciplinary infractions: We consider any prior instances of misconduct, take into account the nature of the misconduct, the frequency of such behavior, and the progressive disciplinary actions that have been implemented in response.
- Imminent threat of serious harm: We prioritize the safety and well-being of all individuals within our school community. If there is a clear and immediate risk of serious harm, our response will be swift and focused on ensuring the safety of everyone involved.
- Other mitigating or aggravating circumstances: We recognize that certain circumstances, such as hate language, images, or symbols, have the potential to cause substantial disruption. While we prohibit their inclusion or display, we are committed to promoting responsible discussions surrounding these subjects for educational purposes.

By considering these factors, we strive to approach disciplinary decisions in a fair, understanding, and thoughtful manner that fosters a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. Creating a warm and inclusive school environment is a shared aspiration for everyone involved - students, families, staff, and the community at large. Through collaboration and mutual support, we can transform our school into a truly exceptional place of learning and growth.

Each school will have an identified Behavioral Threat Assessment Team that will evaluate verbal, written or online threats made by students, families, and staff. Threats will be referred to the Behavioral Threat Assessment Team at the administrator's discretion. The Threat Assessment Evaluation rubric will be used to determine next steps. If warranted, a Threat Assessment Action Plan will be developed and implemented.

**Missouri Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline Numbers**

|                             |                                             |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Toll-free Phone Line        | 1-800-392-3738                              |
| Hearing and Speech Impaired | 1-800-735-2466 Voice<br>1-800-735-2966 Text |

**MO HealthNet for Kids**

Through the MO HealthNet for Kids program, children receive full, comprehensive coverage including primary, acute, and preventative care, hospital care, dental and vision care as well as prescription coverage.

**Website:** <https://mydss.mo.gov/healthcare/mohealthnet-for-kids>

**Toll-free phone number:** 855-373-4636

Visit your local **Family Support Division** office

**Trauma-Informed Schools Initiative**

Learn more about Missouri's Trauma-Informed Schools Initiative at:

<https://dese.mo.gov/traumainformed>

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Our district is required to inform you of information that you, according to the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (Public Law 114-95), have the right to know.

Upon your request, our district is required to provide to you in a timely manner, the following information:

- Whether your student's teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether your student's teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived.
- Whether your student's teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher.
- Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

In addition to the information that parents may request, a building receiving Title I.A funds must provide to each individual parent:

- Information on the level of achievement and academic growth of your student, if applicable and available, on each of the State academic assessments required under Title I.A.
- Timely notice that your student has been assigned, or has been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by, a teacher who has not met applicable State certification or licensure requirements at the grade level and subject area in which the teacher has been assigned.

If you have any questions, you may call Esthere Scott, Federal Programs Coordinator, at 314-989- 8542.

Sincerely,

Kelly Grigsby, Ph.D.

Deputy Superintendent

Special School District

**Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**  
**Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)**  
**COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

This guide explains how to file a complaint about any of the programs<sup>1</sup> that are administered by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Department) under the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA)<sup>2</sup>.

| Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education<br>Complaint Procedures for ESSA Programs<br>Table of Contents                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>General Information</b><br>1. What is a complaint under ESSA?<br>2. Who may file a complaint?<br>3. How can a complaint be filed?                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Complaints filed with LEA</b><br>4. How will a complaint filed with the LEA be investigated?<br>5. What happens if a complaint is not resolved at the local level (LEA)? | <b>Complaints filed with the Department</b><br>6. How can a complaint be filed with the Department?<br>7. How will a complaint filed with the Department be investigated?<br>8. How are complaints related to equitable services to nonpublic school children handled differently? |
| <b>Appeals</b><br>9. How will appeals to the Department be investigated?<br>10. What happens if the complaint is not resolved at the state level (the Department)?          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

**1. What is a complaint?**

For these purposes, a complaint is a written allegation that a local education agency (LEA) or the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (the Department) has violated a federal statute or regulation that applies to a program under ESSA.

**2. Who may file a complaint?**

Any individual or organization may file a complaint.

**3. How can a complaint be filed?**

Complaints can be filed with the LEA or with the Department.

**4. How will a complaint filed with the LEA be investigated?**

Complaints filed with the LEA are to be investigated and attempted to be resolved according to the locally developed and adopted procedures.

**5. What happens if a complaint is not resolved at the local level (LEA)?**

A complaint not resolved at the local level may be appealed to the Department.

<sup>1</sup> Programs include Title I, A, B, C, D, Title II, Title III, Title IV.A, Title V  
<sup>2</sup> In compliance with ESSA Title VIII-Part C, Sec. 8304(a)(3)(C)

**6. How can a complaint be filed with the Department?**

A complaint filed with the Department must be a written, signed statement that includes:

1. A statement that a requirement that applies to an ESSA program has been violated by the LEA or the Department, and
2. The facts on which the statement is based and the specific requirement allegedly violated.

**7. How will a complaint filed with the Department be investigated?**

The investigation and complaint resolution proceedings will be completed within a time limit of forty-five calendar days. That time limit can be extended by the agreement of all parties.

The following activities will occur in the investigation:

1. **Record.** A written record of the investigation will be kept.
2. **Notification of LEA.** The LEA will be notified of the complaint within five days of the complaint being filed.
3. **Resolution at LEA.** The LEA will then initiate its local complaint procedures in an effort to first resolve the complaint at the local level.
4. **Report by LEA.** Within thirty-five days of the complaint being filed, the LEA will submit a written summary of the LEA investigation and complaint resolution. This report is considered public record and may be made available to parents, teachers, and other members of the general public.
5. **Verification.** Within five days of receiving the written summary of a complaint resolution, the Department will verify the resolution of the complaint through an on-site visit, letter, or telephone call(s).
6. **Appeal.** The complainant or the LEA may appeal the decision of the Department to the U.S. Department of Education.

**8. How are complaints related to equitable services to nonpublic school children handled differently?**

In addition to the procedures listed in number 7 above, complaints related to equitable services will also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education, and they will receive all information related to the investigation and resolution of the complaint. Also, appeals to the United States Department of Education must be filed no longer than thirty days following the Department's resolution of the complaint (or its failure to resolve the complaint).

**9. How will appeals to the Department be investigated?**

The Department will initiate an investigation within ten days, which will be concluded within thirty days from the day of the appeal. This investigation may be continued beyond the thirty day limit at the discretion of the Department. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Department will communicate the decision and reasons for the decision to the complainant and the LEA. Recommendations and details of the decision are to be implemented within fifteen days of the decision being delivered to the LEA.

**10. What happens if a complaint is not resolved at the state level (the Department)?**

The complainant or the LEA may appeal the decision of the Department to the United States Department of Education.

## [ESSA Complaint Procedures](#)

## **Educating Missouri's Homeless Children**

The McKinney-Vento Act, part of the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, guarantees homeless children and youth an education equal to what they would receive if not homeless.

### **Who is Homeless?**

- According to the McKinney-Vento Act, homeless children and youth include individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. This includes the following situations:
- Sharing the housing of others (known as doubling-up) due to loss of housing or economic hardship
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Abandoned in hospitals
- Living in a nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings

The McKinney-Vento Act also recognizes unaccompanied youth who are homeless. According to the act, an unaccompanied youth is a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian.

### **Which School Can a Homeless Child Attend?**

There are two choices for a student in a homeless situation – the school of origin and the school of residency. The school of origin is the school the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled. The school of residency is the school serving the area where the child or youth is currently physically dwelling. When determining the school of best interest, a homeless child or youth should remain in the school of origin (to the extent feasible) unless doing so is contrary to the wishes of the parent or guardian or to the wishes of the unaccompanied youth.

### **Enrollment**

The McKinney-Vento Act requires the immediate enrollment of homeless children and youth. These children must be allowed to attend school even if they are unable to produce previous academic records, immunization and medical records, proofs of residency, birth certificates or other documentation that is usually required.

## **Transportation**

School districts must provide transportation for homeless children and youth to the school of best interest. Districts must also provide transportation during the resolution of any pending disputes. While disputes over enrollment, school placement or transportation arrangements are being resolved, students must be transported to the school of choice of the parent or the unaccompanied youth.

## **The Homeless Coordinator**

A school district's homeless coordinator plays a vital role in ensuring that children and youth experiencing homelessness enroll and succeed in school. The McKinney-Vento Act requires that every school district appoint a homeless coordinator who serves as the link between homeless families and school staff, district personnel, shelter workers and social-service providers.

***Special School District's homeless liaison is Esthere Scott who can be reached at 314-989-8542 or 314-239-1586 (cell-after 3:30 p.m.).***

**Call Missouri's Homeless Coordinator at (573) 522-8763**

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education –  
Federal Grants Management - PO Box 480 Jefferson City, MO 65102-048