

SOUTH DECATUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2025-2026

SOUTH DECATUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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Mrs. Nicole Stone, Principal

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook was developed to help keep you informed about your child's learning environment. South Decatur Elementary School has been and will continue to be a school that welcomes its parents and surrounding community members. It is our desire to involve the entire school "family" in providing a successful and enjoyable experience for our most precious resource; our children.

This handbook is one very important means of providing general information about school rules, regulations, and opportunities. Revisions to and clarifications of this handbook will be sent to you in the SDE Newsletter. The Newsletter is sent by email on each Friday. Questions about specific situations should be directed to your child's teacher or to the office. Suggestions about this handbook, or any aspect of the operation of South Decatur Elementary, are welcome.

Nicole Stone, Principal

This Handbook is also part of our Home Page:

<https://sdes.decaturo.k12.in.us/>

SOUTH DECATUR ELEMENTARY MISSION STATEMENT

At South Decatur Elementary School, we believe students can think critically, creatively, and reflectively, become effective communicators, productive collaborators, and be digitally literate.

The South Decatur Community strives to help students develop to their full potential-intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially - by nurturing the total child in an environment that promotes cooperation and respect, thus fostering a lifelong love of learning.

VISION STATEMENT

Decatur County Community Schools identifies six 21st Century Learning Skills that students will continually develop:

- 1) Critical Thinking
- 2) Creative Thinking
- 3) Reflective Thinking
- 4) Effective Communication
- 5) Productive Collaboration
- 6) Digital Literacy

Developing these 21st Century Learning Skills will be accomplished through continued collaboration between students, parents, school, and community.

MOTTO

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

SECTION ONE - RULES AND REGULATIONS

ADMISSIONS

Indiana Code requires that students must be legal residents of the South Decatur School District to attend South Decatur Elementary. Students are legal residents if they live with a parent who lives in the school district, or if they live with a legal guardian who lives in the school district. Legal guardians will be required to show guardianship documents and must prove the guardianship was not established solely for attending South Decatur Elementary in order to enroll the child in school. Any student who is not a legal resident of the school district must complete a transfer request form on file at the Decatur County Community Schools' Central Office.

Students who transfer to South Decatur Elementary from a non- accredited private, non- public or other special school must meet requirements set forth by the Board of School Trustees. A copy of the policy is available upon request.

To enroll in a Decatur County Community School the student must meet one of the following requirements:

1. LEGAL RESIDENCE

- a. Live with the natural or adoptive parent in the school district.
- b. Live with a legal guardian in the school district (except if established solely for school purposes).
- c. Be a ward of the court and placed in this school.
- d. Be placed in a foster home in the school district.
- e. Be a legal transfer student.
- f. Be emancipated and live in the school district.

2. ADMISSION AGE

In order to officially enroll in a Kindergarten program offered by the Decatur County Community Schools, a child must be at least five (5) years of age on August 1. A child entering school for the first time at the first grade level must be six (6) years of age on August 1. Age must be verified by a birth certificate. Students must show proof that immunizations are up-to-date.

Children who enter first grade or kindergarten at a Decatur County Community School after attending school in another school system must meet the age requirements of the Decatur County Community Schools. An exception to this policy will be made for a first grade child who has attended another school for a full semester, but only after the parents have been informed of the risk assumed by having a child in a grade with older pupils. Beginning pupils shall not be admitted to first grade after the second week of school unless approved by the Superintendent.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A good attendance record is important not only to the student but to the school as well. Students with poor attendance often lose interest in school, tend to feel left out, and are commonly potential dropouts. Evidence indicates that grades and attendance are directly related. Also, attendance reports and class records of prospective employees are of concern to business and industry.

EXCUSED and UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

The following comprises the Decatur County Community School Corporation Attendance Program:

1. Recognized Excused Absences

- a. Personal illness or temporary disability preventing school attendance.
- b. Death in the immediate family.
- c. Employment on a lawful employment certificate with school permission.
- d. College visitation (arrangement must be made in advance through the guidance office).
- e. Required court attendance.
- f. Religious holiday.
- g. Other reasons deemed justifiable by school officials.

2. Unexcused Absences In Which School Work May Be Made Up
 - a. Family vacations should be taken during non-school time. Only in those instances where it is impossible to do otherwise should a student be taken out of school for a family vacation. In the event a family vacation must be taken on school time, the absences are considered unexcused, but students are allowed to make up school work. **Work must be completed on the day of return. A failing grade is automatically assigned for work that is not made up within this time period. Also, the parent must notify the administration prior to the child's absence.** In the event, prior notification to the administration is not made, schoolwork missed may not be made up.
 - b. In the event that a child is ill, and the school is not notified, **work must be made up within the prescribed time limit, which is one (1) day plus the number of days absent.**
3. Unexcused Absences In Which School Work May Not Be Made Up
 - a. Anything outside the above listed reasons will be counted unexcused and work will not be allowed to be made up.

ATTENDANCE RULES AND REGULATIONS:

It is the desire of the school that your child receives optimum educational benefits, and a good attendance record is a significant portion of this. **It is felt that (5) absences during a school year, except in the cases of extended illnesses or unusual circumstances, is excessive.**

1. A student absent from school is also unable to work, participate in athletics or participate in social events on the same day, except on special excused absences.
2. A note, an email, or a phone call from a guardian stating the reason for absence should be received by the school before 8:30 a.m. on the day of return to school.
3. Every effort should be made to see that doctor and dental appointments are made on non-school time.
4. Students cannot expect to receive an excused absence for attending to personal business, working, babysitting, missing the bus, taking a relative to the doctor, unless in the case of dire emergency. Other arrangements should be made, if at all possible, to handle these situations.
5. **No student may leave school property, after arriving at school until signing out in the proper manner.**
6. **When a student accumulates five (5) total absences in one school year, the student's parents will be notified that a doctor's note may be required to excuse any future absences for the year.**
7. **When a student accumulates ten (10) days of unexcused absences for the school year, the parents will be cited to the courts for educational neglect.**
8. If road conditions during inclement weather prevent a school bus from making its regular stop to pick up a student, that student will be counted present. The student will be responsible for making up missed work.
9. During inclement weather, if a parent chooses not to send a student on the bus, even though it has made its regular stop, the absence will be counted unexcused.

E-LEARNING

E-Learning attendance will be taken and monitored by the main office. Students attendance on elearning will be counted when a student logs into Canvas or Seesaw and completes the eLearning assignment per teacher.

TRUANCY

Truancy is defined as being absent from school without a valid excuse acceptable to the district. For example, students are considered truant when they stay home from school, with or without a parent's permission, in order to avoid the responsibility of attending classes of instruction. The compulsory attendance law of the State of Indiana requires each child who is more than seven years of age, and not more than sixteen years of age to be in school each day that school is in session.

Parents will be contacted and the name of student and parent will be turned in to the proper agency for appropriate action.

TARDINESS

Classes begin at 8:30 A.M. Students who arrive after 8:30 A.M. are considered tardy and must report to the school office for an admission slip to class. The person dropping off the student will need to sign the student in and report to the office as to why they are tardy. The record of tardies will be listed on Report Cards and Permanent Records and will affect the Perfect Attendance

Award.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

When a student is to be withdrawn from school, the parents should notify the office in advance and have their child:

1. Turn in all textbooks, workbooks, iPad, iPad charger, chromebook, and library books.
2. Pay any outstanding device fees, picture money or lunch money.
3. Get all of his/her personal possessions and report card.
4. Report the new home address and the name and location of the new school if possible.
5. Sign a claim form to cover any refunds due.
6. The student cannot be officially withdrawn until the new school has requested records.

STUDENT CONDUCT

South Decatur Elementary students are, as a group, well behaved and well mannered. We are generally very proud of our students' conduct. Our expectations for students are realistic and simple: Students at South Decatur Elementary are expected to be considerate of themselves and others. Students will be disciplined: if their behavior interferes with their own learning or that of others; if their behavior could cause harm to themselves or others; if their behavior is rude or defiant towards adults or other children. Respect for teachers, assistants, bus drivers, and all other adults is expected at all times. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Although it is impossible to list all kinds of disruptive behavior, the following are examples that will not be tolerated and could result in disciplinary action:

1. Rules
 - a. Any disruptive behavior that interferes with educational purposes and procedures
 - b. Academic Dishonesty
 - c. For reasons of safety, students are prohibited from running in the building.
 - d. No Throwing of unauthorized objects on school premises
 - e. Engaging in theft or vandalism
 - f. Gambling in any form
 - g. No laser pointers allowed in school
 - h. Engaging in sexual behavior, inappropriate touching, or open displays of affection on school property
 - i. Inappropriate transmittal of bodily fluids
2. Insubordination
 - a. Disobedience of Administration
 - b. Failing in a substantial number of instances to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under their supervision, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
 - c. Misbehavior for a Guest Teacher
 - d. Failure to follow classroom rules or directions from school personnel
 - e. Refusing to report or failing to report to proper school personnel as directed
3. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, bullying, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other comparable conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. The following enumeration is only illustrative and not limited to the type of conduct prohibited by this subdivision.
 - a. Continuously and intentionally making noise or acting in any manner so as to interfere seriously with the ability of any teacher or any of the other school personnel to conduct the education function under this supervision.
 - b. The use of rude, lewd, vulgar or obscene language, writings, or acts directed toward students, staff, or others.
 - c. Fighting, pushing, pinching, kicking, biting, or shoving of any type
 - d. Threatening student or school safety
 - e. Unauthorized loud and/or boisterous activity while in the school building

4. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property, stealing or attempting to steal school property.
 - a. Occupying any school building, school grounds, or part thereof with intent to deprive others of its use.
 - b. Blocking the entrance or exits of any school building or corridor or room therein with intent to deprive others of lawful access to or from, or use of the building, corridor, or room.
 - c. Setting fire to or damaging any school building or property.
 - d. Prevention of or attempting to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning at any school or education function, or of any meeting or assembly on school property.
5. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property, stealing or attempting to steal private property.
6. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to any person. Self-defense or reasonable action undertaken on the reasonable belief that it was necessary to protect some other person does not, however, constitute a violation of this provision.
 - a. Threatening or intimidating any student for the purpose of, or with the intent of, obtaining money or anything of value from the student.
7. Knowingly possessing or using any personal electronic device on school grounds during school hours in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function is prohibited.
 - a. All electronic devices must be turned off and in the student's backpack during the school day unless given permission by the teacher for a school activity.
 - b. The first offense will result in a verbal warning. Any additional offense(s) will result in the device being confiscated and a guardian must pick up the device in the school office during school hours.
8. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of Indiana that constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
9. Failing to report the actions or plans of another person to a teacher or administrator where those actions or plans, if carried out, could result in harm to another person or persons or damage property when the student has information about such actions or plans.
10. Aiding, assisting, or conspiring with another person to violate these student conduct rules or state or federal law.
11. Failing to tell the truth about any matter under investigation by school personnel.
12. Possession of a weapon including a knife or firearm
 - a. Knowingly possessing, handling, or transmitting a knife or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon.
 - b. No student shall possess, handle or transmit any firearm on school property.
 - c. Carrying deadly weapons or firearms, which can do bodily harm.
 - d. The following devices are considered to be a firearm as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code:
 - i. any weapon which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive.
 - ii. the frame or receiver of any weapon described above
 - iii. any firearm muffler or firearm silencer
 - iv. any destructive device which is an explosive, incendiary, or poison gas bomb, grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, mine or any similar device
 - v. any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter
 - vi. any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive

device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled According to Section 921, the following devices are not considered to be a firearm:

1. an antique firearm
 2. a rifle which the owner intends to use solely for sporting, recreational, or cultural purposes
 3. any device which is neither designed nor redesigned for use as a weapon any device, although originally designed for use as a weapon, which is redesigned for use as a signaling pyrotechnic, line throwing, safety, or similar device
 4. Class C common fireworks
 5. Possession or use of fireworks on school property
- e. The penalty for possession of a firearm is 10 days of suspension and expulsion from school for one calendar year. The length of the expulsion may be reduced by the superintendent if the circumstances warrant such reduction.
- f. The superintendent shall notify the county prosecuting attorney's office when a student is expelled under this rule.
13. Knowingly possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. Use of drugs authorized by a medical prescription from a physician is not a violation of this subdivision.
- a. possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of caffeine-based substances, substances containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA), or stimulants of any kind, be they available with or without a prescription.
 - b. Engaging in the unlawful selling of a controlled substance or engaging in a criminal law violation that constitutes a danger to other students or constitutes an interference with school purposes or educational function.
 - c. Possession or use of tobacco, e-cig, lighter, matches, chewing tobacco, or drug and tobacco related paraphernalia
 - d. Student use and/or possession of tobacco are prohibited on school grounds, school buses and school bus stops. Students caught using and/or possessing tobacco will be disciplined in the following manner:
 - i. First Offense--Suspension from school for three (3) days. Parent Conference required. Recommended to parents, their student is enrolled in substance abuse counseling.
 - ii. Second Offense--Expulsion will be recommended.
14. Violation of the school corporation's policy on District Provided Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks.
- a. First Offense will result in a verbal warning that will be documented in Harmony. Parents will be notified.
 - b. Second Offense will result in the student becoming a day user only. The iPad will be removed and stored in the Tech Office for one week.
 - c. Third Offense will result in loss of iPad privileges for the remainder of the semester. Curriculum will be adjusted as necessary.
 - d. Fourth Offense will result in loss of iPad privileges for the school year.

CITIZENSHIP

One of the most important lessons education should teach is for students to become good citizens. While it does not appear as a subject, it underlies the whole educational structure. It is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency. It is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people. It is important for school officials, parents, and students to work together to develop a good attitude toward school, learning, and good citizenship.

DRESS and APPEARANCE

Decatur County Community Schools expects its students to appear at school looking nothing less than neat and clean. We have been proud of our students in the past years for their appearance and are confident that they will continue to set high standards for themselves. As students graduate into the business world, many employers expect their workers to wear uniforms or adhere to strict dress codes. Our job as educators is to prepare our students to be successful in the world beyond school. The courts have ruled that the school can make reasonable rules regulating student dress and appearance as they affect the educational process, concern health and safety, and affect common decency.

Students are expected to meet these guidelines. Should a student choose not to follow these expectations, he/she will be asked to change, remove or cover the questionable item(s). Continued offenses will be handled as insubordination and could lead to detention, suspension, or possible expulsion.

The following guidelines are in effect for student dress. The guidelines listed are not to imply that this is the complete list and may include any item deemed inappropriate and/or in bad taste by the school administration. If a student/parent/guardian has a question about a particular item, please contact the school administration BEFORE wearing the item.

1. Head wear (except when permitted on certain spirit days), including bandanas, are not to be worn in the building.
2. Short-shorts, tank tops, halter-tops, tops which reveal the midriff, holes above knees, or any clothing, which is inappropriately revealing are not permitted. Shorts and skirts/dresses are to be a minimum of fingertip length. Discretion is at the determination of the administration/designees.
3. Any printing, graphics, or art on clothing, which expresses anything to do with sexual objects, vulgar language, drugs, or alcohol are not permitted.
4. For safety reasons, chains or clothing with excessive metal objects and/or straps are not to be worn. This includes wallet chains.
5. Any clothing or appearance, which causes a substantial disruption of the daily operation of the school. (Except when permitted on certain spirit days.)
6. We will not tolerate the wearing of pants down on the buttocks. All pants must be worn up at the waistline. No undergarments shall be exposed.
7. Certain academic area classes may have more stringent requirements regarding dress. The school reserves the right to impose other reasonable requirements due to health or safety concerns while involved in certain activities.

FIGHTING

A small percentage of students require a disciplinary visit to the Principal. We do not allow what some students call “play fighting”, wrestling, tae kwon do, or anything similar. These may be acceptable activities to some parents in some circumstances. We believe that they are not appropriate for school. Students often get hurt during these activities and may carry playground battles into the classroom. Parents and school officials need to work together to teach students methods other than fighting to solve disputes.

APPLICATION OF RULES

For minor behaviors that are not serious offenses, the following consequences will occur:

1. Teacher or adult in the classroom will address the behavior. The teacher will communicate with the parent.
2. If the behavior becomes disruptive to other students in the classroom, the student will be sent to the office. Parent communication will be made and the student will be given a verbal warning. The verbal warning will be documented in Harmony.
3. If the student does not discontinue behavior after the verbal warning, the student will lose privileges such as recess or after school detention.
4. If the student continues the behavior after the loss of privileges, they will be given one half-day of in school suspension.
5. If the behavior continues, the student will be given one full day of in school suspension.
6. If the behavior continues, the student will receive two full days of in school suspension.
7. If the behavior continues, a parent meeting will be requested. The student will receive one day of out of school suspension. A plan will then be developed with the teacher, the parent, and administration for further action.

The grounds for suspension or expulsion listed in Student Conduct apply when a student is:

1. On school grounds immediately before, during, and immediately after school hours and at any other time when the school is being used by a school group;
2. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event, or
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event.
4. In addition to the grounds listed above, a student may be suspended or expelled for engaging in unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity may reasonably be considered to be an interference with school purposes or an

educational function, or the student's removal is necessary to restore order or protect persons on school property. This includes any unlawful activity meeting the above criteria, which takes place during weekends, holidays, other school breaks, and the summer period when a student may not be attending classes or other school functions.

5. Student Due Process Code, enacted and amended by the General Assembly of Indiana, outlines in detail the procedures to be followed when a student is disciplined by expulsion or suspension. So that the rights of the student concerned are protected, a copy of the Law is on file in the office of each Decatur County School Corporation school building, and is available to students upon request.

DISCIPLINE

Teachers are in charge of their classrooms. Designated employees are in charge of the cafeteria and playground. Teachers, assistants, and other adults will correct students when their behavior violates the above standards of conduct. If students do not respond to correction, or if the misconduct is serious, the teacher or assistant will take disciplinary action.

The superintendent, principal, any administrative personnel or any teacher of the school corporation shall be authorized to take any action in connection with student behavior, in addition to the actions specifically provided in the code * reasonably desirable or necessary to help any student to further school purposes, or to prevent an interference therewith, such action including such matters as:

1. Counseling with a student or group of students
2. Conferences with a parent or group of parents
3. Assigning students additional work
4. Rearranging class schedules
5. Requiring a student to remain in school after regular school hours to do additional school work or for counseling; or
6. Restriction of extracurricular activity.

*Other actions specifically provided in the Indiana Code include suspension and expulsion.

A visit to the Principal or Assistant Principal for disciplinary reasons is considered to be serious. Parents will be notified with a brief account of the behavior that led to the visit. A record of such visits is kept in the office. Parents are asked to support the school rules and instruct their children regarding the importance of maintaining an orderly school environment. If parents have questions about an incident that involved their child they are urged to contact the school but at a time when the child is not present.

If a student continues to misbehave after a visit to the office or for extreme "first offenses" and a warning from the Principal or Assistant Principal does not seem to be sufficient, more serious actions will be taken. The actions may include those listed above and/or: after school detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and expulsion. Parents will be contacted by phone or by letter if any of the actions in this paragraph were implemented.

Parents are urged to become involved with school officials before situations become very serious. School officials will try to work with parents in developing plans of discipline. However, school officials remain in charge and make the final decisions regarding rules discipline and punishment after considering the good of the student, the class and the school.

BUS RULES FOR STUDENTS

1. Each pupil shall be located immediately upon entering the bus in the place assigned by the driver.
2. No pupils shall stand or move from place to place during the trip.
3. Loud, boisterous, or profane language, or indecent conduct shall not be tolerated.
4. No windows or doors will be opened or closed except by permission of the driver.
5. Pupils shall not be allowed to tease, scuffle, trip, hold, hit or use their hands or feet or body in any objectionable manner.
6. No pupils shall enter or leave the bus until it has come to a full stop and the door has been opened by the driver.
7. The child should be waiting at his boarding station when the school bus arrives.
8. Upon recommendation of the bus driver, school authorities may deny the privilege of riding the school bus to any pupil who refuses to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner or ladylike manner.
9. All school rules apply to students while they are on the bus.

10. Students experiencing problems should report them to the bus driver.

BUS DISCIPLINE

The most important thing in maintaining bus discipline is to be consistent and to treat all children fairly and equally.

All bus drivers are held responsible for the discipline on their bus. Drivers shall enforce all of the “rules for pupils” that have been distributed to each pupil. It is expected that all drivers shall maintain good bus discipline; however, if a driver finds that he is not making the necessary progress in a case, there is a procedure, which is to be followed to ensure proper continuity in handling bus discipline.

Major infractions such as fighting which may reasonably be foreseen to cause injury and major property destruction, shall be handled immediately as the driver thinks proper, and then at the earliest moment the major infraction is to be reported to the Principal for further consideration.

BULLYING

The School Board is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community. Bullying behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes physical, verbal, and psychological abuse as provided herein. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. Engaging in bullying behavior through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system or computer network also is prohibited. This policy applies when a student is on school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours, or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group; off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event; traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or, using property or equipment provided by the school. Additionally, this policy applies regardless of the physical location when:

1. the individual committing the bullying behavior and any of the intended targets of the bullying behavior are students attending a school within the Corporation; and
2. the bullying behavior results in a substantial interference with school discipline or an unreasonable threat to the rights of others to a safe and peaceful learning environment.

Bullying as defined in State law means overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

1. places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;
2. has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
3. has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
4. has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.

This type of behavior is a form of harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, marital status, or disability. It includes, but is not limited to, such behaviors as stalking, intimidation, menacing behavior, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing. It also includes the use of digital or electronic communications to engage in such behaviors.

However, Indiana law exempts the following from the definition of "bullying":

1. Participating in a religious event.
2. Acting in an emergency involving the protection of a person or property from an imminent threat of serious bodily injury

or substantial danger.

3. Participating in an activity consisting of the exercise of a student's rights protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Article I, Section 31 of the Constitution of the State of Indiana, or both.
4. Participating in an activity conducted by a nonprofit or governmental entity that provides recreation, education, training, or other care under the supervision of one or more adults.
5. Participating in an activity undertaken at the prior written direction of the student's parent.
6. Engaging in interstate or international travel from a location outside Indiana to another location outside Indiana.

Any student who believes s/he has been or is currently the victim of bullying should immediately report the situation to the building principal or assistant principal or the Superintendent. The student also may report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. This report may be made anonymously. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President. A parent may file a complaint on behalf of a student in the same manner.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required to report any situation that they believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made to those identified above. Staff members who fail to report bullying or who fail to conduct an investigation when assigned that duty are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

All complaints about bullying behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated according to the timeline established by the Superintendent's administrative guidelines.

If, during an investigation of reported acts of bullying and/or harassment, the investigator believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, or disability, the investigator will report the act of bullying and/or harassment to one (1) of the Compliance Officers so that it may be investigated.

If the investigator finds an instance of bullying behavior has occurred, prompt and appropriate action or responses shall be taken to address the bullying behavior wherever it occurs including, as appropriate, disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students, discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Bullying acts shall be reported to law enforcement officials immediately upon determining that a report to law enforcement is necessary.

The parents of the targeted student and the reported bully shall be notified of the alleged bullying incident at the beginning of the investigation, the findings of the investigation at the conclusion of the investigation, and, as appropriate, any remedial action that has been or will be taken to the extent disclosure is permitted by law. In addition to discipline, remedial action may include support services for the targeted student and bullying education for the bully, among other actions.

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying. Making intentionally false reports about bullying for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and making intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

STUDENT DUE PROCESS

A student may be suspended temporarily from a class by a teacher during a class period. A teacher may extend the class suspension for a maximum of two consecutive class meetings. Suspension for more than two consecutive class meetings requires action by the Principal or Assistant Principal. The law will be followed to enforce these preceding rules and regulations. Students failing to follow the school rules that are more than minor offenses may be subject to the following procedures and penalties. The Student Due Process Law will be followed to enforce school rules and regulations.

1. A first offense will result in a (1-3) day suspension. Notification of the suspension (except in-school suspension) will be

- given to the parents by certified mail, and a conference with the parents will be arranged before the student is reinstated.
2. A second offense will result in a (1-10) day suspension. Notification of the suspension will be given to the parents by certified mail and a conference with the parents, student, and principal will be arranged before the student is reinstated.
 3. Continued Offenses will result in a recommendation to the Superintendent for expulsion. The principal will recommend the disruptive student be placed on suspension until the expulsion.

Unless make-up of tests are permitted, expulsion shall mean any disciplinary action whereby a student is separated from school attendance for a period in excess to ten (10) school days, or for the balance of the current semester. The school reserves the right to issue a suspension or expulsion for violators of the school's rules that are deemed serious without following the above procedure.

SUSPENSION

Suspension shall mean any disciplinary action where a student is suspended from school or class attendance for up to **ten (10) days**. When a student is suspended for a specified number of days, he/she will miss that exact number of days. If school is canceled for any reason, another day(s) will be added to the end of the scheduled suspension.

1. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Administration may assign a student in-school suspension for one to ten days for violating school rules, or district policies. The usual length of in-school suspension is from one to three days. While a student is in in-school suspension, he/she will be assigned a place away from other students to work, will be expected to do all assignments, miss noon recess, have limited privileges during the time. Lunch will be in the area away from other students.

- a. The student is counted present.
- b. The student is responsible to secure all assignments, books, and needed supplies before coming to the assigned area. Time missed because of absence will be made up, including school closing, appointments, etc.
- c. If school is canceled for any reason, the student will serve the in-school suspension the next school day.

2. OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Administration may assign a student out of school suspension for one to ten days for violating school rules, or district policies. The usual length out-of-school suspension is from 1-3 days.

If school is canceled for any reason, day(s) will be added to the end of the scheduled suspension.

3. AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

Students assigned after-school detention will be assigned a day and supervised by a staff member until 4:30 p.m. Parents should be at school promptly at 4:30 to pick up their child. If a child is being detained for problems completing work, they may be assigned work to complete. Students failing to stay for an after-school detention will have a half-day of in-school suspension the following day that they are in attendance. Work will be completed, but will not count.

EXPULSION

Expulsion shall mean any disciplinary action whereby a student is suspended from attendance for the balance of the current semester or current school year. A student may be expelled from school after due process procedures have been followed. The policy of the Decatur County Community Schools states: "When the good of the school requires it, a pupil may be suspended or expelled from school only according to procedures outlined in the Indiana Code."

In the event that the misconduct transpires during the last ten (10) days of the semester, the expulsion and/or suspension may continue into the next semester or school year. Students may be assigned in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or after school detention for breaking school rules.

STUDENT USE OF TOBACCO

The Board recognizes that the use of tobacco presents a health hazard that can have serious consequences both for the user and the nonuser and is, therefore, of concern to the Board.

For purposes of this policy, use of tobacco shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigar, cigarette, pipe, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco, as well as electronic, "vapor," or other substitute forms of cigarettes.

In order to protect students who choose to use tobacco from an environment that might be harmful to them, the Board prohibits the use and/or possession of tobacco by students at all times within any facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board. The Board also prohibits the use and/or possession of tobacco anywhere on the campus of any facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board, including, but not limited to, practice fields, playgrounds, football fields, baseball fields, softball fields, pool areas, soccer fields, tennis courts, and all open areas and will remain in effect at all times. Furthermore, the Board prohibits the use and/or possession of tobacco in all vehicles owned or operated by the Board, including, but not limited to, school buses, special purpose buses, vans, trucks, and cars.

The administration of each school building will take appropriate action in cases involving students who use and/or possess tobacco in violation of this policy.

Students caught using or possessing tobacco will be disciplined in the following manner:

1. First Offense - Suspension from school for three (3) days. Parent conference required. Recommended to parent that student be enrolled in substance abuse counseling.
2. Second Offense - Expulsion will be recommended.

Marijuana/THC

1. Student will be referred to Juvenile Probation and will complete the Why Try program and SAFE class through Centerstone
2. Parents, student, and administration meet to sign and discuss Form 16A; participation and completion will be mandatory.
3. First offense suspend the student 5 days, and the student can return after *SAFE* class completion
 - a. All future repeat offenses: repeat 1-5 and school SRO will make a police referral.
4. If the student fails to complete the required classes, proceed with the expulsion through form 16A.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Decatur County Community Schools assures the Federal Government that it will comply fully with all requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. The Decatur County Community Schools further assures that it will not discriminate against any person in the United States on the basis of limited English proficiency, race, color, sex, national origin, religion, or handicap, nor will anyone be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in the conduct of its program and activities and the operation of its facilities.

Furthermore, this organization has designated the Superintendent of Schools to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities including the investigation of any complaint or non-compliance. The principal address of this officer shall be: 2020 N Montgomery Rd, Greensburg, Indiana 47240. The telephone number is (812) 663-4595. A complaint and grievance procedure has been adopted providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints; this procedure is now on file in the office of the coordinator and will be made available upon written request of any citizen.

DECATUR COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

CIVIL RIGHTS NON-DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1. LEVEL ONE

- a. The officer, employee, student, or patron alleging a violation shall submit the initial complaint in writing to the appropriate compliance coordinator described above. The complaint shall stipulate the specific act or omission, the date of same, and parties involved.
- a. The compliance coordinator shall initiate investigation of the circumstances of the complaint within seven (7) calendar days of the receipt of the written complaint.
- b. The compliance coordinator shall render a decision within fourteen (14) calendar days of the receipt of the written complaint. The decision shall be in writing to the complainant.
- c. The complainant shall have seven (7) calendar days to react to the decision before it becomes final. If the complainant disagrees with the decision of the compliance officer, a level two procedure shall be enacted.

2. LEVEL TWO

- a. The compliance coordinator shall submit the written disagreement statement and all related information to the superintendent within three (3) calendar days of receipt.
- b. The superintendent shall review all material and schedule a meeting within seven (7) calendar days of receipt of the written disagreement and all related information. The participants shall be the complainant, the compliance coordinator, and the superintendent. Other witnesses may be called with mutual prior notice of three (3) calendar days.
- c. The superintendent shall make a decision within seven (7) calendar days of the final meeting of parties. This decision shall be final.

Note: By mutual agreement circumstances of calendar availability may result in extension of stipulated time allowances if a request is made in writing by either party and so agreed to by the parties.

Note: If the alleged violation, interpretation, or application is of a corporate nature such as a written rule, regulation, or policy then Level Two is initiated immediately.

Notice Of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education.

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parents;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex Behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of -

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school of its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for making or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use -

1. Protected information and surveys of students;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional materials used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Decatur County Community Schools has promulgated a policy, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. DCCS will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. DCCS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation in the specific activity or surveys. DCCS will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at the time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of

such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.

Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education.

Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above. Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

1. THE POLICY

- a. It is the policy of the Decatur County Community School Corporation to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from sexual harassment.
- b. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee of The DCCS Corporation to harass another employee or student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined in Section 2. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined in Section 2. The use of the term “employee” also includes non-employees and volunteers who work subject to the control of school authorities.

2. DEFINITIONS OF HARASSMENT (excerpts*)

- a. Sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by an employee to a student, when made by any employee to another employee, or when made by any student to another student when:
 - i. such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual’s academic or professional performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment or educational environment
 - ii. conduct of a sexual nature may include verbal or physical sexual advances and/or comments regarding physical or personality characteristics of a sexual nature.

3. **COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**-Any person who alleges sexual harassment by any employee or student in the school corporation may use the complaint procedure explained in Section III.C.* [of this policy] or may complain directly to his or her immediate supervisor, building principal, or the Title IX complaint designee or the school corporation. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual’s status nor will it affect future employment, grades, or work assignments.

*The complete policy, including report forms, is available from the Principal’s office.

STUDENT RECORDS

Education records are governed by federal law and regulation. The requirements of these laws and regulations are contained in school board policy #8330, titled Student Records. Generally, this policy provides for the following:

1. Records are confidential and may be disclosed only as provided in the policy.
2. The policy concerns both elementary and secondary student education records.
3. Parents have a right to examine their child’s records at reasonable times if the child is less than 18 years of age and not attending a post-secondary institution or if the child is a dependent student as defined by Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code.

4. Students have a right to examine their records at reasonable times.
5. Before education records are disclosed to third-parties, the school requires a signed and dated written consent of:
 - a. a parent of a student who is less than 18 years of age and not attending a post-secondary education institution, or
 - b. a student who is at least 18 years of age or attending a post-secondary institution.
6. Certain persons may examine education records without a parent's or student's consent as provided in the above paragraph. Those who may review records without prior notification to the parent or student include school officials (who have legitimate educational interests) and officials of another school, school system, or institution of post-secondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll.
7. Directory information will be released to media organizations (including radio, television, and newspapers), colleges, civic or school related organizations, and state or local government agencies without the consent of parent or student as provided in paragraph 5 above. Directory information includes the student's name, address, parent home and work telephone number, major field of study, participation in official recognized activities and sports, height and weight of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received, motor vehicle description (including license plate number), hair and eye color, race, sex, date of birth, height, weight, grade level, and other similar information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. A parent of a student less than 18 years of age or a student who is at least 18 years of age may object to disclosure of the categories of directory information by filing form #12161 (Denial of Permission to Release Certain Directory Information Without Prior Written Consent) from the principal's office not later than 14 calendar days from the beginning of the school year or date of enrollment.

Decatur County Community School Corporation

Administrative Guidelines for Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks (Internet)

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY AGREEMENT

To access Technology Resources (see definition in Bylaw 0100), including a school-assigned e-mail account and/or the Internet at school, students under the age of eighteen (18) must obtain parent permission and must sign and return the handbook agreement form consenting agreement to the rules and regulations in this handbook. Students eighteen (18) and over may sign their own forms.

Use of Corporation Technology Resources is a privilege, not a right. The Corporation's Technology Resources, including its computer network, Internet connection and online educational services/apps, are provided for educational purposes only. Unauthorized and inappropriate use will result in loss of this privilege and/or other disciplinary action.

The Corporation has implemented technology protection measures that protect against (e.g. block/filter), internet access to visual displays/depictions/materials that are obscene, constitute child pornography, or are harmful to minors. The Corporation also monitors online activity of students in an effort to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. Nevertheless, parents/guardians are advised that determined users may be able to gain access to information, communication and/or services on the Internet that the School Board has not authorized for educational purposes and/or that they and/or their parents/guardians may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable or controversial. Parents/Guardians assume this risk by consenting to allow their students to participate in the use of the Internet. Students using Corporation Technology Resources are personally responsible and liable, both civilly and criminally, for unauthorized or inappropriate use of the Resources.

The Corporation has the right, at any time, to access, monitor, review and inspect any directories, files and/or messages residing on or sent using the Corporation's Technology Resources. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the appropriate authorities. Individual users have no expectation of privacy related to their use of Corporation Technology Resources.

Please complete the following information:

Student User's Full Name (please print): _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian

As the parent/guardian of this student, I have read the STUDENT TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY AGREEMENT and have discussed them with my child. I understand that student access to the Internet is designed for educational purposes and that the Corporation has taken available precautions to restrict and/or control student access to material on the Internet that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate and/or harmful to minors. However, I recognize that it is impossible for the Corporation to

restrict access to all objectionable and/or controversial materials that may be found on the Internet. I will not hold the Corporation (or any of its employees, administrators, or officers) responsible for materials my child may acquire or come in contact with while on the Internet. Additionally, I accept responsibility for communicating to my child guidance concerning his/her acceptable use of the Internet - i.e., setting and conveying standards for my daughter/son to follow when selecting, sharing and exploring information and resources on the Internet. I further understand that individuals and families may be liable for violations

- () To the extent that proprietary rights in the design of a web page, site, service or app hosted on the Corporation-owned or Corporation-affiliated servers would vest in my child upon creation, I agree to assign those rights to the Corporation.

Please check each that applies:

- ☐ I give permission for my child to use and access the Internet at school and for the Corporation to issue an email account to my child.
- ☐ I give permission for my child's image (photograph) to be published online, provided only his/her first name is used.
- ☐ I give permission for the Corporation to transmit "live" images of my child (as part of a group) over the Internet via a webcam.
- ☐ I authorize and license the Corporation to post my child's class work on the Internet without infringing upon any copyright my child may own with respect to such class work. I understand only my child's first name will accompany such class work.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

By signing the handbook agreement, you give permission for all authorizations listed above. If you wish to not consent to all the authorizations listed above, please detach this portion, select all that apply, and send it to the school office.

Student

I have read and agree to abide by the Student Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Policy and Guidelines. I understand that any violation of the terms and conditions set forth in the Policy and Guidelines is inappropriate and may constitute a criminal offense. As a user of the Corporation's Technology Resources, I agree to communicate over the Internet and the Technology Resources in an appropriate manner, honoring all relevant laws, restrictions and guidelines.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

By signing the school handbook form, the student agrees to these conditions.

Teachers and building principals are responsible for determining what is unauthorized or inappropriate use. The principal may deny, revoke or suspend access to the Technology Resources to individuals who violate the Student Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Policy and related Guidelines, and take such other disciplinary action as is appropriate pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

DCCS iPad/Chromebook PROCEDURES ©NEOLA 2017

1. iPad/Chromebook Care

- a. Keep food and liquid away from the iPad/Chromebook.
- b. Keep the school provided case on the iPad/Chromebook at all times.
- c. Do not set anything heavy on the iPad/Chromebook.
- d. Clean with a soft, dry cloth, such as a microfiber or micro-suede cloth (i.e. cloth used to clean eyeglasses).
- e. Defacing the iPad/Chromebook and/or case is prohibited (stickers, markers, etc.).
- f. Do not expose the iPad/Chromebook to temperature extremes; don't leave the iPad in a car.
- g. Use only your fingers or an iPad-designated stylus approved by the teacher on the iPad screen (Nintendo/Playstation/other handheld gaming pens are NOT authorized for iPads).
- h. Treat the iPad/Chromebook with care at all times. Do not throw or slide the iPad/Chromebook.
- i. iPad/Chromebook are to be returned to the designated location, as directed by the teacher, during school hours.
- j. iPad/Chromebooks are never to be left on the floor.

2. iPad/Chromebook Use

- a. Students are responsible for charging their iPad/Chromebook. Make sure the battery has enough charge for a full day.
- b. While using the iPad/Chromebook, follow the school district's Policy.
- c. The location of the iPad should be known at all times. It is the student's responsibility to keep the iPad/Chromebook safe and secure.
- d. The iPad/Chromebook camera and voice recorder should not be used in any manner that would violate the rights and privacy of other students or staff.
- e. In bathrooms or locker rooms, iPad/Chromebook must be on stand-by and not used.
- f. Please keep in mind the iPad/Chromebook is for the student's educational use.
- g. The student is responsible for the device at all times. It should only be used by the student it has been issued to, for educational purposes at home and at school.
- h. The use of passcodes by students is prohibited.
- i. The student will treat others with respect both online and offline.
- j. The student will not damage, change, or tamper with the iPad/Chromebook or network in any way.
- k. The student will not make changes in the Settings app unless directed by a teacher.
- l. Teachers, administrators, and technology staff have the ability to confiscate and/or revoke iPad/Chromebook and/or iPad/Chromebook iPad features if deemed necessary.

3. iPad/Chromebook Lost/Stolen/Broken

- a. If the iPad/Chromebook is lost, stolen, or damaged, notify the teacher, principal, or technology department immediately.
- b. Any iPad/Chromebook and/or charger that is lost or stolen must be replaced through the school at full price to the student/parent.
- c. An administrator will deal with intentional damage on an individual basis.
- d. Failure to pay for lost/stolen items may lead to students using a loaner and not being able to take devices home or receive new devices when distributed. Any work done at home will have to be completed via a format accepted by the teacher. All assignments/classwork that are affected by such a loss will still have to be completed via a format accepted by the teacher.

Use of Corporation Technology Resources is a privilege, not a right. The Corporation's Technology Resources, including its computer network, Internet

SECTION TWO-IMPORTANT PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL

Students are never allowed to walk **between** buses. This is extremely important! If a student is allowed to walk between buses with an adult, he or she might someday walk between buses when alone. Students are too short to be seen by the bus driver when they walk too close to the bus.

Buses arrive between 7:45 A.M. and 8:15 A.M. Students who do not ride to school on a bus should arrive between 7:40 and 8:30. Students should not arrive before 7:40 A.M. (If an unusual situation exists causing a temporary need for an early arrival, this must be discussed with the Principal.) Parents who bring their children to school should be cautious and be sure that they do not interfere with the school buses. Cars, vans, or other vehicles are not allowed in the bus lanes between 8:05 and 8:15.

DISMISSAL

Regular dismissal time is 3:00 for car riders. At 3:15 regular bus riders are dismissed.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Students who leave before 3:10 are dismissed only from the office. Students shall be dismissed only to a parent or a person who has the permission of the parent(s). The person picking up the student must come to the office to provide the following information in writing: the child's name and class, the person's name and relationship to the child (father, grandmother, etc.), and

the reason for the early dismissal. The reason for the early dismissal must be stated in order to determine if this is excused or unexcused. **Wednesdays are early release days. Students are released an hour early.** The record of early dismissals will be listed on Report Cards and Permanent Records, and will affect the Perfect Attendance Award.

ALTERNATE DISMISSAL

If a child is to go home in a manner other than the usual (he/she usually rides the bus, but you will pick him/her up or you usually pick him/her up but you want him/her to ride the bus), the parent or guardian must send a dated note to the teacher stating the changed arrangement. We will not accept a student's statement "Mom said that she will pick me up today." Students frequently get those arrangements confused.

Please put a date on all notes! Students sometimes find a note in their book bag right before dismissal. If the note doesn't have a date, we don't know if it is a current note or an old one. If we don't have a dated note, we will try to contact someone by phone if time allows. If we can't locate someone by phone, we will keep the student at school (if they do not believe that they would be able to get into their home).

A note must be sent to the teacher and the school office- with specific instructions if any of the following apply to the student:

1. To be picked up early- parents must sign out the student in the front office
2. To go on a different bus
3. To go on the same bus but get off at a different stop
4. To go home with a friend
5. To be a car rider
6. To be picked up by someone after school
7. To wait at school because of a parent conference with the teacher
8. To stay after school for any extracurricular activity or event

CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

Parents will be notified by phone with our school wide Alert Now System, of school closings or delays. If school is closed due to an emergency, such as weather, power failure, or water problems, the closing will be broadcast on local media outlets.

An emergency closing of school during the school day is possible, but happens very infrequently. Parents must make contingency plans for this possibility. Students should know where to go if they are dismissed from school early. If an emergency exists to cause school to close early, it would be very important to keep student usage of the phone to an absolute minimum in order to allow school officials to deal with the emergency.

BUILDING, GROUNDS AND EQUIPMENT

South Decatur Elementary is a beautiful facility. We take great pride in the building and grounds and desire to maintain the facility in excellent condition. Students are encouraged to keep the building and playground clean and neat. Wastebaskets are placed in each room for paper and other litter. Students are not to mark on any walls, desks, or in any school books. Parents will be held financially responsible and/or students may face expulsion for careless or malicious damage to the building, equipment, school bus or van.

SCHOOL SAFETY

Keeping your child safe is of utmost importance to us. SDES works to protect the school environment and to maintain an atmosphere where teachers feel safe to teach and students feel safe to learn. Parents and visitors may enter the school through the doors at the FRONT ENTRANCE ONLY. Once you are inside the foyer, you will be buzzed into the office suite. Parents, visitors, and guests are required to check in at the office upon entering the building. Please bring your driver's license because we run it through the Raptor system to assure that we do not allow inappropriate people into our buildings. You will be printed a badge to wear while in the building.

We have two School Resource Officers in the corporation. The officers are around the buildings to promote a positive environment with law enforcement as well as keep our building safe.

PARKING FOR PARENTS AND OTHER VISITORS

Parents and friends are welcome to visit the school and share in the educational experiences with students. Please enter and exit through the main doors at the office whenever visiting during school hours (8:10-3:30). All visitors are required to sign in at the office so we are aware of who is visiting in the building. To ensure the safety of our students and staff, everyone entering the building is scanned into our visitor management system (RAPTOR). Because of this, all visitors will need to bring in their ID's. Visitors should always use the north parking lots and walk to the front entrance. This helps the school ensure everyone's safety concerning buses at drop-off and dismissal.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency Drills are held in order to prepare students for the "most likely" possibilities for emergencies. It is our "best guess" for an occurrence we hope will never happen. An actual emergency, however, might require very different action from what occurs in a drill. The teacher in charge has

the authority to deviate from the planned procedure, if in his or her professional judgment, the change is required to protect the safety and well being of students. Students are expected to obey the teacher in this and other situations.

1. **FIRE DRILLS:** A fire drill is planned on a monthly basis, provided weather conditions are not too severe to send students outside. The drill is announced by a continuous sounding of the fire alarm. Students are expected to remain calm and quiet so that they can receive directions from their teacher.
2. **TORNADO DRILLS:** A tornado drill is held in the fall and spring. In case of a tornado emergency, students will be instructed to proceed to the designated area. Everyone should go to the assigned area and assume a position on the floor next to an inside wall. Eyeglasses should be removed and students should place their heads between their knees and their hands over their heads. Students are again expected to remain calm and quiet so that they can receive and obey directions from their teacher.
3. **LOCKOUT-SECURE THE PERIMETER-** In case of a domestic situation or criminal at large in the area, doors are locked and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of our children and staff.
4. **LOCKDOWN- LOCK, LIGHTS, OUT OF SIGHT-** In the case of an intruder or imminent danger, doors are locked and procedures are in place to secure the safety of our children and staff.
 - a. Parents will be notified as quickly as is reasonably possible if these situations occur.
5. **EVACUATE-** Using the Announced Type and Locations.

Decatur County Community Schools utilize the "I Love U Guys" Standard Reunification Method and has been tailored to each specific school. The "I Love U Guys" Foundation's reunification method ensures a safe and organized process for reuniting students with their parents or guardians after an emergency. Whether the reunification occurs on-site at the school or off-site at an alternate location, the process prioritizes student safety, accountability, and clear communication. An ALL-CALL will go out to parents to notify them that reunification is taking place and to provide specific instructions. Parents will be directed to a check-in location where their identification will be verified before their child is released. This controlled process may take time, but it is essential to ensure every student is safely reunited with the correct guardian. Please follow staff instructions closely and bring a photo ID to help expedite the process.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

It is vitally important that the school have on file: an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached, the name of the student's family doctor, and the phone numbers of at least two (2) other people who may be called if the parent(s) or guardians cannot be located. This information and any other health concerns, instructions or information about injuries must be listed on Harmony. Parents need to inform the school with any change of phone number, address, or change in emergency information in order that we may reach you quickly in case of an emergency.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

1. As used in this section, "reasonable cause for a search" means circumstances which would cause a reasonable person to believe that the search of a particular person, place, or thing will lead to the discovery of:
 - a. Evidence of a violation of school rules or of student conduct standards contained in the student handbook;
 - b. Anything which because of its presence presents an immediate danger of physical harm or illness to any person.

2. All lockers and other storage areas provided for student use on school premises remain the property of the school corporation and are provided for the use of the students subject to inspection, access for maintenance, and search pursuant to this section. No students shall lock or otherwise impede access to any locker or storage area except with a lock provided by or approved by the principal of the school in which the locker or storage area is located. Unapproved locks shall be removed and destroyed.
 - a. The principal, or member of the administrative staff designated by the principal in his/her absence may search a locker and its contents where the person conducting the search or the principal designating the person conducting the search has reasonable cause for a search of the locker searched. Where the locker to be searched is assigned to a particular student and that student is on the school premises at the time of the search, the student shall be notified prior to the search and given the option to be present at the search.
 - b. The principal, a member of the administrative staff, or a teacher may search a desk or any other storage area on school premises other than a locker when the person conducting the search has reasonable cause for a search.
3. The principal, or another member of the administrative staff designated in writing by the principal and acting at the direction of the principal, may search the person of a student during a school activity if the principal has reasonable cause for a search of that student. Searches of the person of a student shall be limited to:
 - a. Searches of the pockets of the student
 - b. Any object in the possession of the student such as a purse or briefcase, and/or
 - c. A “pat down” of the exterior of the students’ clothing
 - d. Searches of the person of a student which require removal of clothing other than coat or jacket shall be referred to a law enforcement officer in accordance with subsection G of this section, “pat down” searches and other searches of the person of a student shall be conducted in a private room with a person of the same sex as the student being searched. At least one, but not more than three additional persons of the same sex as the student being searched shall witness, but not participate in the search. At the request of the student to be searched, an additional person of the same sex as the student designated by the student, and then reasonably available on school premises, shall witness the search.
 - e. The parent or guardian of any student searched shall be notified of the search as soon as reasonably possible.
4. Anything found in the course of a search conducted in accordance with this section which is evidence of a violation of the student conduct standards contained in the student handbook may be:
 - a. seized and admitted as evidence in any suspension or expulsion proceeding if it is tagged for identification at the time it is seized and kept in a secure place by the principal or the principal’s designee until it is presented at the hearing;
 - b. returned to the parent or guardian of the student from whom it was seized;
 - c. destroyed if it has no significant value; or
 - d. turned over to any law enforcement officer in accordance with subsection G.
5. Anything found in the course of a search conducted in accordance with this section which by its presence presents an immediate danger of physical harm or illness to any person may be seized and:
 - a. returned to the parent or guardian of the student whom it was seized;
 - b. destroyed; or
 - c. turned over to any law enforcement officer in accordance with subsection F.
6. The principal, or a member of the administrative staff designated in writing by the principal, may request the assistance of a law enforcement officer to:
 - a. search any area of the school premises, any student, or any motor vehicle on school premises; and
 - b. identify or dispose of anything found in the course of a search conducted in accordance with this section.
7. Search Policy
 - a. “General searches conducted by law enforcement officers and with the assistance of canines or other means may be made of lockers, storage areas, classrooms, and all other school property, as well as student’s persons and student’s personal property, at any time, with or without notice.
 - b. If, after the general search, reasonable cause exists for search of a particular person or property, then the school administration may search the person or property in accordance with this policy.

FORBIDDEN ITEMS

Items that interrupt the educational process or are damaging to property are not allowed at school. Such items include, but are not limited to:

CANDY	SQUIRT BOTTLES	SOFT DRINKS
ALCOHOL	GUM	MAKE-UP KITS
ELECTRONIC GAMES	LARGE TOYS	GUNS OR PLAY GUNS
KNIVES	BASEBALLS	LIGHTERS
TOBACCO	DRUGS	WATER GUNS
FIREWORKS	LASER POINTERS OF ANY KIND	
SHIRTS WITH CRUDE, OBSCENE, OR INSULTING COMMENTS		
NON TRANSLUCENT WATER BOTTLES		

If a student needs one of the above items for a school project, the teacher will notify the parent and the student will be allowed to bring the item(s) for the school project only. Any items sent to school are best sent in unbreakable containers. Students who bring the above items to school without permission will have the item taken by the school staff for safe keeping. Parents may have the items if they come to the school for them.

Students are not allowed to bring in items that imitate a forbidden item, for example a fruit drink that is packaged to look like liquor.

RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION OF STUDENTS

As part of the emergency procedures in place in our schools, no student will be restrained and/or placed in seclusion by school staff, unless the student's behavior poses an imminent risk of injury to him/herself or others. However, significant violations of the law, including assaults on students and staff will be reported to the police. As soon as possible after any such use of restraint and/or seclusion, the parents or guardian will be informed when any of these actions have occurred and will be provided with a detailed account of the incident, including the circumstances that led to the use of restraint and/or seclusion.

MEDICAL

1. HEAD LICE

- a. If you notice your child scratching his or her head, please check them for nits (eggs) or head lice. The eggs are a small whitish or brownish oval shape and are attached firmly to the hair shaft often near the scalp. They are extremely hard to move down the hair. The louse is a small grayish or brownish insect that is found on the scalp. Look behind the ears and along the nape of the neck for nits as this is the most common location for them. They can be found in any area of the hair. Also, you might find a rash on the back of the child's neck.
- b. The condition of head lice is a communicable disease; it has nothing to do with cleanliness. The child must remain at home until treated with a special head lice shampoo and until all lice have been removed. **Upon return, students must be checked by the school nurse to confirm all live lice have been treated.** They must also be eliminated from the environment to prevent re-infestation. Parents may either obtain a prescription from your doctor or buy the shampoo at the drugstore. Some of the shampoos available at the drugstore are R&C, Rid, NIX and A-200. There are others, but these are the most often used products. If you are unable to afford shampoo for treatment of head lice and nits, please call our School Nurse, and she will arrange to get shampoo for you. It is also advisable for you to contact the parents of your child's play-mates, or leaders of other activities-scouts, babysitters, dance class, etc. To increase your chances of avoiding head lice: Remind your child to never share combs, brushes, hats, scarves, etc. Students should never have their hands in someone else's hair. Some students are real 'huggers' and walk around the playground arm-in-arm and head-to-head. A child who is a 'hugger' has a greater chance of acquiring head lice. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the nurse at school.

2. MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

- a. A student may have an illness which requires medication that does not prevent his/her attending school. When possible, such medication should be scheduled to be taken at home. **Parents should consult with the child's**

doctor to determine if the school needs to dispense medication. Medication that is a controlled substance is not to be transported by a student on a school bus. (This includes Ritalin or its generic equivalent.) Medication may be dispensed to a student by school personnel if the following requirements are met by the parents or guardian requesting this service:

- b. Prescription or non-prescription drugs will be administered to students for fifteen days or less if the parent or guardian sends a signed, dated note giving permission and if the following conditions are met:
- c. All **prescription** drugs must be in their **original labeled pharmacy container**. The label must include: the student's name, physician's name, name of drug, date the prescription was filled, dosage to be given, and the frequency of administration.
- d. All **non-prescription drugs** must be in their **original container**, including cough drops. The written request for administration of these must contain: the student's full name, name of drug, amount of the drug to be given, and when the drug is to be given.
- e. All prescription or non-prescription drugs that need to be administered at school for longer than 15 days must be accompanied by a written request signed and dated by the prescribing physician and the parent or guardian requesting this service.
- f. All medications will be stored and dispensed in the school clinic. **All medications including OTC medications will not be permitted to transport back home on the school bus. They must be picked up by a parent/guardian or an adult who is over 18 years of age.** Check with the school nurse if you have questions.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

1. REPORT CARDS

- a. There are four grading periods, of approximately nine weeks in length, during each school year. Report cards are issued at the end of each grading period. Parent Conferences are scheduled at the end of the first grading period. The report card is issued to the parent at the conference. If no conference is held, the report card is sent home the Wednesday following the end of the grading period. The report card is mailed following the end of the school year.
- b. The Elementary Grading Scale:

100 — 93 = A	82 — 80 = B-	69 — 68 = D+
92 — 90 = A-	79 — 78 = C+	67 — 63 = D
89 — 88 = B+	77 — 73 = C	62 — 60 = D-
87 — 83 = B	72 — 70 = C-	59 and below = F
- c. Students are also evaluated in citizenship and work study.
- d. Midterm grade reports are issued mid-way during the grading period. These reports are issued to all students during each grading period. Parents are to sign and return the midterm grade report and the report card in a reasonable length of time. If parents have questions about these reports, or any aspect of a student's educational program they are encouraged to contact the teacher.
- e. Special Class Grades for art, music, and other classes that meet once a week are given using E = Excellent, S = Satisfactory, N = Needs Improvement, or U = Unsatisfactory. Students in grades K, 1, and 2 will receive grades in these subjects at the end of each semester. Students in grades 3-6 will receive grades in these subjects at the end of each grading period.
- f. Semester Grades are an average of the grades on the Report Card for each grading period.

2. PROMOTION AND RETENTION

- a. Promotions and retention are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, social and emotional growth. If retention is a possibility, it will be discussed during a second Parent/Teacher Conference at the end of the third grading period. The final decision on pupil promotion and/or retention will be made by the Principal.

RECESS

Physical and social development are important aspects of our educational program. South Decatur Elementary is very fortunate to have a very well designed and equipped playground. Students should wear clothing appropriate for outdoor recess. Indoor recesses are held when the weather is rainy, severely cold, or too windy. Each grade has a scheduled recess before or after lunch.

Primary grades may also have additional recesses. Students will be expected to go outside for recess unless they bring a note from their parent for each day they should stay inside. Usually if a student is healthy enough to be in school, he or she is healthy enough to enjoy a breath of fresh air. A student may be excused from outdoor recess for an extended period only with a signed statement from a medical doctor.

MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES

1. CARRYING MONEY

Students should be encouraged not to carry money to school unless there is a definite need for it. It is very helpful if all money that is sent to school is sent in an envelope that is marked with the exact purpose of the money (lunch, book rental, book club, etc.) Students will not be allowed to cash checks or to receive change for large bills unless we have specific verifiable parent direction.

2. SELLING

Students are not to sell tickets and/or other merchandise without permission from the office. Permission from the teacher is necessary to determine the correct time to sell approved items.

3. VALUABLES

The school is not responsible for money or other valuable items that a student brings to school.

SECTION THREE—STUDENT SERVICES

HEALTH SERVICES

A clinic is provided for the temporary care of children who become ill or are injured at school. Immediate first aid is provided by the school nurse or a member of the school staff. Parents will be called in case of serious injury or illness and are to decide for the child to be picked up if necessary. It is vitally important that the school have on file: an emergency telephone number where parents can be reached, the name of the student's family doctor, and the phone numbers of at least 2 other people who may be called if the parent(s) or guardians cannot be located. This information, all other health concerns, and instructions or information about injuries must be listed on Harmony.

The school needs to be informed about any issues which might affect a student's participation in any school activity including physical education, recess, or the classroom. A doctor's written note is required if a student needs to be excused from taking physical education more than three consecutive classes.

The school nurse is responsible for the maintenance of health records, routine health checks, parental contact concerning health problems, care of minor injuries, vision screening, and assistance in health teaching. Vision screening is done for students in grades K, 1, 3, and 5 and those referred by teachers with concerns. The nurse will contact parents if a problem is observed during any screening.

Students who enter school for the first time should have a physical, dental, and visual examination. State Law requires that every child who is admitted to public school must have evidence of a successful vaccination for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, and polio and a rubella/rubeola/mumps vaccination. All students entering Kindergarten and first grade in Indiana schools each school year must have received at least two (2) doses of a measles-containing vaccine and (3) doses of Hepatitis B vaccine prior to beginning classes. To meet the new requirements, measles vaccines must have been given after the student's first birthday. Parents should advise the school when students have booster shots so that our records will be current.

Vaccinations exemptions are available if needed. Questions about immunizations may be discussed with the school nurse.

MEAL SERVICES

1. BREAKFAST

A nutritional low-cost breakfast is provided each day that school is in session. This service is intended for the child who would otherwise not eat breakfast at home and is not intended to replace breakfast at home. The cost of breakfast is \$1.50 daily. Students who are eligible for free lunch, are also eligible for free breakfast. Students who are eligible for reduced lunch are also eligible for reduced breakfast at a cost of 40¢.

2. LUNCH

A nutritional low-cost lunch is provided each day that school is in session all day. Students are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. The cost is kept low by a high percentage of student participation. Student lunch prices are \$2.60 per day. Reduced lunch prices are .40¢ per day. Students who forget their money for lunch may charge their meal. Parents are asked to pay the charge of \$2.50 the next day or to contact the office to make other arrangements. An application for free or reduced lunches is available from the office for families who wish to apply for this assistance. Lunch menus are sent home on a monthly calendar. Students are allowed to purchase extra items from the cafeteria. Students should order the extra items when lunch count is taken in their classroom early in the morning. Students may pay for the extra items as they go through the lunch line or they may have the money taken from their lunch account. Students are not allowed to "charge" extra items. Parents may stipulate that students are not allowed to purchase extra items with their lunch account card.

A student who has a milk allergy, verified by a medical doctor, may purchase juice instead of milk at the same price as milk. If a student buys a school lunch, he/she may not bring another type of drink to consume with their lunch. The milk that is usually offered is 2% white or low fat chocolate. Whole white milk is available upon request. Students will not be

allowed to buy, sell, or trade food, candy, or drinks at school. *No delivery of commercially prepared food is allowed during the school day.*

Lunches from home: Students may bring lunches from home to be eaten in the school cafeteria. Lunches should be packed appropriately so that the contents will not leak, explode, or spoil when stored for a few hours in a closet. Students who bring their lunches from home may have candy as a part of their lunch. However, they will be allowed to eat the candy only in the lunchroom and only during their regular lunch period. Soft drinks are NOT allowed as part of a sack lunch in the cafeteria.

3. LUNCH/BREAKFAST ACCOUNTS

In order to efficiently and accurately account for lunch and milk money, we utilize a computer and account number to record deposits and to track student purchases. Each student has an account. Money is collected in the cafeteria first thing each morning.

If you send in money for one day (40¢ for milk or \$2.60 for lunch), that will be paid directly to the cafeteria manager. The money won't be deposited or tracked on your child's account. It will, of course, be included in our school totals and reports to the federal school lunch program.

Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Guidance

We are awaiting guidance from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regarding the PLE requirements for the 2025 school year. As soon as guidance is available, we will release all of the details, along with an updated PLE tool through the weekly school newsletter.

If a parent wishes to send in one check; for more than one student, the student who brings in the check needs to know the account numbers and amount of money to deposit for his/her brothers and/or sisters. Their money will be taken by the bookkeeper or cafeteria manager. Deposits made after 9:30 A.M. will be credited to the account on the following day. Students may pay for their lunch as they go through the line, but may not make deposits at that time. Parents who wish to request information about an account should call school before 10:00 A.M. or after 2:00.

Students may bring in checks to pay for school fees. The school will not cash checks for students or issue a student change from a check.

4. MILK BREAK

Students may purchase milk through their lunch/milk account, or they may purchase milk for 40¢ per serving. Students are not allowed to charge milk unless they would otherwise not have a drink with a sack lunch.

A student who has a milk allergy, verified by a medical doctor may purchase orange juice instead of milk for the same price as milk.

The milk that is usually offered is 2% white or low fat chocolate. Whole white milk is available upon request.

5. SCHOOL LUNCH CHARGE AND COLLECTION POLICY

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) requires school food authorities to establish written administrative guidelines and procedures for meal charges. Decatur County Community Schools (DCCS) will consider the following definitions when considering meal charges and collections.

Delinquent Debt – that debt which is deemed still collectible.

Bad Debt – that debt which is deemed uncollectible.

“No Cash Back Policy” – Any remaining cash paid at the register at time of purchase will go into the student’s account instead of refunding.

Decatur County Community Schools will adhere to the following meal charge procedures.

- a. All cafeteria purchases are to be prepaid before meal service begins. Parents can make deposits into their students’ lunch account by cash, check, credit card or electronic funds online.
- b. School lunch accounts for students and/or DCCS staff are not to be in a negative balance situation.
- c. A student who has a negative lunch balance may not purchase “a la carte” items, including extra main entrees.
- d. Schools will continue to offer a complete lunch option to students K – 6th grade.
- e. The Food Service Director or other school personnel will coordinate communications with the parents/guardians to resolve the matter of unpaid charges.
- f. An automated email will be sent out each week to the parents of students with negative lunch account balances, regardless of the amount.
- g. The automated call system will notify parents once a week if their student has a negative lunch account balance.
- h. All accounts must be settled at the end of the school year. Letters will be sent home when the negative balance is greater than -\$25 and again greater than -\$50. Negative balances greater than -\$50 at the end of the school year will be sent to a collection agency for collection.
- i. Students who graduate or withdraw from the corporation have 30 days to notify the corporation if they request a refund of any funds remaining in their student lunch account. If no request is received after 30 days, the student lunch account will close and the funds will be no longer available. Unclaimed balances will be transferred to the fund used by the corporation to pay any negative balances at school year end.

	Grades K-6	Grades 7-12
Number of Outstanding Charges Permitted *Diet Restriction Students – Accommodations are made for students with special dietary needs. Paperwork must be on file with the School Nurse.	In grades K-6, Collection procedures start as soon as the student’s lunch account balance is negative. No Courtesy meals are provided; students continue with regular meal choices at the regular price.	Grades 7-12: At lunch, a Courtesy meal of a cold deli sandwich, vegetable, fruit, and milk until the outstanding balance is paid. There is no Courtesy meal at breakfast, students receive the menued meal. Charges are not permitted for a la carte items or extra milk. In order to expedite the line speed, a “no cash back policy” has been implemented for grades 7-12 students. Any remaining cash paid at the register will go into the student’s account instead of refunding.
Notifications to Student of Account Balance	Verbal reminder: Cashiers inform students of low balances. Written reminder: Managers send home balance notifications with students each week	Verbal reminder: Cashiers inform students of low balances .
Negative Balance Notifications	Once a week an email notification is sent to the parents of all students with negative lunch account balances. Automated phone calls will be generated every Monday by the Student Data system for lunch accounts with negative balances.	Once a week an email notification is sent to the parents of all students with negative lunch account balances. Automated phone calls will be generated every Monday by the Student Data system for lunch accounts with negative balances. The school bookkeepers send letters to households

	The school bookkeepers send letters to households with negative lunch account balances greater than -\$25	with negative lunch account balances greater than -\$25
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SPECIAL SERVICES

1. TITLE I

Policy # 2281

Effective Date: 8/1/2025

Revised: 04/28/2025

DISTRICT TITLE I PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

This policy and the plan to implement it have been developed jointly and in agreement with, and will be distributed to, parents of students participating in the Title I program.

Parent and Family Engagement

The School Board recognizes that each student's education is a responsibility shared by the school and the family. Meaningful family support is critical if a student is to achieve his/her potential.

In order to foster meaningful family involvement, the Board directs the Superintendent to establish a program that both encourages and facilitates parent/family members involvement in their child's educational program. This policy shall serve as the School Corporation policy, as well as the Parent and Family Engagement policy for each school in the Corporation. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), defines the term "parent" to include a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

In accordance with statute, the term "family" is used in order to include a child's primary caregivers, who are not the biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, and other family members and responsible adults who play significant roles in providing for the well-being of the child. The following practices, organized under six (6) categories, are based on the State Board of Education's Parent and Family Involvement Policy, the National PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.

Best Practices by Category

A. Create a welcoming school climate

1. Title I staff will hold their annual meeting during the "Back to School" night during the first week of school. This annual meeting will be announced in a letter, email, or all call phone announcement that families will receive over the summer. Translators will be available at every meeting to assist families upon request. A second annual meeting will occur at the first PTO meeting of the school year. Title I staff will inform parents of the school's participation in Title I, Part A. Parents will be informed of their rights to be involved. A one page handout will be provided with specific information regarding the implementation of the Title I program. Parents will receive their Right to Know, School-Parent Compact, and the Title I Parent Involvement Policy in the school handbook.
2. Transportation and childcare may be provided to enable families to attend school-sponsored, family-involvement events.
3. Parents and family members receive a welcome packet from the school office when they first enroll their child that includes important school and community information.
4. Teachers regularly communicate with families through email, phone calls, and home visits if needed.

B. Establish Effective School-to-Home and Home-to-School Communication

1. Parents are provided with a monthly newsletter with ideas and activities for use at home. Specifically, parents receive information on how to monitor and support student work at home.
2. Teachers send home weekly folders of student work. Parents have to sign daily agendas to acknowledge student homework.
3. Teachers use electronic gradebooks that are available to parents through Harmony Family Access for review at home.
4. School policies are available to all families in their home language.
5. Schools have weekly hours for families to call administrators and teachers as needed.
6. There is an electronic suggestion box available to families on the school website where they can share questions, concerns, and recommendations anonymously.
7. Student progress reports will be sent home regarding universal dyslexia screeners (Grades K-2), as well as the yearly ILEARN+ and IREAD test scores.
8. During parent-teacher conferences, teachers explain the Indiana Academic Standards, the academic expectations of Decatur County Schools for students, and discuss ways that parents can monitor their child's work. Parents are encouraged to work closely with the classroom and Title 1 teachers to develop strategies to assist students with their academic endeavors. Parents will be offered the opportunity to conference with their child's Title 1 teacher during this time as well.

C. Strengthen Families' Knowledge and Skills to Support and Extend Their Children's Learning at Home and in the Community

1. A Family Night will be held once a year to provide parents with training and materials for helping their child at home. Parents will have the opportunity to visit "stations" where staff members and PTO members will share resources for parents to use at home with their children to improve their academic skills. Parents will have the opportunity to ask questions regarding how to work with their child at home.
2. Timely information regarding the Title 1 program is provided through quarterly Title 1 newsletters and at each parent meeting. Within the newsletter, we will include clarification regarding upcoming testing dates and explain what these tests entail. These monthly newsletters are emailed and also a paper copy is sent home by parent request.
3. Tutorial videos may be available through the school website and also email for parents to use at home to improve children's study skills or learning in various academic subjects.
4. During parent-teacher conferences, a table of reading and math resources will be available for parents to take home to use with their child. These resources will address skills specific to each grade level.
5. Teachers provide weekly homework for students to discuss with their families what they are learning in class.
6. Community activities are available for students throughout the school year and in the summer from local organizations. These organizations send home information in the school newsletter as well as flyers.
7. We have a College Go Week every fall where students set academic, college, and career goals. Parents receive information regarding these goals.

D. Provide Families with Information Related to Child Development and Creating Supportive Learning Environments

1. During Kindergarten Roundup in the spring, there will be a brief introduction to the Title I program. Parents will also be provided with resources to use over the summer to help their child better prepare for kindergarten.
2. A newsletter is provided to families monthly with suggestions on home conditions that support learning at each grade level.
3. Local agencies may provide parenting workshops on nutrition, family recreation, or communication.
4. The principal, kindergarten teachers, and Title I teachers will meet with teachers of local preschools to share information about what is expected during Kindergarten roundup testing.

E. Engage Families in School Planning, Leadership, and Meaningful Volunteer Opportunities

1. Title I staff will involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under this part, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parental involvement policy. Parents may mark on a Title I parent contact form that they wish to be involved in a Parental Involvement Committee. Our Parent Involvement Committee will meet a minimum of once per semester to review Title I policies and procedures. In the first semester, parents will be able to review the policy at Parent-Teacher Conferences and/or a PTO meeting. In the second semester, parents will review the policy at a PTO meeting. The Parent Involvement Committee will review the Parent Involvement Policy at each meeting and make suggestions for improvement.

2. An end-of-year parent survey will be conducted in order to obtain parent suggestions and comments about the program. Parents will have the option to complete this parent survey online or on paper.

3. Volunteers are recognized at our end of year programs.

4. There is an AlertNow notification system to provide school information to all parents and staff members.

5. Teachers serve as family representatives to other staff members and administrators.

F. Connect Students and Families to Community Resources that Strengthen and Support Students' Learning and Well-Being

1. Families have access to community-based programs, including health care and human services, to ensure that families have resources to be involved in their children's education.

2. The local library provides programs in and out of school.

3. Community activities are available for students throughout the school year and in the summer from local organizations. These organizations send home information in the school newsletter as well as flyers. They also come to the schools to present their opportunities.

G. Provide High Ability Services and Collaboration

1. The high ability services coordinator may plan family educational opportunities for families of high ability students.

2. Extracurricular activities are available for high ability students.

3. There is a high ability broad based planning committee that discusses the social, emotional, and academic needs of high ability children.

H. Provide Family Engagement Efforts and Community Participation

1. There are two PTO meetings each year where parents review the Title I policies and give input.

2. Our PTO offers multiple opportunities for parents to be involved in the school community.

3. Our Parent Involvement Committee includes parents and family members of students with disabilities.

4. Parents have multiple opportunities to communicate with teachers regarding their child's learning and development.

SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT

The South Decatur Elementary School, faculty and staff, students, and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A for *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015*, agree that this compact outlines how the entire school staff, students and the parents will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards.

This School-Parent Compact is in effect during the school year 2024-2025.

SCHOOL PLEDGE

We, the South Decatur Elementary School faculty and staff, pledge to:

Deliver high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:

- have high expectations for ALL children
- provide a disciplined, safe, and positive learning environment
- teach the standards that are required by law
- have highly qualified teachers and staff
- communicate information about school activities

Hold parent-teacher conferences - During the conference, the classroom teacher will provide information as it relates to the individual child's achievement. Title I personnel will be available for consultation.

Distribute four report cards documenting each child's progress during the school year. In addition, written midterm reports will be sent home four times a year, and teachers will communicate by informal note, e-mail, or telephone as needed.

Provide parents reasonable access to staff by inviting parents to schedule additional conferences as needed or to communicate by telephone, e-mail, or written letter to the teacher.

Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities as follows:

- visit their child's classroom to observe
- volunteer to chaperone field trips
- participate in mentoring programs provided through the schools, such as High Five
- attend all school programs including winter and spring music programs, convocations, and the Title I Family Night

PARENT PLEDGE

We, as parents, pledge to support our child's learning in the following ways:

- promote positive use of my child's extracurricular time (examples: board games, read together, take a walk) and supervise my child's use of television
- offer love, discipline, guidance, and encouragement to our child
- have high expectations for our child
- monitor our child's attendance
- provide a quiet place that allows our child to concentrate on his/her homework and make sure that homework is complete each night
- show my child how to be and stay organized (gather all school materials and other important items and keep in a designated area where the child will see it each morning)
- be involved with the school
- communicate with the school about our child's strengths and needs

STUDENT PLEDGE

I pledge to share the responsibility to improve my academic achievement to the best of my ability by doing the following:

- attend school regularly
- do my homework every day and ask for help when needed

- read everyday outside of school time
- give my parents or guardian all notices and information from school
- fill out my school planner/assignment book and show it to my parents each night
- work cooperatively with teachers and classmates
- follow all school rules
- get plenty of sleep each night

**“I pledge to my school,
 That I will follow every rule,
 To keep me safe
 And show respect
 Caring people are what we expect.
 I will be responsible everyday,
 To show everyone the Cougar Way.”**

1. LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

A learning resource center provides part-time instruction for students who have a learning disability, are mildly mentally handicapped, or have emotional problems. To be eligible for this program students must meet the established criterion as determined by a Psychological Evaluation and a Case Conference Committee

2. SPEECH AND HEARING

A Speech Clinician conducts speech therapy at SDE. Students may be referred for a speech screening by their parents or teachers. All kindergarten students will have their speech screened by the clinician. If the Speech Clinician detects a problem during screening, parent permission for additional testing is requested. A decision to enroll the child in speech therapy would be made by the parent, the teacher, and the clinician. Students enrolled in therapy usually meet once or twice weekly for 20-30 minutes.

Audiometric (hearing) screening examinations are given to students in grades 1 and 4, new students, and those referred for a possible hearing loss. Students who do not do well in a hearing screening are rechecked at a later date. Students who do not pass the second screening are referred for further medical evaluation.

3. SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

The primary function of the School Psychologist is to provide psychometric testing to help diagnose the cause and extent of student learning difficulties. This evaluation may determine that a student is eligible for Special Education Services. A Psychological Evaluation is undertaken only with written consent from parents. After the evaluation is completed, a conference is held with the parents, teacher, principal, and psychologist to discuss the evaluation and the student's educational program.

4. HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Pending board approval, homebound instruction by a qualified teacher is available for a student if a doctor verifies that the child will be absent from school for four weeks or more.

SECTION FOUR - MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES

STANDARDIZED TESTING

1. Students in third grade through sixth grade will be participating in the ILEARN state mandated testing program. Students who do not meet minimum standards in 3rd and 6th grades will participate in remediation.
2. Second and third grade students will participate in the IREAD 3 in March. Second grade students who do not meet the minimum standards will have an additional opportunity to take the IREAD 3 in May. Students who are At Risk will attend summer school. Third grade students who do not meet the minimum standards will have an additional opportunity to take the IREAD in May. If they do not pass on this attempt, they will complete summer school and retake the assessment a third time. Students who do not meet the requirements on the summer retest will be retained in 3rd grade unless they meet

one of the good cause exemptions.

ASBESTOS INFORMATION

This information is being published to comply with the requirements of 40 CFR 763 Subpart E asbestos containing materials in schools. This regulation commonly known as the “AHERA” rule requires local education agencies, such as this one, to perform certain tasks regarding the presence and control of asbestos containing materials in the buildings under the jurisdiction of the local education agency.

These include but are not limited to:

1. Developing an asbestos management plan which is designed to outline procedures and guidelines for the inspection, reinspection and periodic surveillance of asbestos containing materials that are present in the buildings.
2. Provide awareness training and additional training to selected school employees.
3. Periodically notify all workers and occupants, or their local guardians, parent teacher organizations, and collective bargaining organizations of the availability of asbestos management plans, the location of same and the times that the plans may be reviewed.

This notification is to advise all patrons, occupants, or their legal guardians, collective bargaining organizations, and parent-teachers organizations, that the asbestos management plans required under this act are available for review upon request. A copy of the plans for all buildings under the jurisdiction of this local education agency are available in the administration building, which is located at 2020 N. Montgomery Road, Greensburg, Indiana 47240, telephone number 812-663-4595. Plans for individual schools and other buildings are located in the administration office of each building. The plans can be viewed by any person during normal business hours of the particular school. Interested parties wishing to inquire about the hours and times that the plans are available should call the above number.

At this time, the management plans can provide information regarding inspections, response actions, and post-response action activities, including periodic inspections and surveillance activities that are planned or in progress. Inquiries regarding any facet of the regulation of the management plans should be directed to Dr. Burns at the above telephone number during regular business hours.

Listed is a brief description of asbestos work that has been completed in our school this year. Detailed reports have become part of each school's asbestos management plan and may be reviewed in the school office.

All School Buildings and Support Structures

*Operations and Maintenance activities will be performed as required. August

NOTICE: All rules and policies and all their provisions are subordinate to local, state, and federal statutes.

PEST CONTROL POLICY

The Decatur County Community School Corporation (“Corporation”) is committed to providing students a safe environment. It seeks to prevent children from being exposed to pests and pesticides. While pesticides protect children from pests that may be found in the school and its surrounding grounds, under some circumstances they may pose a hazard to children. Therefore, pest control practices may involve a variety of chemical and non-chemical methods that are designed to control pests effectively while minimizing potential pesticide exposure to children.

The Corporation will:

1. Inform annually parents and staff members of the corporation's pest control policy at the same time of student registration (beginning of school year*) by a separate memorandum or as a provision in the student handbook.
2. Provide the name and phone number of the person to contact for information regarding pest control.
3. Establish a registry of parents and staff members who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use and provide such notice.

4. Provide notice of planned pesticide applications to parents and employees who have requested advanced notice.
5. Provide notice of all pesticide applications to school nurse.
6. Maintain a written record for at least 90 days of any pesticide applications.

The Corporation will provide notice at least two (school) days prior to the date and time the pesticide application is to occur. The notice will include the date and time of the pesticide application, the general area where the pesticide is to be applied and the telephone number to contact the school for more information.

In case of emergency pesticide application because of immediate threat to the public health, the school shall give written notice as soon as possible.

NOTICE: All rules and policies and all their provisions are subordinate to local, state, and federal statutes.

CRIMINAL GANGS AND CRIMINAL GANG ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

The Board of School Trustees of the Decatur County Community School Corporation prohibits gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior on school property, on school buses and/or at school-sponsored functions and prohibits reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior or who are victims, witnesses, bystanders or other people with reliable information about an act of gang activity and similar destructive or illegal group behavior.

The following definitions apply to this policy:

Criminal Gang means a group with at least three (3) members that specifically:

1. Either
 - a. Promotes, sponsors or assists in; or
 - b. Participates in; or
2. Requires as a condition of membership or continued membership;

The commission of a felony or an act that would be a felony if committed by an adult or the offense of Battery.

Per state law, a school employee shall report any incidents of suspected criminal gang activity, criminal gang intimidation or criminal gang recruitment to the principal and the school safety specialist. The principal and the school safety specialist may take appropriate action to maintain a safe and secure school environment, including providing appropriate intervention services. Appropriate consequences and remedial actions are those that take into consideration the severity of the offenses and consider both the development ages of the student offenders and the students' histories of inappropriate behaviors per the code of conduct.

Any corporation and school employee who promptly reports an incident of suspected gang activity and who makes this report in compliance with the school corporation procedures is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident.

The principal or designee shall conduct a thorough and complete investigation for each report of suspected gang activity. The investigation shall be initiated by the principal or the principal's designee within one school day of the report of the incident. The principal may appoint additional personnel and request the assistance of law enforcement to assist in the investigation. The investigation shall be completed and the written findings submitted to the principal as soon as possible, but not later than five school days from the date of the report of the alleged incident of criminal gang activity.

The principal shall take any appropriate disciplinary actions based upon the findings of the investigation, in accordance with the code of conduct. The superintendent of the school corporation is authorized to define the range of ways in which school staff and the principal or the principal's designee shall respond once an incident of criminal gang activity is confirmed, according to the code of conduct. Consequences for a student who engages in gang activity may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

The principal shall provide the parents of the students who were investigated with information about the investigation. The information to be provided to parents includes the nature of the investigation, whether the corporation found evidence of criminal gang activity and whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the activity. This information is to be provided in an expedited manner.

As appropriate to the investigation findings, the principal also shall provide intervention and/or relevant support services. The principal shall inform the parents of all students involved in alleged incidents and discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services.

Support services may include one or more of the following:

1. Gang awareness education that shows promise of effectiveness based on research. The gang awareness education information should be revised and updated regularly to reflect current trends in gang and gang-like activity.
2. Culturally and/or linguistically appropriate services/ supports for parents and families.
3. Counseling coupled with mentoring for students and their families.
4. Community and faith-based organizations and civic groups.
5. Viable, sustainable after-school programs developed in collaboration with other stakeholders.
6. Job training and employment opportunities as both a deterrent to gang involvement and an incentive to leave gang involvement.
7. School sanctioned/ facilitated extra-curricular activities.

The principal shall submit the report to the superintendent of the school corporation within ten (10) school days of the completion of the investigation. The superintendent or his/her designee shall report the results of each investigation to the school board on a quarterly basis during regularly scheduled board meetings.

Each school within the school corporation shall record the number of investigations disposed of internally and the number of cases referred to local law enforcement, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, age, and gender. Each school shall report this information to the school corporation superintendent who shall submit a written report to the Indiana Department of Education by June 2 of each year.

This policy shall be annually disseminated to all parents who have children enrolled in a school within this corporation. Notice of this policy must be published in student handbooks and all other publications of the school corporation that set forth the rules and procedures for schools within the school corporation.

SECTION FIVE - ADMINISTRATIVE REQUESTS

CLASS PARTIES

Parents may wish to send birthday treats for the child to share with his/her class. Parents should schedule such arrangements with the teacher in advance. *(We prefer store bought products.)*

Some classes will plan a gift exchange at Christmas time. Students are urged to limit the price of a gift to the amount recommended.

ATHLETIC CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Students are given opportunities to be involved in extracurricular activities. These activities are provided by organizations within the school system and community.

CURRICULUM

South Decatur Elementary offers a comprehensive and challenging curriculum. Much of our curriculum is available for students both in print form and online. We are a 1:1 school, and students access the materials through the use of iPads and chromebooks.

Our 1:1 status also allows us to utilize eLearning days where students can learn from home during inclement weather. Our educators infuse traditional learning techniques with innovative technology to ensure students are future ready. The curriculum for each subject is evaluated and revised as part of the textbook adoption process. A parent who has an interest in serving on a curriculum committee is encouraged to contact the principal.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips within our area and to nearby points of interest are scheduled throughout the school year. These trips are an educational activity designed to supplement different aspects of the classroom curriculum and to introduce students to the resources of the extended community. Parents will receive notices of field trips in advance of the scheduled trip date and will be asked to sign field trip permission forms. The P.T.O. usually pays for the expenses of the field trip. Sometimes a small amount of money may be requested from each student to help defray some of the costs. Parents who are interested in being a chaperone on a field trip are encouraged to inform the teacher of their interest early in the year. The teacher will contact you if you are needed. (Not all volunteers will be needed for some popular trips.) Guidelines for chaperones are available and entrance fees may not be covered by school or PTO.

HOMEWORK

Homework can provide practice and drill that reinforces classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by setting aside a time each evening for homework, arranging a comfortable place for the students to work, and by seeing that assignments are completed. If unusual family circumstances occasionally prevent a student from completing the assigned homework, the parent should send a note to the teacher stating the nature of the circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to complete the assignment at the earliest possible date (usually the next day). This accommodation will be allowed only so long as it is not abused.

MAKE-UP WORK DUE TO ABSENCE

If someone wishes to pick up make-up work for a student who is absent, please notify the school at least one-half day in advance so the work will be collected and ready. Students are not required to do school work when they are ill. Students are allowed the number of days absent plus one day to complete make up work.

HONOR ROLL

The Board of School Trustees directs that Academic Honor Rolls are to be developed and published as outlined below:

1. Type of Honor Roll
 - a. An "A" Honor Roll - student report card consists of all "A" grades.
 - b. An "A-B" Honor Roll - student report card consists of at least all "B" grades or above. (This means no "C" or below.)
2. Role of Miscellaneous Grades
 - a. Elementary
 - i. A student on the Honor Roll will have received all A's, B's, E's and S's. This means no C's, N's, and U's anywhere on the report card. If a student received an N or U in a subject for which a letter grade is not given (handwriting, art, music, P.E., citizenship, effort, etc.), an N or U will still keep the student from being on the Honor Roll.
 - ii. S- will be treated as S.
 - iii. Any student who receives Credit/No Credit in any subject must have a percentage of 70% or higher to be eligible for the Honor Roll.
3. Frequency of Development
 - a. Honor Rolls will be developed at the end of each grading period and on the semester grades earned.
4. Publication / Distribution
 - a. Elementary
 - i. In grade 2,3,4,5 and 6 teachers may post their class Honor Rolls in their rooms.
 - ii. In grade 4, 5 and 6 teachers shall submit their Honor Rolls to the Principal for publication.

An Academic Awards program will be held at the end of each school year to celebrate students with high academic achievements.

NEWSLETTER

Information is sent to parents on a weekly basis in the SDE NEWSLETTER through email and school website. It will contain important information about activities and dates for school and community events. Paper copy is available upon request.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Communication is an essential part of the educational program. We believe it is very important for parents to keep in close contact with their child's teacher concerning his/her progress.

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be scheduled at the end of the first grading period. Conferences are scheduled in the morning and evening. A survey form allows parents to indicate a preferred time. Parents will later be notified of their appointment. If other conferences are desired, an appointment should be made with the teacher so that the conference can be held at a time that is convenient and appropriate.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (P.T.O.)

The P.T.O. is a very important group at South Decatur Elementary. The P.T.O. supports and enhances activities at SDE. Past services have included: field trip financing, supplemental educational materials, games for indoor recess, balls and jump ropes for outdoor recess, fans, risers, and portable stage equipment.

Parent volunteers are always needed for P.T.O. activities. Many volunteers are needed who are available during the school day but some are also needed for late afternoon or evening duties.

The P.T.O. usually conducts one major fundraiser each year, and other activities such as Santa's Secret Shop and Spirit Items. Parents are encouraged to help with at least one activity. It is very important that orders, items, and money are all returned promptly and by the indicated deadlines.

The Executive PTO Committee conducts the business of the organization and appoints other committees as needed. Parents who are interested in serving as an officer or member of another committee are encouraged to tell an officer or the Principal of this interest. Copies of the P.T.O. Bylaws are available, upon request, from the school office.

PICTURES

School pictures will be taken early in the school year. These pictures are taken by a professional photographer. Pictures will be taken utilizing a prepay system. Parents will choose a type of picture package and indicate that on a form provided by the photographer. Payment for the package must be included at the time the picture is taken. If the pictures are not acceptable, the company will retake them or issue a refund. Retakes are also provided for absentees, and new students.

Pictures of groups will be taken later in the year for inclusion in the yearbook. Orders for the yearbook will usually be taken second semester.