South Washington County Schools

Elementary Handbook
for parents of students in grades Preschool-5

2019-2020
Welcome to
South Washington County Schools!

District Mission:

We are committed to igniting a passion for lifelong learning.

VALUES

Collaboration
Continuous Improvement
Equity
Integrity
Relationships

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

» We will engage, motivate and empower each student through personal instruction, creating shared ownership of learning.

» We will ensure safe, inclusive environments and encourage diverse perspectives through engagement, innovation and creativity.
Welcome to the 2019-20 School Year!

We are pleased to be serving more than 8,650 students in our district’s 16 elementary schools!

This handbook provides you with highlights of the curriculum, services and policies of our schools. Please keep this as a resource for your use throughout the school year. Contact information is available in this handbook as well as on our websites. We are available to assist with any further questions you may have about your child’s school. Your support and involvement in your child’s education will help to ensure their success.

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Student success in school is directly linked to attendance. To increase the educational opportunities for your child and to meet the county’s mandatory school attendance guidelines, the following procedures related to the attendance policy have been created:

» A parent/guardian is expected to notify the school if his or her child will be absent.
» If a student is ill for three days in a row due to health concerns, the parent/guardian will be contacted by a district Health Services employee regarding the child’s health concerns. School accommodations may be discussed at this time.
» The school district may require a health care provider’s note for each absence due to illness in excess of 10 days during the school year.
» Whenever the school is not notified of an absence, it is considered unexcused. If the student has two unexcused absences, a letter may be sent to the student’s parent/guardian notifying them of this status.
» By law, after six unexcused absences a “diversion meeting” will be scheduled with a school representative, parent/guardian and a Washington County employee to establish an attendance contract.
» After seven unexcused absences, Washington County may pursue an educational neglect investigation.
» After 10 days of excused absences, students may be required to provide a health care provider’s note.

### Please call in your child’s absence to the school’s attendance line:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong</td>
<td>651-425-4106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey</td>
<td>651-425-4806</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cottage Grove</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Middleton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newport</td>
<td>651-425-4306</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nuevas Fronteras Spanish Immersion</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine Hill</td>
<td>651-425-3906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pullman</td>
<td>651-425-3606</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red Rock</td>
<td>651-425-5606</td>
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<tr>
<td>Royal Oaks</td>
<td>651-425-4706</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valley Crossing</td>
<td>651-425-7506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbury</td>
<td>651-425-4606</td>
</tr>
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### District 833 Elementary Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armstrong Elem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bailey Elem</td>
<td>651-425-4800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cottage Grove Elem</td>
<td>651-425-5800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crestview Elem</td>
<td>651-425-3800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Cloud Elem</td>
<td>651-425-4200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillside Elem</td>
<td>651-425-4000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberty Ridge Elem</td>
<td>651-425-5900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middleton Elem</td>
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<td>Newport Elem</td>
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<td>Nuevas Fronteras Spanish Immersion</td>
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<td>Pine Hill Elem</td>
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<td>Pullman Elem</td>
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<td>Red Rock Elem</td>
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<td>Royal Oaks Elem</td>
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<td>Valley Crossing Elem</td>
<td>651-425-7500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodbury Elem</td>
<td>651-425-4600</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Communications

Many communication venues are available to parents as they learn more about their school and South Washington County Schools. Here are some ways to stay connected to your school community. Questions about District Communications can be directed to Shelly Schafer at 651-425-6209.

Cable TV Channel 15
Cable Channel 15 is the educational access channel operated by South Washington County Schools. Broadcasts of School Board meetings, informational shows featuring schools from across the district, concerts, sports and special events make up the programming. Emergency messages are also posted as necessary. Video segments can be found on Cable TV Channel 15, the district’s website and YouTube channel: @ISD833. School Board meetings are marked by chapters to help visitors easily navigate to specific portions of the video.

Parent Portal
Infinite Campus’ Parent Portal is a district-wide student information system designed to manage attendance, grades, schedules and other student information. Parents should create an account to access their student’s information. Parents should keep their contact information up-to-date in Parent Portal. To access Parent Portal, visit campus.district833.org or download the Infinite Campus Mobile Portal app on your device.

Conferences
While parents are welcome to check the progress of their child at any time, formal conferences are scheduled twice each year. Be sure to watch for the scheduled dates at your school.

District Newsletter: Window on Education
The district publishes the Window on Education that is mailed to more than 30,000 residents across the district. The Window is published four times each year: August, November, February and June. Watch for this publication as it includes updates on key district issues.

Email
Classroom teachers may choose to build a list of parent contact information to share current classroom news. Be sure to check with your child’s teacher and see if this is an opportunity you may have to stay connected. Please note that classroom teachers are not always able to respond immediately to emails, as their first obligation is to teach. If you need to reach the school immediately, call the school’s main office.

Emergency School Closings
Emergency school closings or delayed start-times for any reason will be announced as soon as possible to all district families through our Parent Notification System by phone and email, on WCCO Radio and TV, KSTP, KMSP-FOX 9, KARE 11, the district’s Cable TV Channel 15, www.sowashco.org and our social media.

Parent Notification System
The district’s parent notification system, Blackboard Connect, is used for phone calls, emails and text messages. Parents do not need to subscribe to this service. School principals rely on this as a means of communications for reminders or invitations to events, or to share urgent messages with all families within the school. Whenever possible, calls are programmed to be made during evening hours. This system can call all families of the district within 10 minutes when there is a school or district emergency. The system will leave a voicemail if you do not answer the call; please listen to the voicemail before calling the district or school’s office.

School Newsletters
Principals and classroom teachers may periodically send communications about activities taking place in their buildings and classrooms. The PTO/PTA parent group at your school also sends communications home with students that will provide you with valuable information about the activities taking place at the school.

Websites
The district’s website offers news and information about the district, individual schools and departments. Every elementary school maintains a website that shares information parents need to know about their school, staff and student opportunities. School websites can be accessed from the district’s website at www.sowashco.org. Teacher websites can be accessed from school websites.
Community Education

The Community Education Department offers programming for all ages. Community Education’s objective is to strengthen the partnership between schools and community, while expanding the availability of school district facilities and resources.

Kids Club: School Age Care
Kids Club is the school age child care program serving elementary students (grades K-5) in District 833. The school year program provides care in all elementary buildings before and after school, and operates full day programming on select days when school is not in session. During the summer months, Kids Club provides full day programming for children who have successfully completed Kindergarten through fifth grade at selected sites.

Kids Club provides a safe, recreational and creative environment for elementary school children. Children are offered options to participate in a variety of group and individual activities such as art, crafts, games, science, computers, physical activities and quiet time. Our program acknowledges the individual differences of each child, and respects their right to quality care. For additional information on programming, fees and availability, please contact 651-425-6637 or kidsclub@sowashco.org.

School Age Care (Kids Club)
Serving elementary students:
» Before & After School
» School Release Days
» Summer

Activity Centers
» Gymnastics  » Birthday Parties
» Indoor Walking Track
» Recreational Open Gyms

Aquatics
» Open Swim  » Lessons  » Rentals
» Boy Scout Workshops
» Camp Swim Testing
» Swim Training  » Water Exercise
» Year Round Offerings

Youth Enrichment
Before and after school classes:
» Art
» Mad Science
» Engineering
» Languages
» Chess
» Babysitting
» Karate, and more!

Elementary Intramurals
» Soccer
» Volleyball
» Floor Hockey
» Basketball
» Spring Games

Adult Enrichment
» Move your body, eat well, create, raise great kids, save money, get Tech Smart and more!

For more information about youth and adult activities and to register for classes, visit ce.sowashco.org or call 651-425-6600.

Dress for School Success

Appropriate student dress and grooming are expected. Wearing apparel or grooming that detracts from the normal educational process, constitutes a safety hazard, or that attracts inappropriate attention to the individual is unacceptable. Please assist us in keeping our focus on the educational process by discussing clothing expectations with your child.

Expectations include:
» Clothing that promotes alcohol, drugs, tobacco, inappropriate language or graphics, or sexual behavior is not acceptable.
» Bare midriffs and/or other suggestive clothing items are not acceptable.
» For health reasons, students are expected to maintain hygienically clean attire.
» Pants must be fastened around the waist.
» Students must wear shoes.
» Students should be appropriately dressed for the weather, including the Minnesota winter.
Health Services

South Washington County Schools’ Health Services consists of a team including a lead nurse, Licensed School Nurses (RN), Health Care Specialists (RN or LPN) and Health Service Assistants. These individuals are first aid/CPR trained.

- **Health Service Assistants**: Provide first aid, administer medication, assist with vision, hearing and screening programs, and process immunization records.
- **Health Care Specialists (RN or LPN)**: Provide care to students receiving special education services and/or are medically fragile, and provide the same services listed above for Health Service Assistants.
- **Licensed School Nurses**: Assess individual student health and developmental status, promote and maintain the health and well-being of all students, develop health plans for students having need, coordinate prevention and control of communicable disease, develop a system of first aid and emergency care, participate in health education, and recommend new and updated health practices/procedures. One LSN is assigned to every school.

Health Office

All health records, immunization records and authorization for prescribed medications are located in the health office. Each student must have updated emergency information in Parent Portal. Health Services staff is available each day during school hours. Any student experiencing illness or injury should report to this office after receiving a pass from the assigned classroom teacher. Phone calls related to illness, medication or injury must be made through this office.

Medications at School

When a student requires any medication at school:

- The medication must be provided in the **original prescription/medication bottle** labeled for school.
- There must be written authorization from a parent for all medications.
- There must be written authorization from a parent and health care provider for all prescription medications.
- Medications are kept in the health office unless arrangements have been made otherwise (alternate location or self-carry).
- NO ASPIRIN PRODUCTS WILL BE ALLOWED IN SCHOOL.
- Students may self-carry inhalers for asthma with proper parent and health care provider authorization.

Illness at School

If a student does not feel well enough to attend classes, he/she must report to the health office. Health Services staff will call the student’s parent/guardian for permission for the student to go home. If a parent/guardian is not available, the student will be allowed to rest in the health office.

Students who leave school without following this procedure will be recorded with unexcused absences for any classes missed. If your child is ill, please call the school daily to report the illness. Questions concerning ill children or Health Services can be addressed to the health office at your child’s school. In order for your child to return to school they must have been on an antibiotic 24 hours, or must be free of fever, diarrhea, vomiting for 24 hours without the use of medication if illness was considered communicable.

Immunizations

Minnesota state law requires all children enrolled in elementary and secondary school to be completely immunized against diseases. Parents choosing to exempt their children from immunizations (medically or conscientiously) must provide the proper documentation. These documents are available in each school’s health office and at [www.sowashco.org](http://www.sowashco.org) under Departments — Health Services. To comply with the state law, please submit all immunization information to your child’s school. If you need further information please call the health office.

**Immunization records required are:**

- **Kindergarten**
  - 5 DTaP; 4 Polio
  - 3 Hepatitis B; 2 MMR
  - 2 Varicella (chicken pox) date or actual date of disease
- **Age 7 through 6th Grade**
  - 3 DTaP; 3 Polio; 3 Hepatitis B; 2 MMR; 2 Varicella

Insurance

Accident or medical insurance on students is not carried by the district for students.

Physical Examinations

Physical examinations are recommended but not mandatory for elementary students entering kindergarten and fourth grade.
Nutrition Services

Nutritious meals are an essential part of students’ complete education experience. Research shows that good nutrition increases attention span and learning readiness, and decreases morning behavioral problems and nurse visits. Increasingly, the food served in the district is made from scratch. Menus are planned to include many choices. Breakfast, lunch and snacks are available in all buildings. The goal of the Nutrition Services Department is to provide students with high quality food and service. Your input is important to us. You may contact us at 651-425-6280.

MEAL PRICES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Breakfast (SBP)</th>
<th>Lunch (NSLP)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully Paid Price</td>
<td>$1.30</td>
<td>$2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced Price</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>$2.65</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Only one reimbursable breakfast and/or lunch may be purchased at these prices per day.

Computerized Accounts

A lunch account is setup for each student along with a Personal Identification Number (PIN) that is used to access the account. This number should be memorized and kept confidential. Once money is deposited in the account, the student enters their PIN on a keypad at the cashier station to pay for cafeteria purchases. Cash and checks are also accepted.

Computerized Meal Tracking:

» Each student receives his/her own Personal Identification Number (PIN)
» PINs ensure confidentiality
» Money is put into the student’s account through cash, check or at www.schoolcafe.com
» When a student enters his/her PIN on the keypad, the cost of the purchases is deducted from the student’s account

Breakfast

A federally funded breakfast program is offered at all elementary buildings. If your family is approved for free or reduced price meals, your children will automatically be approved for a free breakfast. All kindergarten students also receive breakfast at no charge.

À la Carte – Healthy Snack Items

All foods sold à la carte meet the USDA “Smart Snacks” nutrition guidelines. These guidelines require that snacks have limited calories, fat, sodium and sugar, and that grains be whole. Nutritious beverages and water are permitted. At the elementary level, there are limited items available.

Special Dietary Needs

The Nutrition Services Department adheres to specific regulations to accommodate special diets for students. USDA regulations require substitutions or modifications in school meals for children whose disabilities restrict their diets. A child with a disability must be provided food substitutions when a special diet statement is signed by a recognized medical authority, which includes a licensed physician, physician assistant or advanced practice nurse.

NOTE: Nutrition Services will substitute lactose-reduced milk for students whose parents have requested this alternative in writing via a simple note. The special diet statement is not required in this case.

SchoolCafé

SchoolCafé is a web-based system used for students’ meal accounts. Parents can use SchoolCafé to view lunch menus and view nutrition and allergen information for each food item. Parents can also use SchoolCafé to deposit money into their children’s lunch account, get low balance reminders, schedule automatic payments, review student purchases online, and apply for free and reduced meal benefits. To access SchoolCafé and register online, go to www.schoolcafe.com. Create a username and password, along with entering basic contact information. Parents can also download the SchoolCafé mobile app.

Note: You will need your student’s ID number from Parent Portal in order to complete the registration process.
Free and Reduced Meal Eligibility
Nutrition Services is pleased to be able to provide families with three different options when completing an Application for Educational Benefits. They include:
» Online applications: Completed online applications will normally be processed within 24-48 hours. At the beginning of the school year, paper applications can take as long as 10 days to process, including mailing time.
» Paper copy: All schools will have a small supply of applications on hand throughout the school year.
» Printable applications from the website: Applications can be printed at your convenience.

Families must submit a new application each year. If your family received free or reduced priced meals last school year, that same eligibility will remain in effect for the first 30 days of school. Families who have this 30 day carry-over and have not submitted an application for the current school year by October 15, 2019 will lose their eligibility.

Using the Angel Fund Account
Each school has an established Angel Fund account to loan parents funds until a deposit can be made into their student’s meal account. Angel Fund dollars come from the Employee Giving Campaign, private donations and students that move from the district or graduating seniors who do not request a refund.
» Parents will begin to receive messages when their student’s account balance falls below $5 and any day thereafter when there is activity on the account and the balance remains below $5.
» Student meal accounts are allowed to go negative up to $10. Once an account is negative they are no longer allowed to purchase à la carte items.
» After a student is at negative $10 they will be allowed to use the Angel Fund twice.
» After the second Angel Fund use, parents will be notified that their student will be receiving an alternative lunch the following day unless a deposit is made.
» If a deposit still has not been made, the student will be given an alternative lunch of a deli sandwich, fruit, vegetable and milk. The student will continue to receive the alternative lunch until a deposit is made.
» Any payments made to the account will repay the negative balance first.
» A separate payment to the Angel Fund of the amount loaned is appreciated so that funds will be available when other students need to access the program.

Frequently Asked Questions
How are payments made? Please make checks payable to “ISD #833 NS” and include on the memo line the child’s name and PIN. If you would like to deposit money into your student’s meal account by using SchoolCafé, go to www.schoolcafe.com.

Can I write one check for multiple children at the same school? Yes. Be sure to provide each child’s name, PIN and the amount for their account.

May students use another student’s PIN? No. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service has a policy regarding the misuse of accounts. Students are not allowed to share, borrow or use another student’s PIN. Disciplinary action may result from such behavior.

Can I restrict what my child is allowed to purchase? Limits an be set on à la carte purchases in whole dollar amounts being purchased from the student account balance. Individual à la carte options may also be restricted.

What if my child changes schools? Remaining lunch balances will follow students to their new school within South Washington County Schools. If you are an existing SchoolCafé user, you do not have to make any changes to your account.

How will I know if my child’s account balance is getting low? When a student’s account falls to $5, students receive verbal reminders their account is getting low. SchoolCafé will also notify parents by email that additional funds are needed. An automated phone call will go to the child’s home when the account balance falls below $5.

What happens if a child does not have enough money in their account to pay for a school lunch? Elementary students are allowed to charge up to $10. Once the account is negative the cashier will call the parent letting them know their student had to “charge” a lunch. If no payment is received and the student has used the Angel Fund twice, parents will be informed that an alternative meal will be provided at the next lunch.

What do I do if I suspect someone else is using my student’s PIN? Contact the cashier immediately. A new PIN will be issued and steps taken to track any further use of the old PIN. Attempts by another student to use the old PIN may result in disciplinary action, including paying restitution. Note that restitution is the only method for recouping unauthorized charges.

What happens to money at the end of the year? Balances remaining at the end of the school year automatically carry forward when school reopens and follow students to their next building assignment. Refunds will not be issued at the end of the year on account balances of less than $10 unless the family is moving out of the district. Families moving out of the district should contact 651-425-6280.
South Washington County Schools is committed to creating a safe and civil environment for students, enabling them to learn, achieve and promote healthy relationships. The district and each school work to ensure the physical and emotional well-being of all students.

If you plan to pick your child up during school hours, please report to the school office. Office staff will assist you in the process of connecting with your child and will have you sign your child out. You may be asked to show picture identification to maintain student safety.

Bullying Policy

What is bullying?
Bullying includes intimidating, threatening, abusive or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and includes an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern. In addition, the behavior materially and substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities or performance, ability to participate in school functions or activities, or to receive school benefits, services or privileges. Cyberbullying is included as part of the definition of this policy.

Warning signs of bullying include:
» Student returns from school with torn clothing or unexplained injuries.
» Student is unusually anxious, distressed, unhappy, depressed or tearful when returning from school.
» Student is fearful about attending school, walking to and from school, or riding the bus to school.
» Student has trouble sleeping, displays poor appetite, or suffers from headaches and stomachaches (especially before school), or exhibits unexpected or uncharacteristic mood shifts, irritability or sudden outbursts of temper.
» Student loses interest in schoolwork and/or shows a decline in academic performance.
» Student talks about or attempts suicide.

South Washington County Schools strictly prohibits bullying on school grounds. Each report of bullying is taken seriously and investigated. We will take necessary actions required against any individual who violates the school district's bullying prohibition policy (Policy 514, available at www.sowashco.org under About 833 — Policies and Handbooks. Action is taken against any individual who retaliates against any person who has made a good faith report of alleged bullying or who has participated in an investigation. The report form can be completed online.

Ensuring the success of the district’s bullying policy requires the participation of teachers, students, parents/guardians, administrative officials, support staff and transportation staff. In order to help children feel comfortable approaching his or her parents or guardians about bullying, please take the time to review the bullying prohibition policy and information on how you can help prevent bullying.

Student Rights & Responsibilities

The district has School Board policies in place to help ensure that we provide a safe learning environment for students.

All policies and full details of behavior expectations and discipline guidelines are available in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, available at www.sowashco.org under About 833 — Policies and Handbooks.

What can parents and guardians do?
If you believe bullying is occurring, encourage your child to share their problems with you or a trusted confidant. Ensure your child that talking is not tattling. Listen attentively and reassure him or her that they will not have to face the problem alone.

If bullying is occurring on the way to or from school, accompany your child or arrange for alternate transportation. Work with other parents to ensure that the children in your neighborhood are supervised closely. Report the incident to your school principal immediately. Keep a detailed record of bullying episodes and related communication with the school.
Bicycle Safety
Families are reminded to follow the rules when riding bicycles to school. Students should walk their bike when on school property and secure them safely in the bike rack. Skateboards, rollerblades, scooters and sleds are not allowed on school property.

Food Served in School
In accordance with state law, all food served in schools must be obtained from sources which are approved and inspected by federal, state or local regulatory authorities. Therefore, food served at fundraisers such as bake sales and cakewalks, or served as snacks for parties, carnival food, etc., must be obtained from a licensed caterer (South Washington County Schools Nutrition Services is licensed) or a commercial retailer.

Outdoor Preparedness
It is important that students come to school prepared with the appropriate clothing for all types of weather. Students are not only standing at bus stops in a wide range of weather conditions, but are also expected to be outdoors for recess and other activities that may occur throughout the day. Students will not participate in outdoor recess should the air temperature be below zero degrees or the wind chill below -10 degrees. School administrators have a process in place to check on temperatures should we experience extreme cold.

Potluck in School (MN Statute)
MN Statute 1577.22 allows food not prepared at an establishment and brought in by individuals attending a potluck event for consumption at the potluck event. An organization sponsoring a potluck event under this clause may advertise the potluck event to the public through any means. Individuals who are not members of an organization sponsoring a potluck may attend the potluck and consume food at the event. Licensed food establishments cannot be sponsors of potluck events. Potluck event food shall not be brought into a licensed food establishment kitchen.

Volunteer Background Check
Volunteers play an important role in the education of our children. A volunteer handbook has been created and is available in your school’s office to make sure the experience is enriching and rewarding for all involved. Student safety is always a top priority so volunteers are asked to follow the check-in procedures for the school. A background check and fee is required for volunteering when not directly under the supervision of a district staff person. Examples are working with an individual student or small group of students when a staff member is not present, on field trips and when coaching extracurricular academic or athletic activities. The background check is required during the school year in which the volunteering is taking place. Another background check may be requested if there is a lapse of service or at anytime at the discretion of the building principal.

Safety Drills
Schools are required to conduct periodic fire, severe weather and lock-down drills. These include evacuating and sheltering students in place. Please talk with your student about the need for these drills - reminding them that they are a drill and a measure for us to ensure that they are safe, should a crisis situation arise. The Transportation Department also conducts School Bus Safety Drills at each site twice each school year.

Pesticide Notification
Parents may request information from the school on the use of pesticides for the maintenance of school grounds.

Photographing Students
Schools are responsible for maintaining a list of students who are not to be photographed or filmed for any purpose. If you do not what your student to be photographed or filmed for any purpose, complete the district’s “Denial of Release of Information Form” (more information on page 13). If you do not complete this form, your child may be included in local media, district coverage of school events, marketing or other promotional material.
Parking Lot Safety
With hundreds of students arriving and leaving at the same times, the volume of traffic and variety of transportation means require extra rules and regulations to keep students safe. Please be patient and allow enough time for dropping off and picking up your child. Please refer to your school’s parking lot procedures for before and after school carpool. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Field Trips
Each elementary student may attend up to two field trips in which fees are collected directly from the student or the student’s family. More than two field trips may be offered if fees are not directly charged to the student or the student’s family. Lunch can be purchased and ordered through our Nutrition Services Department on the Field Trip Permission form that must be completed. To ensure student safety, volunteers chaperoning field trips are required to have a background check which must be completed during the current school year prior to the activity.

School Age Care (Kids Club)
Kids Club is South Washington County Schools’ School Age Care program. The school year program provides quality care both before and after school in all elementary buildings as well as full day programming on select release days for current elementary students. During the summer months, Kids Club provides full day programming for children who have successfully completed grades preschool-5.

Kids Club provides a safe, recreational and creative environment for elementary school children. Children are offered options to participate in a variety of group and individual activities such as art, crafts, games, science, computers, physical activities and quiet time. Our program acknowledges the individual differences of each child. For additional information on programming, fees and availability, please contact 651-425-6637 or kidsclub@sowashco.org.

Sending money/valuables to school
Payment for school activities can be made by check to “District 833.” Students should not have large amounts of money and/or valuable items at school. We cannot guard against stolen property.

Visitors in Buildings
South Washington County Schools welcome visitors and encourage all parents to be an active part of their children’s educational experience. A new visitor management system allows school staff to quickly and securely scan all visitors. It also simplifies the sign-in process for returning visitors. The new process will create passes that will be distributed by school staff in a quick and secure fashion. The system will only be used during school hours.

Releasing Students
The safety of all South Washington County Schools students is a top priority. In the absence of a court order or legally binding document, a student may only be released to authorized persons listed on the student’s emergency card/or identified in Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Exceptions require a signed note from the custodial parent/legal guardian. Phone calls and verbal requests will not be accepted without additional verification. The district will contact the custodial parent/legal guardian when there is a question or concern regarding the release of the student. We may also require that a form of identification be provided.
Special Services

Special education is specially designed instruction and related services that enable a student with a disability to access and benefit from their program of education. Special education addresses the individual needs of students that arise from a disability and is provided at no cost to the parents. These services can include specialized personnel, special instructional supplies and materials, modification to curriculum and other special accommodations.

There are several steps to determine special education eligibility and possible services:

1. **Pre-referral:** General education teachers and staff implement interventions to support students who are experiencing difficulty in school.

2. **Referral:** Teachers and parents may request assistance to address learning and/or behavioral problems from the building Student Support Team.

3. **Pre-evaluation:** Parents and educators meet to discuss areas of concern and develop an evaluation plan.

4. **Evaluation:** Information gathering, observations and assessments are conducted to determine student strengths, areas of need and possible eligibility for special education services.

5. **Staffing:** A team meeting (including parents) is held to review evaluation data and determine eligibility and appropriate services.

6. **Implementation:** The team develops an individual education program (IEP or IIIP) based on the results of the evaluation.

7. **Progress reporting:** Progress toward IEP/IIIP goals is monitored and reported to parents on a regular basis.

8. **Annual IEP meeting:** The IEP team meets at least annually to revise the IEP as needed.

**Specially designed instruction** means adapting the content, methodology or delivery of instruction (i.e. what we teach and how we teach it) to address the student’s unique needs that arise as a result of their disability, and to ensure access to the general education curriculum. Related services are a broad array of services that assist a student with a disability to benefit from their program of specialized instruction.

Related services can include: adaptive equipment and/or technology; audiology; occupational therapy; orientation and mobility services; physical therapy; psychological services; school social work services; special transportation; and speech/language therapy. The purpose of a related service is to facilitate the student’s access to, and allow them to benefit from, their program of “specialized instruction.”

**Who is eligible for special education services?**

Students qualify for special education by meeting specific eligibility criteria, as defined by the Minnesota Rule Chapter 3525. Students are evaluated by a team of professionals to determine if they qualify in one or more of the following disability areas:

- **Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD):** A lifelong developmental disability with onset usually in the first three years of life. It is a behaviorally defined syndrome characterized by an uneven developmental profile and difficulty in social interaction, communication and perceptual organization. Autism occurs on a continuum from mild to severe.

- **Deaf-Blindness:** A medically verified visual impairment coupled with medically verified hearing impairment that together, interferes with acquiring information or interacting in the environment.

The Special Services Department is located at the District Service Center. Information is available at www.sowashco.org under Departments - Special Services.

If questions or concerns cannot be addressed through your child’s teacher or principal, please contact the Special Services Department at 651-425-7201.
Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH): A diminished sensitivity to sound that is expressed in terms of standard audiological measures. Hearing impairment has the potential to affect educational, communicative or social functioning that may result in the need for special education services.

Developmental Cognitive Disability (DCD): DCD refers to children whose cognitive ability and adaptive behavior skills are below their peers, either within the mild-to-moderate or severe-to-profound range.

Emotional/Behavioral Disability (EBD): Children are eligible for EBD services when inappropriate behavior(s) significantly interfere with learning and consistently occur across home, school and community settings.

Other Health Disability (OHD): A broad range of medically-diagnosed, chronic or acute health conditions. A student may receive OHD services if it is determined that the health condition adversely affects academic functioning.

Physically Impaired (PI): a medically diagnosed chronic physical impairment, either congenital or acquired, that may adversely affect physical or academic functioning and result in the need for special education and related services.

Severely Multiply Impaired (SMI): A pupil who has severe learning and developmental problems resulting from two or more disability conditions as determined by an evaluation.

Specific Learning Disability (SLD): Children are eligible under this category when there is evidence of inadequate achievement, a disorder of information processing and a discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement. All three of the above mentioned conditions must be present to qualify.

Speech/Language Impairments (S/L): Children with articulation, language, fluency, voice and/or hearing problems may be eligible to receive speech/language therapy.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): A TBI is an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that may adversely affect a child’s educational performance and result in the need for special education and related services.

Visually Impaired (VI): A medically verified visual impairment accompanied by limitations in sight that interfere with acquiring information or interaction with the environment to the extent that special education and related services may be needed.

Who should I contact if I have questions about special education?
If you have questions about your child's educational progress or would like to discuss the possibility of a special education evaluation, you can contact your child’s teacher or school psychologist. If your concerns are specifically related to the implementation of your child’s IEP, you should discuss them with your child’s IEP Manager. Parents might also elect to speak to their child’s building principal for questions related to special and general education.

Although the Director of Special Services cannot overrule an IEP Team’s decisions, you may wish to contact the Director or a Special Education Supervisor for clarification or mediation if you cannot resolve a problem.
Preschool and Kindergarten Registration
In January, families who will have incoming preschool students and kindergarten students during the upcoming school year will be mailed enrollment packets. Packets include enrollment information and forms, and information about choice programs such as Nuevas Fronteras Spanish Immersion and the Multiage program. Families with eligible students will also receive a welcome letter from the designated elementary school or department inviting families to attend registration night at the school or site in February.

Who will receive this information?
» Preschool Information: Families with children who will be four years old on or before September 1
» Kindergarten Information: Families with children who will be five years old on or before September 1

Registering Students
Students joining our school district are welcomed at our Student Information Department at the District Service Center. Student Information staff will assist families in coordinating the transition from a previous school to a school in South Washington County Schools. Please be certain to highlight any special services or programming your child may have been receiving at a previous school so we can better plan for a smooth transition for your child.

Students are assigned to the school within the attendance boundary the family resides in. A family may submit a request to attend a different school in the district via Intra-District Transfer (IDT). An IDT approval is based on enrollment at the requested school. If the request is approved, the parent is required to provide transportation and the student will be able to attend that elementary school through grade five (families do not need to re-apply each year). At the transition to middle school, students are then assigned to their attendance boundary middle school.

Withdrawing a Student
If you are going to be relocating and will be withdrawing your child from his or her elementary school, the office coordinator at the school can assist with the transition.

Updated Contact Information
If you move, change telephone number(s) or change email addresses, contact Student Information at 651-425-6326. You can also review and update contact information through Parent Portal. It is important for the district to have current information to reach parents/guardians.

Legal Paperwork
If there is legal documentation that parents feel is necessary for the school to have, parents are to provide the most current, complete copies for the school. It is always encouraged to talk to your child’s teacher and school office at the beginning of each school year to make sure all needed parties have the requested, updated information and legal paper work to support any necessary action.

Directory Information & Photography Release
The district’s policy 515 relating to the protection and privacy of student records is in place to allow minimal information, as defined by the district in accordance with state statute, to be available to the public.

Directory information, defined by policy 515, is a student’s name, gender, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, date of attendance, grade levels completed, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, and other similar information.

The same form allows parents to choose not to have their student photographed or videotaped for school or district purposes. Student photography/videos are frequently taken by staff and media (with permission from the school principal or the Communications Department) for use in school programs, publications, website or other marketing purposes. Parents must opt-out if they do not want their student to be photographed for any school or district purpose.

Should parents not want photographs or video taken, or directory information released, a “Denial of Release of Information Form” must be completed and submitted to the Office of Student Information at the District Service Center (7362 E. Pt. Douglas Road S., Cottage Grove, MN 55016) or to the office of the school the student attends no later than Oct. 1 each school year.

The form is available at www.sowashco.org under Departments — Communications — Forms & Procedures.
South Washington County Schools believes in a student-centered learning, results-oriented system believing that all students can learn. The Teaching and Learning Services Department (TLS) assists the district by:
1. Identifying what students will learn,
2. Organizing curriculum and instruction around the state standards,
3. Assessing learning and report results, and
4. Using results to continuously improve the learning process for all students.
In the classroom this means that the teacher has identified outcomes for the student, teaches to those outcomes and assesses progress on an ongoing manner.

Progress Report Cards
Consideration is given to the child’s academic growth in each of the subjects as well as the child’s social habits, attitudes and appreciations. All report cards represent the student’s performance in various subject areas. Progress report cards are issued for all elementary students at fall and winter conferences, as well as the final end of the year report. These progress reports reflect our district-wide initiative of reporting student progress in a standards-based instruction methodology. Parents of students in grades 3-5 will receive their child’s progress report cards during conferences.

Early Childhood Screening
Early childhood screening is required by the state of Minnesota of all children before entering kindergarten in a public school and is free of charge. Screening is a quick and simple check on how your child is growing and developing. Earlier is better when it comes to early childhood screening. Early childhood screening includes a vision screening that helps detect potential eye problems, but is not a substitute for a comprehensive eye exam. To schedule an appointment, call the Early Childhood Screening Secretary at 651-425-6175 or find more information at www.sowashco.org under Quick Links — Parents — Early Childhood Screening.

Preschool Program
South Washington County Schools’ preschool program provides a quality educational experience for 4-year-olds the year before they start kindergarten. The program is designed to help children learn the skills necessary for success in kindergarten and beyond in a caring and age-appropriate learning environment. Classes are offered for a fee in most elementary buildings for children living within the building’s attendance area or at alternative sites when space is not available. Limited transportation is available for four-year-old students to and from their site (transportation not available for classes held at alternative sites). Enrollment is limited. For more information or to register, call 651-425-6632 or go to ce.sowashco.org and select Preschool under Early Learning.

Kindergarten
Your child will be exposed to many different learning experiences in kindergarten. These experiences will be tailored to your child’s age and level of development and will be presented in a variety of ways in order to introduce, reinforce, extend or master the building blocks determined for success. Our program focuses on the academic, social and emotional building blocks that prepare students for a comprehensive education. This focus affords opportunities for each student to experience success.

Art
The “Portfolios” state-of-the-art program provides students with a multi-faceted approach to art as a learnable, visual language, integrating creative expression with artistic perception, art history and art criticism. Each grade level integrates art with other subjects such as math, science, social studies and language arts. Each elementary school has an art specialist that works with students in grades 1-5 on a weekly basis. (Kindergarten usually does not have art unless there is a different arrangement.)

Comprehensive Literacy Plan
Literacy is the ability to use language to read, write, listen and speak in order to successfully participate in a social, economic, family and community life. In order to achieve this, our elementary schools use a Local Literacy Plan for instructional planning and implementation. Observation and assessment data are used on a daily basis to make instructional decisions. The daily delivery of instruction moves through each of the components of a literacy plan: read aloud, whole group lesson, small group guided instruction and independent practice. It’s this structure
that allows us to personalize instruction and meet the needs for all students.

**English Learners (EL)**
The EL program serves multilingual students whose first language is not English. The program is designed using curriculum based instruction to ensure English language acquisition through rigorous, standards-based instruction. Students will communicate via reading, writing, listening and speaking in whole-class, small-group and individual settings. The goal of this program is language and cultural proficiency that allows students access to all courses and programs in the district.

**Gifted Education**
Gifted Education serves students with outstanding abilities as described by the Minnesota Department of Education’s definition of giftedness. These students are capable of high performance when compared to others of similar age, experience and environment. Based on demonstrated learning needs, staff focus on academic and affective development over time as it relates to a positive and productive relationship with learning. Evidence of learning needs being met is reviewed through complexity, pacing, depth, increased autonomy and abilities to navigate choice.

At the elementary level, cluster classrooms are provided for gifted students in a mainstream classroom where the cluster teacher works to meet the needs of gifted learners within the context of core curriculum and as part of an informal gifted education team. The Gateway Program, located at Valley Crossing Elementary, is for students in grades 3-5 who have been identified with unique learning needs best met in a “program-within-a-school” learning environment. Details about Gifted Education and can be found at [www.sowashco.org](http://www.sowashco.org) under Academics — Gifted Education or by contacting the Teaching and Learning Services Department at 651-425-6242.

**Health**
The Wright Group “Primarily Health” is used in kindergarten and Harcourt Brace “Your Health” is used in grades 1-5. Supplemental units are used in the areas of sexual abuse, bus safety, growth/development and diseases.

**Mathematics**
Mathematics for K-5 employs a consistent method of instruction for developing mathematical proficiency. Key components are: daily intervention strategies that diagnose student strengths and difficulties; a variety of assessment tools for each teacher to choose from; an array of technological products used to further promote mathematical understanding; online learning; and finally, a family support component which aids in the development of a strong family-school partnership for math.

**Minnesota Math and Reading Corps**
Minnesota Math and Reading Corps members serve at a number of South Washington County Schools elementary schools, providing research based reading and math interventions for students in grades K-3. Qualifying students in need of extra support will work individually with a Corps member daily for a short block of time and the student’s success will be monitored.

**Music – Instrumental**
Both band and orchestra meet for a large musical session 30 minutes during the school day as well.

**Band:** At the end of 4th grade, students can enroll in the instrumental program. During 5th grade, students receive group lessons and start in beginner’s band, which rehearses for 30 minutes once a week during the school day. Band students have several concerts during the year. Instruments can be rented or purchased from companies outside of school. Further information is available by calling your child’s school.

**Orchestra:** Students may enroll in Orchestra at the end of 3rd grade. Beginning in 4th grade, students will receive small group lessons and start in a beginning orchestra program. This program includes lessons on violin, viola, cello or string bass. Teachers will set up a scheduled time during the school day for students to participate in a 30 minute lesson and large group activities. Some instruments are available through the school district to rent or students may purchase from companies outside of school.

**Music – Vocal**
Music instruction blends a combination of Orff and Kodaly methods, along with the use of McGraw Hill’s text, “Share the Music.” Each grade level is guided through a set of outcomes designed around the main strands of music: dynamics, tone color, tempo, rhythm, melody, harmony, form and style. The area of social skills which includes responsibility and cooperative skills is also emphasized.

Children are actively involved in singing, playing, moving, listening and creating music as outlined in the National Standards for Music Education. In addition, students in grades 4-5 may participate in the before or after school choral program.
Physical Education
The physical education program is designed to provide a variety of activities to help all students develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to maintain a health and fitness level to function effectively in today’s society. There are many one and two week units of instruction that cover a variety of motor skills and fitness related activities. For a copy of the physical education schedule, contact your school or ask your child’s physical education instructor. All students in grades 1-5 participate in a district health related fitness test in the fall, winter and spring of each year.

Required Dress
A standard uniform or change of clothes is not required in our district. However, shorts or slacks for girls who wear dresses may be necessary for some units, such as tumbling. If a parent wishes their son or daughter to change clothes for physical education class, time will be arranged to make this possible.

Gym Shoes
Children should have gym shoes for physical education class and won’t be allowed to participate without these shoes. Proper shoes are a safety precaution for your child and for the other students. Our program stresses motor skills and fitness. A large part of the fitness is cardiovascular and that is developed largely by jogging. Running, walking and jogging require a comfortable fitting running shoe. Flats or any type of slip-on shoes cannot be worn in physical education class. When purchasing shoes, ask for a running type shoe that has a soft gum rubber-type bottom (not plastic) that will have good adhesion to a gym floor. Improper shoes will hinder performance and could affect your child’s safety and development.

There is no “best” running shoe, and they don’t have to be expensive. When you’re ready to buy a gym running shoe, find one that fits your child’s foot and provides cushioning, support and flexibility.

All gym shoes must have velcro or laces. All laces must be properly tied. Gym shoes can be left in school. This is a sure way of knowing that your child will have them available. If you elect not to do this, then you will need to send them with your child on a daily basis. Gym shoes can be worn to and from school.

Physical Education Excuses
Students who must be excused from physical education classes because of illness or injury should present a note from his/her parent or guardian. If such disability extends beyond three school days, it will be necessary to have an excuse from a doctor. When the doctor states a definite time limit, the excuse will be honored accordingly. If the doctor gives an indefinite time such as “until further notice” or “for an indefinite time,” a release from the doctor is necessary before the student will be permitted to re-enter the physical education activities.

Reading Support
The Reading Specialist Teacher:
» Supplements instruction to students using various delivery systems, such as Reading Recovery, one-on-one or team teaching (1st grade only)
» Provides comprehensive literacy staff development opportunities for teachers, paraprofessionals and parents
» Coordinates school-wide comprehensive literacy program
» Manages the use of balanced literacy curriculum resources
» Monitors and compiles assessment results
» Integrates reading across the curriculum through reading projects

Reading Recovery Program
Reading Recovery is an intervention program for 1st grade children who are having difficulty with reading and writing. Specially trained teachers work individually with children on a daily basis to improve their reading skills. The aim is to bring children to the average level of their peers before the need for remedial help. The district offers services in each elementary building.

Science
In Minnesota, science content standards are divided into three strands: Physical Science, Earth and Space Science, and Life Science. Generally, students receive instruction in each area every year. The content builds and becomes more in depth as students progress through school.

In addition to science content, The Nature of Science and Engineering standards represent the learning process, necessary skills and real world connections for science content. Unlike the content standards, Nature of Science and Engineering standards are embedded...
throughout the curriculum and spiral as students progress through school.

The elementary science curriculum is a combination of text resources and inquiry modules. Students use science notebooks for recording and communicating their investigations. Science field trips and science fairs are common in our schools.

Social Studies
The elementary social studies standards focus on four areas of study: government and citizenship, economics, geography and history. The social studies curriculum for grades 3-5 is in a digital format. Through a Minnesota partnership, this adaptable format allows for a more robust approach to teaching and learning.

Technology
Technology is immersed into all areas of learning to support personalized learning, growth and understanding as it relates to how all subjects connect. It is important for our students to understand the skills of being safe and effective digital citizens. The central idea in the use of technology in instruction is that access to technology is critical to a comprehensive 21st century education. It is not the specific device that is the most important, rather the availability and accessibility to the appropriate tools to develop a creative and comprehensive learning experience for all students is key.

Title I
Title I is part of Improving America’s School Act. The program is funded by the federal government, administered by the State of Minnesota and operated by the local school district. It is designed to provide support and educational opportunities to children from target schools. The district’s elementary schools qualifying for Title I services are Crestview, Newport and Pullman. The program gives individual and small group supplementary help in reading and math to children with the greatest need as identified by assessments and teacher recommendation. Children in kindergarten and primary grades are given first priority because of our belief in early intervention. Parental involvement is actively encouraged through groups which contribute significantly to the success of the Title I program.

Testing
Students will experience a range of tests throughout their education that include statewide tests, district tests and classroom tests. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) are tests that measure student performance on the state’s standards in the areas of reading, math and science. Results are provided for the district, schools and individual students. South Washington County Schools uses the results to evaluate our curriculum and teaching methods. We use the MAP test in reading and math beginning in second grade to measure student performance in the fall of each year. The MAP test, along with classroom assessments, allows teachers to monitor progress and tailor instruction to meet individual needs.

A district testing schedule, FAQ about testing and more details about the tests given to elementary students is available at www.sowashco.org under Departments — Continuous Improvement & Assessment.

To learn more about parent opt-outs for state testing, please refer to the district’s Continuous Improvement & Assessment FAQ page or the Minnesota Department of Education Statewide Testing page at education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/tests.

Targeted Services
Targeted services is a program for students in kindergarten through 8th grade who are in need of additional support because they are not meeting grade level expectations. Programming occurs on an extended day/year basis and is designed to supplement the traditional school day. Programming is focused on academic, social and emotional goals that are outlined on a continual learning plan that is designed by teachers, parents and students. The programming provides a variety of learning techniques and experiences to engage students beyond the regular school day to enhance the learning outcomes for all students.
More than 14,000 students, who attend both South Washington County Schools and area private schools, will ride a school bus to and from school each year. Transportation is provided for elementary students living one mile or more from school.

In order to give needed attention to the ever changing traffic situations, it is vital that drivers have full cooperation from their passengers and obey bus rules. Help promote safety and good ridership, which will reduce disciplinary action, by reviewing bus safety rules with your children. Please point out the hazards and consequences for misbehavior with respect for the safety of all other students who ride the bus.

Transportation service is a privilege for all eligible students who exhibit proper behavior according to district behavioral guidelines. Minnesota Statute 123.801 provides that transportation is a privilege, not a right, for an eligible student. A student’s eligibility to ride the school bus may be suspended or revoked for a violation of school bus safety or conduct policies, or for violation of any other law or policy governing student conduct on a school bus. Revocation of a student’s bus riding privileges is not an exclusion, expulsion or suspension under the Fair Pupil Dismissal Act of 1974.

Parents are directly responsible for the supervision of their children until the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day. Many problems in the morning would be eliminated if students were outside at the bus stop five minutes prior to loading time. Once a student boards the bus, only at that time does he/she become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day.

Special Transportation
Some students require special transportation for health reasons or as deemed necessary by the IEP team. Forms are available through the main office at each school or on the Transportation website. It takes three to five business days to arrange transportation once the completed form has been received by the Transportation Department.

School Bus Safety
School bus safety training for all students in grades K-10 will start shortly after school opens. State law requires that all K-10 students receive classroom training in school bus safety and practical training using an actual school bus. Students must demonstrate competency in seven areas and be certified by the school in order to be eligible to ride the school bus. All K-3 students enrolled in the first two weeks of school must be trained by the end of the third week and all 4-10 grade students must be trained by the end of the sixth week. The Superintendent must certify to the state that each student has achieved the required competencies.

Students failing to demonstrate competency in the following areas will be denied bus transportation privileges.
1. Transportation by school bus is a privilege and not a right;
2. District policies for student conduct and school bus safety;
3. Appropriate conduct while on the bus;
4. The danger zone surrounding the school bus;
5. Procedures for safely boarding and leaving a school bus;
6. Procedures for safe vehicle lane crossing; and
7. School bus evacuation and other emergency procedures.

Behavior Standards for Bus Riders
Student compliance with the following bus safety rules is requested to ensure appropriate driving conditions at all times for bus drivers.
1. **Loading** - When students cross the road to be picked up, the student should take extra caution in watching for approaching vehicles.
   **Unloading** - When exiting the bus, students should immediately move 10 feet away or out of the danger zone (see image on page 19). Those students who must cross the road should be 10 feet in front of the bus and again take extra caution in watching for approaching vehicles. Students will not be allowed to get off the bus at a stop other than their scheduled one unless they present a parent note to the driver with valid telephone number.
2. The bus driver is in full charge of the bus and riders at all times. Students are responsible to the driver while riding the bus the same as they are responsible to teachers while in attendance in school.
3. It is dangerous for students to be out of their seat when the bus is in motion. Students must not change seats while the bus is in motion or shout to one another.
4. Students should not stand in the traffic lanes while waiting for the school bus.
5. Students should always be outside and ready for the bus at the bus stop five minutes before the time it is scheduled to arrive. Changing weather and road conditions make it impossible for the bus to maintain an exact schedule every morning. Every attempt is made to be as close to schedule as possible.

6. Students have a responsibility to keep the bus clean. They should do their part to keep the floor clear of waste paper and dirt and to keep the upholstery and interior finish of the bus in excellent condition.

7. Any damage done to the bus should be reported to the driver as soon as it happens.

8. Students should never extend their head or arms out of the bus window. Windows should not be lowered any further than to allow air to pass through the bus.

9. The use or possession of matches, lighters, tobacco, e-cigarettes, alcohol or drugs while riding the bus will deny the student riding privileges. Any use of profane or abusive language could result in loss of riding privileges.

10. Any distractions of the driver’s attention to remind the student of a regulation could jeopardize the safety of every student on the bus. Students should aim to avoid talking with the driver when the bus is in motion.

School Bus Discipline
The Student Safety Manager will administer discipline based on the district’s school bus discipline procedures. After verbal warning from the driver, if the need for disciplinary action continues, students may be assigned a seat on the bus. Your cooperation is necessary as the driver will do his/her best to move only those who are in violation of the bus rules. The district’s policy against weapons applies to the school bus. Look-alike weapons (knives, guns, water pistols, etc.) of any type should not be brought onto any bus. Students having possession will lose riding privileges.

The following consequences are to be used if the offense is minor. It is to give parents time to respond to and aid in correcting the behavior.

First Offense: A warning is given to provide parents time to work with their child on his/her behavior before the Transportation Department steps in. Students can still be suspended if the offense is a flagrant violation/major infraction. Such violations would include fighting, profanity and/or possession of tobacco, drugs or alcohol, or possession of a weapon or replica, or any threat of deadly force.

Second offense: This will result in a five-day suspension.
Third Offense: This will result in a 10-day suspension.
Fourth Offense: This will result in the loss of transportation privileges for the remainder of the school year.

Note: Bus suspensions will include AM and PM routes and all activity buses.

Minor infractions: The following infractions are considered minor and in most cases can be handled by the drivers.

» Spitting
» Loud noise
» Name calling (no profanity)
» Littering on or off the bus
» Throwing objects on the bus
» Eating or drinking on the bus
» Hanging out of window
» Not remaining seated facing forward
» Unwilling to follow driver’s instructions
» Obstructing aisles or tripping/pushing (for example: pushing to gain access to the bus in front of others, or trying to exit the bus ahead of others)

Major infractions: The following infractions are considered major and can result in suspension for a first offense.

» Fighting
» Profanity and/or vulgar language
» Vandalism: Permanent destruction of the bus, such as ripping seat covers, breaking windows, writing on any part of the seats or interior of the bus
» Harassment: This does not include name calling unless profane in nature. Harassment can be verbal or physical. See Safe Schools section on page 8
» Assault: See Safe Schools section on page 8
» Possession of matches/lighter, alcohol/drugs, tobacco products (including e-cigarettes), laser pointer, fireworks, weapon or replica
» Terroristic Threat: This is any threat to use deadly force with any kind of weapon to either one or more
Bus Stops
Bus stops will be located at corners or intersections, whenever possible. The designated area that students wait for the bus must be within a bus length to the corner (about 40 feet). The bus driver will designate this area to the students after the first day. This may change during the year. Stopping at corners or intersections is safer due to the expectations of traffic. It also provides the driver or substitute driver a landmark (intersection) to identify prior to making the stop so the eight-lamp (flashing lights) system can be properly activated to warn the public. This also allows the driver to scan the area for students when approaching the intersection. State law and School Board policy states students can walk up to one mile to a bus stop.

Bus Stop Change Request
If you would like to request a change to your designated bus stop, visit www.sowashco.org and select Departments — Transportation — Forms, and fill out the appropriate form. After each request is reviewed, the Transportation Department will notify you of the decision. School bus drivers do not have the authority to change bus routes or student stops.

Walking Areas
Traffic safety factors and distance are two primary criteria used to establish walking areas to schools. The walking area is determined by our routing software which utilizes GIS mapping to measure the most direct route/distance from the street in front of a school driveway to the street in front of a resident’s driveway. Parents are encouraged to arrange neighborhood car pools to pick up walking students when the weather is bad. Please use the designated parking lot. Private vehicles should never enter the bus lots. Buses must be able to pull up and load/unload in a safe and timely manner. Please do not allow your child or passengers to walk between buses or cars stopped in the designated bus or parent loading or unloading areas. This can be very dangerous.

End of year incidents resulting in loss of privileges will be carried over to the next school year.

Questions about transportation issues including routes, stops and late buses can be directed to the Transportation Department at 651-425-5303.
Bus Stop Criteria
1. Buses serving students with disabilities may stop while using their four-way hazard lights only at house stops where it takes an extended period of time to load/unload the student. At these stops the bus will pull over to the curb at the driveway and the student will not be allowed to cross the roadway. Buses will not go into the student’s driveway, unless prior approval has been given, due to the hazard of backing out. The bus horn will not be used to announce arrival.
2. Buses will not generally travel down cul-de-sacs unless the vehicle is picking up handicapped children. Backing up a school bus is a dangerous maneuver. A full-sized bus needs 115 feet to safely turn, and most cul-de-sacs are only 90 feet wide.
3. Unless prior approval has been given and the Transportation Department has approved, no school bus will travel on private roads.
4. Bus stops should be located with clear visibility for 300 feet in both directions. Stops in a residential area where the speed limit is less than 35 mph may not be located within 100 feet of each other.
5. Stops in or out of residential areas where the speed limit is 35 mph or greater may not be located within 300 feet of each other.
6. School buses may load/unload in right-turn lanes if pre-approval has been given. Eight-way lights or four-way hazard lights will not be used and students are not permitted to cross the road.
7. There is not a fixed number of students that warrant adding or moving a stop. All stops are determined on an individual basis.
8. Visibility from the home to the bus stop is not part of the criteria for establishing bus stops.
9. Stranger-Danger criteria are used only under documented persisting or current cases that public safety can verify.
10. The bus driving past your house does not warrant adding or changing a stop. A higher frequency of stops can make the motoring public impatient and cause drivers to pass the bus, creating greater safety concerns than the distance a student has to walk to the bus stop. It also delays the bus, making the overall student time on the bus longer.

Bus Routes
Bus routes are arranged according to geographic area and stops are assigned from one to three blocks of a student’s home whenever possible. Students that attend a school whose boundaries cover a larger geographic area (i.e. Nuevas Fronteras or Gateway) will be assigned to a station stop. Station stops are assigned based on the number of students in an area or neighborhood. They are generally within two to four blocks of a student’s home. Station stops are important to these routes to keep the rider time at a minimum. State guidelines recommend that no student ride the bus more than one hour each way every day. The bus route and/or stops may change from year to year based on student population.

Bus Route Information
Parents can find their child’s bus stop information in Parent Portal before the start of each school year. Students must ride the bus that they are assigned and ride the same bus to and from school unless prior approval from the Transportation Department has been given. Students will be expected to abide by all the school bus safety rules, which are posted in every bus.

Day Care Service
The Transportation Department will regard a student’s day care location as their residence for the purpose of transportation if requested by the parent/guardian. It is necessary that the day care be located in the same attendance area as the school that the child is attending, and in the case of kindergarten, the same AM or PM designated area. Transportation will be provided from the student’s home or day care.

The pick-up and drop-off bus stop must be the same location every morning and every afternoon. Only the following will be considered:
1. Pickup at home, drop off at home;
2. Pickup at home, drop off at day care;
3. Pickup at day care, drop off at day care;
4. Pickup at day care, drop off at home.

It is imperative that the parent/guardian provide the Transportation Department with the day care information by July 1 each year for the upcoming school year. This allows the department to establish routes as accurately as possible.

Non-public Students
Minnesota Statute 123.79 requires the school district to provide equal services to non-public school students in South Washington County Schools’ geographic boundaries.
This information will help parents/guardians make informed decisions that benefit their children, schools, and communities.

**Why statewide testing?**

Minnesota values its educational system and the professionalism of its educators. Minnesota educators created the academic standards which are rigorous and prepare our students for career and college.

The statewide assessments are how we as a state measure that curriculum and daily instruction in our schools are being aligned to the academics standards, ensuring all students are being provided an equitable education. Statewide assessment results are just one tool to monitor that we are providing our students with the education that will ensure a strong workforce and knowledgeable citizens.

**Why does participation matter?**

A statewide assessment is just one measure of your student’s achievement, but your student’s participation is important to understand how effectively the education at your student’s school is aligned to the academic standards.

- In Minnesota’s implementation of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, a student not participating in the statewide assessments will not receive an individual score and for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, including opportunities for support and recognition, will not be considered “proficient.”
- Students who receive a college-ready score on the high school MCA are not required to take a remedial, noncredit course at a Minnesota State college or university in the corresponding subject area, potentially saving the student time and money.
- Educators and policy makers use information from assessments to make decisions about resources and support provided.
- Parents and the general public use assessment information to compare schools and make decisions about where to purchase a home or to enroll their children.
- School performance results that are publicly released and used by families and communities, are negatively impacted if students do not participate in assessments.
- English learners not taking ACCESS or Alternate ACCESS for ELLs will not receive a score to meet English learner program exiting criteria.

**Academic Standards and Assessments**

**What are academic standards?**

The [Minnesota K–12 Academic Standards](https://www.minedu.gov) are the statewide expectations for student academic achievement. They identify the knowledge and skills that all students must achieve in a content area and are organized by grade level. School districts determine how students will meet the standards by developing courses and curriculum aligned to the academic standards.

**What is the relationship between academic statewide assessments and the academic standards?**

The statewide assessments in mathematics, reading, and science are used to measure whether students, and their school and district, are meeting the academic standards. Statewide assessments are one measure of how well students are doing on the content that is part of their daily instruction. It is also a measure of how well schools and districts are doing in aligning their curriculum and teaching the standards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)</th>
<th>ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for English Learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Based on the Minnesota Academic Standards; given annually in grades 3–8 and high school in reading and mathematics; given annually in grades 5, 8, and high school for science.  
- Majority of students take the MCA.  
- MTAS is an option for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. | - Based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards.  
- Given annually to English learners in grades K–12 in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.  
- Majority of English learners take ACCESS for ELLs.  
- Alternate ACCESS for ELLs is an option for English learners with the most significant cognitive disabilities. |
Why are these assessments effective?

Minnesota believes that in order to effectively measure what students are learning, testing needs to be more than answering multiple choice questions.

- To answer questions, students may need to type in answers, drag and drop images and words, or manipulate a graph or information.
- The Reading and Mathematics MCA are adaptive, which means the answers a student provides determine the next questions the student will answer.
- The Science MCA incorporates simulations, which require students to perform experiments in order to answer questions.

All of these provide students the opportunity to apply critical thinking needed for success in college and careers and show what they know and can do.

Are there limits on local testing?

As stated in Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.301, for students in grades 1–6, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 10 hours per school year. For students in grades 7–12, the cumulative total amount of time spent taking locally adopted districtwide or schoolwide assessments must not exceed 11 hours per school year. These limits do not include statewide testing.

In an effort to encourage transparency, the statute also requires a district or charter school, before the first day of each school year, to publish on its website a comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the district or charter school during that school year. The calendar must provide the rationale for administering each assessment and indicate whether the assessment is a local option or required by state or federal law.

What if I choose not to have my student participate?

Parents/guardians have a right to not have their student participate in state-required standardized assessments. Minnesota Statutes require the department to provide information about statewide assessments to parents/guardians and include a form to complete if they refuse to have their student participate. This form follows on the next page and includes an area to note the reason for the refusal to participate. Your student’s district may require additional information.

A school or district may have additional consequences beyond those mentioned in this document for a student not participating in the state-required standardized assessments. There may also be consequences for not participating in assessments selected and administered at the local level. Please contact your school for more information regarding local decisions.

When do students take the assessments?

Each school sets their testing schedule within the state testing window. Contact your student’s school for information on specific testing days.

- The MCA and MTAS testing window begins in March and ends in May.
- The ACCESS and Alternate ACCESS for ELLs testing window begins at the end of January and ends in March.

When do I receive my student’s results?

Each summer, individual student reports are sent to school districts and are provided to families no later than fall conferences. The reports can be used to see your child’s progress and help guide future instruction.

How much time is spent on testing?

Statewide assessments are taken one time each year; the majority of students test online. On average, the amount of time spent taking statewide assessments is less than 1 percent of instructional time in a school year. The assessments are not timed and students can continue working as long as they need.

Why does it seem like my student is taking more tests?

The statewide required tests are limited to those outlined in this document. Many districts make local decisions to administer additional tests that the state does not require. Contact your district for more information.

Where do I get more information?

Students and families can find out more on our Statewide Testing page (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).
Parent/Guardian Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Assessments

To opt out of statewide assessments, the parent/guardian must complete this form and return it to the student’s school.

To best support school district planning, please submit this form to the student’s school no later than January 15 of the academic school year. For students who enroll after a statewide testing window begins, please submit the form within two weeks of enrollment. A new refusal form is required each year parents/guardians wish to opt the student out of statewide assessments.

Date________________________ (This form is only applicable for the 20___ to 20___ school year.)

Student’s Legal First Name_________________________________ Student’s Legal Middle Initial_________

Name_________________________________ Student’s Date of Birth______________

Student’s District/School_________________________________ Grade______________

Please initial to indicate you have received and reviewed information about statewide testing.

______ I received information on statewide assessments and choose to opt my student out. MDE provides the Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing on the MDE website (education.mn.gov > Students and Families > Programs and Initiatives > Statewide Testing).

Reason for refusal:

Please indicate the statewide assessment(s) you are opting the student out of this school year:

______ MCA/MTAS Reading ______ MCA/MTAS Science

______ MCA/MTAS Mathematics ______ ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS for ELLs

Contact your school or district for the form to opt out of local assessments.

I understand that by signing this form, my school and I may lose valuable information about how well my student is progressing academically. As a result, my student will not receive an individual score. Refusing to participate in statewide assessments may impact the school, district, and state’s efforts to equitably distribute resources and support student learning; for the purpose of school and district accountability calculations, my student will not be considered “proficient.”

If my student is in high school, I understand that by signing this form my student will not have an MCA score that could potentially save time and money by not having to take remedial, non-credit courses at a Minnesota State college or university.

Parent/Guardian Name (print) ________________________________

Parent/Guardian Signature ________________________________

To be completed by school or district staff only. Student ID or MARSS Number ___________

Posted May 2019
This is your Parent/Student Handbook that provides information to help you understand more about your child’s school. Please contact 651-425-6230 if you have questions. Thank you.

Hmoob
Nov yog phau ntawv uas piav thiab qhia txog koj tus me nyuam lub tsev kawm ntawv kom koj tus ua niam nua txiv paub txog cov kev pab cuam uas muaj nyob rau hauv tsev kawm ntawv. Yog muaj lus nug, thov hu rau tus xov tooj 651-425-6230. Ua tsaug.

Español
Este es su folleto para padres y estudiantes que provee información que les ayudará a entender mejor las reglas de la escuela de sus hijos. Por favor llame al 651-425-6230 si tiene alguna pregunta. Gracias.

Vietnamese
Day la quyen sach can thiet cho bac phu huynh, cung cap nhung thong tin nham giup qui vi hieu ro hon ve con em cua qui vi o trong truong. Neu qui vi co thac mac gi xin lien lac voi so dien thoai nay 651-425-6230. Xin cam on qui vi.

South Washington County Schools
651-425-6300 • www.sowashco.org

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