ST. JOSEPH
SCHOOL DISTRICT







BESSIE ELLISON ELEMENTARY

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Arrival and Dismissal

School Hours & Morning Arrival

School begins at 8:45 AM and dismisses at 3:50 PM.

For the safety of all students, children should not arrive or be on school property unsupervised before 8:25 AM, unless they are attending a school-sponsored activity. Appropriate supervision by Ellison staff does not begin until 8:25 AM, and our doors will remain locked before that time.

Please do not send students to school before 8:25 AM.

Students arriving after 8:55 AM will be considered tardy.

Morning Car Rider Arrival

We are making some updates to our arrival procedures this school year to help make mornings safe, smooth, and efficient for everyone!

- Please remain in your vehicle during arrival.
- Follow the designated flow of traffic through the parking lot.
- Pull forward to the next available spot marked with cones.
- A student helper will open the car door and assist your child(ren) out of the vehicle.
- Once your child has safely exited, please continue following the flow of traffic and exit the parking lot.
- Please do not park or leave your vehicle during arrival unless absolutely necessary.

Keeping traffic moving helps us get into the building quickly and allows the next family to pull forward.

Afternoon Dismissal

To help keep traffic moving safely and efficiently, car rider dismissal will begin at 3:50 PM.

We ask that families:

- Remain in your vehicle while waiting in the car rider line.
- Follow the designated traffic flow.
- Please do not park and walk up to pick up your child unless absolutely necessary.
- Have your car rider tag clearly displayed in your vehicle.

Each family will receive a car rider tag with a unique family number. This number will be used by our staff to identify your family and safely direct your child(ren) to the appropriate vehicle in the designated pick up spots.

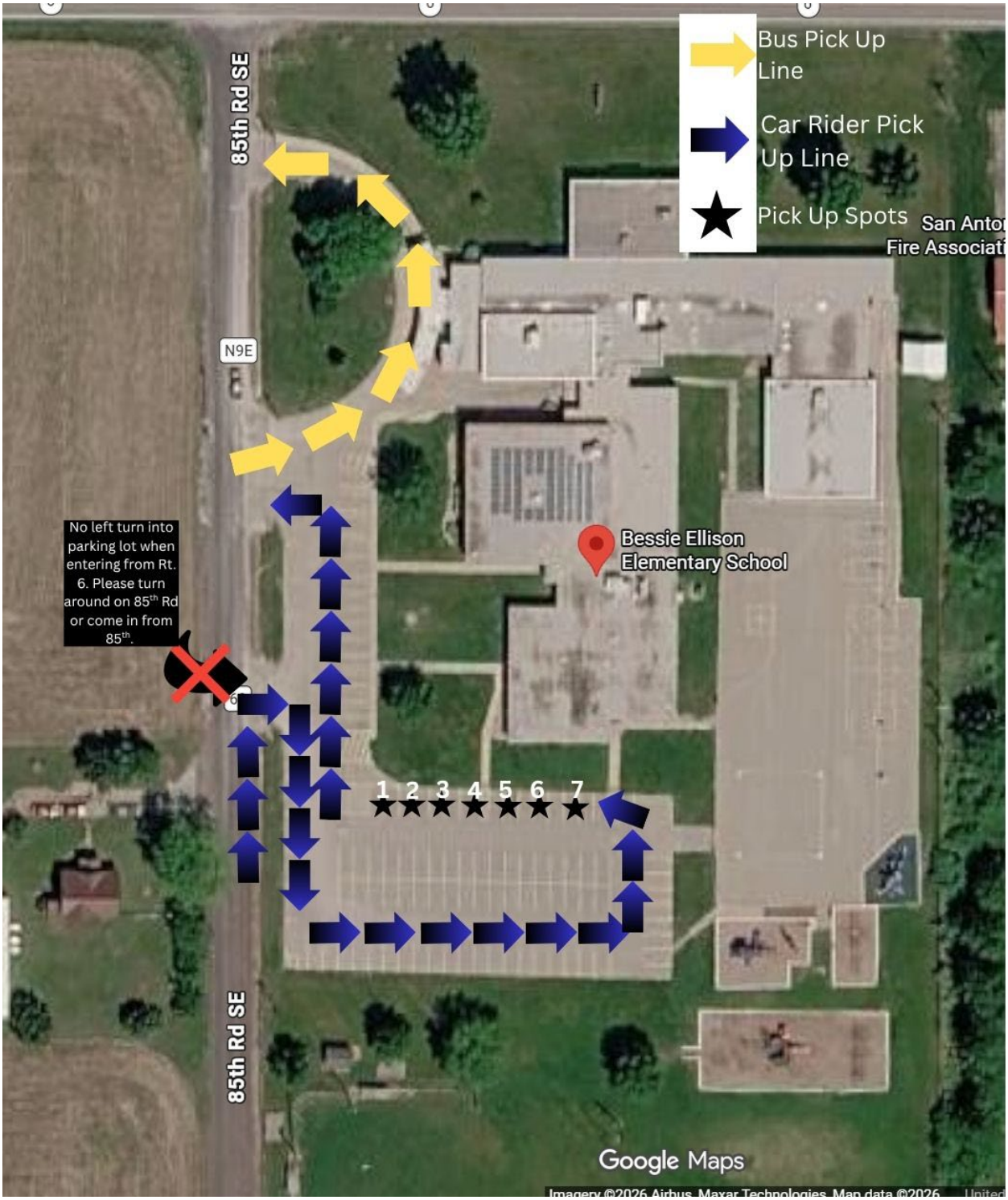
Thank You for Helping Us Keep Arrival & Dismissal Safe!

We know that new procedures can take a little time to get used to, and we appreciate your patience as we work together to make arrival and dismissal safe, organized, and as efficient as possible.

We also do ask that if you drive in from Rt. 6, that you turn around on 85th Rd to get into the car rider line. I know this can be a bit of an inconvenience, however, for safety and making sure our line is not backing up on Rt. 6, we believe this will be the easiest adjustment.

The photo on the following page shows the traffic flow and designated arrival and dismissal areas. Please take a moment to review it before the first day of school.

Thank you for helping us make every arrival and dismissal a smooth one at Ellison!


Bus Pick Up Line
Car Rider Pick Up Line
Pick Up Spots
85th Rd SE
N9E
No left turn into parking lot when entering from Rt. 6. Please turn around on 85th Rd or come in from 85th.
Bessie Ellison Elementary School
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
85th Rd SE
Google Maps

Making a Change in Dismissal Plans for Your Child

Please review with your child their daily transportation routine. If there is to be a transportation change, please notify the school in advance by writing a note to the teacher or calling the school office. If someone is picking up your child that is not on the approved contacts list in PowerSchool, we may ask for formal identification of the person, such as their driver's license. It is not our intent to seem unwelcoming; rather it is our purpose to protect the safety of all students. **If no notification is received, your child will follow his/her regular transportation method. If the plan changes during the school day, please let us know before 3:30 PM.**

Breakfast Procedures

Breakfast will be served in the cafeteria from 8:25-8:50. View the current breakfast and lunch menus here.

Attendance

Academic success depends on consistent and punctual school attendance. Research says that when a child misses school, he/she may miss the teacher's direct instruction, which cannot be made up. Parents can help their child succeed by ensuring attendance except during illness or a family emergency.

Please email (jenniferletterman@sjsd.k12.mo.us) or call Mrs. Letterman in the office (671-4120) between 7:45– 8:15 AM when your child will be absent. Please note that we do not answer the phones until 7:45 AM. On the day of their return, please send a written excuse stating the days and reason your child was absent.

If a child is absent for more than two consecutive days, it is presumed that medical treatment will be sought. If your child leaves for any appointment, please provide a doctor's/dental note stating your child has been seen. This helps us with attendance procedures.

Academic Awards

Students can receive a variety of awards throughout the school year each quarter and a few just once a year. They are outlined below. Please encourage your children to try their best throughout the year to be eligible to earn awards appropriate in their grade level.

- 90% and Above Attendance – Quarterly for K – 6th Grade
- Perfect Attendance – Quarterly for K – 6th Grade
- 'A' Honor Roll - Quarterly for 3rd - 6th grades

- ‘A/B’ Honor Roll - Quarterly for 3rd - 6th grades
- Academic Excellence - Available for 3rd- 6th grades in each subject area, given for earning an ‘A’ all 4 quarters of the school year in that subject
- Reading Circle Certificate - Books must be completed by the end of the school year:
    - Kindergarten - 2nd grade: 20 books
    - 3rd - 6th Grade: 16 books
- Principal’s Reading Certificate - Books must be completed by the end of the school year:
    - Kindergarten - 2nd grade: 50 books
    - 3rd - 6th Grade: 35 books
- President’s Awards for Academic Excellence - 6th grade
- Portrait of a Graduate – Quarterly for K – 6th grade
    - Engaged Citizen
    - Respect
    - Courage
    - Problem Solving
    - Communication

Academic Updates

Along with regular communication from your child’s teacher, you will receive quarterly progress updates about your child’s academic progress in the form of mid-quarter progress reports and end-of-quarter grade cards. At the end of the first and third quarters, Bessie Ellison will hold parent-teacher conferences to provide you with individualized time to speak with your child’s teacher.

PowerSchool is a web-based student information system that allows educators, parents, and students to share information. PowerSchool allows parents access to their student’s grades at any time. For information on how to set up your PowerSchool account, please contact Mrs. Letterman in the front office to assist you in getting set up. Please note, students in kindergarten, first, and second grade do not have traditional grades entered into the PowerSchool system, so no parent account is needed until third grade. Please visit the PowerSchool at this link to log into your account.

Birthday Treats and Party Invitations

Many students request to bring treats to school on their birthday so they may share them with their classmates. We encourage individual items that can easily be served, as opposed to items such as cookie cakes that need to be divided. Please be mindful if plates, napkins or other utensils are needed to serve, as teachers do not have these readily available. Also, we do not

have the freezer space to store ice cream treats. Please be sure to contact your child's teacher so they are aware birthday treats will be coming. ANY BAKED TREATS SENT TO SCHOOL HAVE TO BE PREPARED IN A COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENT AND/OR HAVE TO BE INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED!

The guidelines are in accordance with the St. Joseph Health Department and must be observed. We do not hold special birthday parties but do allow time for students to pass out treats when it is convenient for the class schedule. Parents may drop off items at the office, and we will get the items to the classroom. Parents are not allowed to host a party in the classroom as we are working to protect instructional time.

Students are asked not to bring invitations to school for private parties for distribution unless EVERYONE in the class is invited or the invitations are extended to all the boys in the class or all the girls in the class.

Bus Information

Contact and Routes

Please contact Apple Bus Company at 816-273-0041 if you have any questions about transportation. Bus routes can be found on the SJSD website here.

Please note, all kindergarteners and first graders must have a responsible party at the stop to be released from the school bus; otherwise, they will be returned to Ellison.

Bus Behavioral Expectations

Students, parents/guardians, bus drivers and school officials must work together to provide for the safe transportation of students. The school buses, bus stops, and all other forms of transportation provided by the district or provided incidental to a school activity are considered school property. Students are subject to district authority and discipline while waiting for, entering and riding district transportation. Students who fail to observe district rules or fail to contribute to a safe transportation environment will be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension of the privilege of riding the bus.

Behavioral expectations on the bus are the same for any classroom in the SJSD. Students riding district transportation are expected to meet the following guidelines: (a) follow the driver's instructions promptly, (b) stay seated and face the front, (c) show respect to everyone, (d) use appropriate language, (e) keep aisles clear, (f) keep hands, feet and objects to yourself, and (g) refrain from eating or drinking on the bus. Misbehavior simply cannot be permitted and will be treated through a bus conduct notice system.

The suggested use of how conduct notices can be handled is as follows:

- First Notice: Student will receive a warning, with the notice signed by the parent, the bus driver, and the principal.
- Second Notice: Student will conference with a principal and could face school discipline or further suspension from the bus, not to exceed 3 school days.
- Third Notice: Student will conference with a principal and could face school discipline or further suspension from the bus, not to exceed 5 days.
- Fourth Notice: Student will conference with a principal and could face school discipline or further suspension from the bus, not to exceed 10 days.
- Subsequent Notices: Should a student receive a 5th notice, long-term suspension from the bus may occur.

Communication

Newsletter

During the first week of the month, Bessie Ellison publishes a newsletter on ParentSquare. Included in this newsletter is a monthly calendar of events, including early dismissal dates and all-school activities. Individual teachers also send out class newsletters.

ParentSquare Communication App

The St. Joseph School District uses ParentSquare as our primary communication platform for reaching families. With ParentSquare, you can stay connected to your student's school through messages, calendars, forms, alerts, and more, all in one place.

What You Can Do in ParentSquare

- Receive messages from your child's school via app, email, text, or voice call
- Send and receive two-way messages with automatic translation
- View school and class calendars
- Sign up to volunteer or RSVP for events
- Receive attendance notices, weather alerts, and important updates
- Receive message in your preferred language. (Please note: Chuukese is not currently supported by ParentSquare's auto-translation.)

How to Get Started

- Visit the **ParentSquare website** or download the ParentSquare app from the App Store or Google Play.
- Use the email or phone number you provided to your student's school.
- Create your account and choose your notification preferences (instant or daily digest).

💡 Tip: Make sure your contact information is up to date in your child's school record, PowerSchool. This ensures you receive all school communications.

Dress Code for SJSD

Staff members in the St. Joseph School District are constantly striving to provide the best conditions possible for student learning and achievement. Any condition that may distract students from learning is of serious concern. Student dress can have a significant effect on learning and behavior. Clothing must cover the body sufficiently and avoid attracting excessive attention or causing disruptions. The following have been found to be a distraction to the learning process and therefore are unacceptable in school:

- Clothing that doesn't sufficiently cover the body including tube tops, swimsuits, backless, halter or strapless tops, bare midriff, mid-cut or see-through shirts, or basketball jerseys that are cut low on the sides
- Shorts that are inappropriately short
- Overly long baggy jeans or pajamas
- Clothing that advertises substances such as alcohol, cigarettes, drugs and violence
- Clothing that utilizes double play on words, obscenities, profanity, or is suggestive in any way
- Large chains
- Caps, hats, or head coverings (including hoodies) unless approved by the principal
- Footwear must be worn at all times. Sandals are acceptable if they are safe and adequately secured to the feet

The principal will make decisions regarding the appropriateness of clothing. In the event that a question arises regarding clothing, parents will be contacted.

Emergency Weather/Crisis Situation

Please have a plan in place if the weather turns bad during the school day. Listen to local radio and TV stations for cancellations. Our building does have a Crisis Team ready to handle any crisis situation. Our school engages in regularly scheduled fire and tornado drills. Other drills practiced include intruder drills, lock-down situations, and an earthquake drill.

Field Trip Information

A field trip for a class is a shared experience and should expand upon learning in the classroom. Each student will be required to have a permission slip that is signed and dated before accompanying the rest of the class on the field trip. A student's continuous disciplinary issues could affect his/her attendance on a field trip. Phone calls for permission will not be made on the day of the field trip. Those students without permission slips will remain at school.

It is expected that all students will ride the bus TO the field trip. If a student chooses to ride home in a car it must be the child's parent, and only the child related to driver may ride in the car (no exceptions).

Lost and Found Items

Small, valuable items are kept in the office (eyeglasses, jewelry, etc.) To help prevent items from being lost, please put your child's name on all personal property. Lost and found items are located in the cafeteria in the lost and found corner. Unclaimed lost and found articles will be donated to a local charity at the end of each semester.

Medication to be Given at School

In accordance with state law, nothing can be given in school without a doctor's order. This includes anything over the counter, cough drops, creams, etc. **Permission forms are available from the school nurse if there is a need for medications during school hours. Both the parent and the doctor must sign this form.** Requests may be faxed to the doctor for a signature if needed. Medications must be brought to the school in the original container, marked with the child's name, and kept locked in the nurse's office. This is for the safety of your child and others. If a doctor orders a medication to be given short-term (less than 10 days) and it must be given during school hours, the medicine must be sent in the original prescription bottle. The prescription label counts as the doctor's note. Any other medicine kept at school or given daily must have a long-term medication form filled out annually by the doctor.

The long-term medication form can be found on the SJSD website here.

Missed Schoolwork Due to Absences

If your child is absent due to illness, assignments should be requested by 10:00 am and may be picked up at the end of the school day in the front office. Students have one day to make up work for each day missed.

If it is necessary to take your child out of school because of a vacation or family trip, the child may be given assignments ahead of time for a period of up to two days. If a child is going to be out longer than two days, they will be responsible for making up that work in a reasonable amount of time after returning to school.

Personal Items Brought to School

Personal items (such as toys or valuable belongings) should be left at home. These items will be confiscated and may be returned to the parent. If lost or stolen, we will attempt to recover the item, however, the school will not be responsible for any damage or loss.

Phone Policy

Students are not allowed to display or use cell phones during school days. Violations of this policy will result in the device being confiscated.

- **First Notice:** Device is confiscated and turned into the office. A parent or guardian will be notified. Picked up at the end of the day by the student.
- **Second Notice:** Device confiscated and turned into the office. Picked up at the end of the day by a parent/guardian or designated adult.
- **Subsequent:** The device will be confiscated and turned into the office. A parent/guardian or designated adult will be required to pick up the device. Additionally, consequences for Disrespectful or Disruptive Conduct or Speech will be assigned.

Safety Procedures and Drills

At a minimum, Bessie Ellison School conducts fire drills once a month, intruder drills once a semester, and tornado drills once a semester. Should a tornado warning be in effect at dismissal time, students will be kept at school. An adult must report to the office for a student to be released from school during a tornado warning. Adults will only be allowed to pick their own child(ren) unless a written note is presented from another parent giving permission for that parent's child(ren) to leave with a family friend.

School Registration

Working phone numbers and emergency contact people are identified on the school registration forms. It is critical for students' registration information to be kept current at all times.

6th Grade Band and Strings Students

Students signing up for band or strings are making a yearlong commitment. Before making this commitment, be sure and discuss this with your student.

School Parties

The parties/celebrations provided during the school day are as follows:

October – Fall Party *Parties from 2:45-3:45

February – Valentine's Day *Parties from 2:45-3:45

The room parents facilitate these activities, and the Bessie Ellison PTA provides refreshments. Extra treats may be sent on these days. Any treats sent to school have to be prepared in a commercial establishment and have to be individually wrapped. The guidelines are in accordance with the St. Joseph Health Department and must be observed.

Student Council

The Student Council is an elected group of students that represents the whole student body. Each classroom in grades 4-6 selects two students to represent them on Student Council. Student Council actively promotes the school, completes service projects, and raises money for small projects.

Teacher Assignments

Parents will not be allowed to request a specific teacher for their child. Parents may choose to write a letter to the building principal describing teacher characteristics that their child may best respond to, and this input will be considered as we prepare class lists for the upcoming school year.

Tutoring

Some Ellison teachers offer an after-school prescriptive tutoring program, based upon various criteria. Please consult with your child's teacher regarding these opportunities.

Visitor Policies

Keeping students safe is a top priority for the St. Joseph School District. It is important that we know who is in our buildings at all times. Starting in January 2019, the district began using the Raptor visitor management system at each of our schools to keep track of visitors. The procedure enables each school building to screen all visitors against sexual offender registries in all 50 states and establish a consistent sign-in process across the district. Please understand that the process is not intended to discourage parents from visiting their children's schools. We welcome visitors and encourage all parents to be an active part of their child's educational experience. The goal is simply to enhance the safety and security of both students and staff by prohibiting school access to those who pose a potential threat.

Once the system is in place, all visitors, including parents, will be asked to report to the main office upon their arrival at the school.

- A secretary or other office staff member will request that each visitor provide their driver's license or other state or federally issued ID.
- The visitor's name, address, and photo will be checked for a match to a national sexual offender database.
- If a match is identified, the building principal or designated representative will immediately be notified and respond according to district procedures.
- If no match is found, visitors will be issued a date-specific visitor's badge. These badges must be worn at all times while on the school grounds. School personnel have been directed to escort anyone not wearing a badge to the office. Visitors must check in and receive a visitor badge each time they visit.

Volunteer Policies

The St. Joseph School District in accordance with HB604 and Missouri State Statute 168.133, now requires background checks for volunteers who meet certain criteria.

Level 1 Volunteers - do not require a formal background check and may enter the building with Raptor Visitor Management System.

- Works with students in a group setting under the direct supervision of SJSD staff, such as but not limited to room parents, class parties, family events, etc.
- You must present a valid photo id in the office upon arrival at all SJSD locations, which will be scanned through Raptor Visitor Management System.

- You will sign in as a volunteer and wear a visitor badge while in the building.

Level 2 Volunteers - must complete a full fingerprint background check at the expense of the volunteer at the Missouri Highway Patrol and other private providers

- Works alone with a student(s), away from the direct supervision of SJSD staff, such as but not limited to reading assistance, lunch duty, book fair, field trip, etc.
- You must present a valid photo id in the office upon arrival at all SJSD locations, which will be scanned through Raptor Visitor Management System.
- You will sign in as a volunteer and wear a visitor badge while in the building.

Weather Guidelines for Outdoor Recess

WINTER (TEMPERATURE WITH WIND CHILL)

- 32° – 90°: probably comfortable for outdoor play
- 20° – 32°: use caution, may be necessary to reduce time outside
- Below 20°: students **should not** go outside

SUMMER (TEMPERATURE WITH HEAT INDEX)

- 32° – 90°: probably comfortable for outdoor play
- 90° – 100°: use caution, may be necessary to reduce time outside
- Above 100°: students **should not** go outside

Withdrawal of Students

If you are moving and withdrawing your child from Ellison, please call or come by the school a few days prior to the withdrawal date. This will give the staff time to complete the necessary paperwork. Please make sure that students return all books to school and that all lunch accounts are paid.