



Student Handbook 2025-2026

Valerie Forman, Principal
Elizabeth Gomez, Assistant Principal

MORNINGSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

2300 S. E. Gowin Drive
Port St. Lucie, FL 34952
Phone: 772-337-6730
Fax: 772-337-6744

Website: <http://schools.stlucie.k12.fl.us/mse/>

www.facebook.com/MorningsideElementarySchool

VISION OF MORNINGSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Morningside Elementary School, in partnership with families and the community, will provide an educational institution of academic excellence. Each student will be afforded the opportunity to reach his or her maximum potential to become a successful citizen in the global society.

THE MISSION OF MORNINGSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The mission of Morningside Elementary School is to provide all students a safe and positive learning environment, rigorous academic curriculum and access to technological resources evidenced by continuous student achievement

St. Lucie County Public Schools Mission, Beliefs, Vision

MISSION: The mission of the St. Lucie County School District is to ensure all students graduate from safe and caring schools, equipped with knowledge, skills and the desire to succeed.

Every child can learn, and each child can learn more than he or she is now learning.

- School district personnel, community members, parents and students share the responsibility for student achievement.
- Quality learning experiences are the central focus for all school and district activities.
- We ensure equity and quality for all students, not just some.
- Equity without quality is prejudice, quality without equity is privilege, equity plus quality equals excellence.
- Students are volunteers. Their attendance can be required, but their attention must be earned.
- We teach the whole child, not simply the test taker.
- All students have the absolute right to a safe, trusting and drug-free environment.

The core business of the St. Lucie County Schools is to create challenging, engaging, and satisfying work for every student, every day.

- The teacher's primary role is to design rigorous, engaging work that leads students to higher levels of learning.
- We provide clear and compelling understandings about what students are expected to know and be able to do.
- We provide support for the student's success, understanding that different students master tasks in different ways and at different times.
- District and school support personnel are partners with teachers and schools in the core business.
- Collaboration around the core business is essential to quality learning experiences.
- Quality tools are required for quality work.
- Instructional needs drive the design and construction of facilities.
- Quality facilities are required for quality work.

Quality schools are the responsibility of the entire community.

- Parents, students, community members, agencies, business, governmental entities, other educational institutions, and the school district constitute the community.
- The community works together to provide the political advocacy and support needed for student success.
- Our community actively advocates for support of education by holding candidates and elected officials accountable for their commitment to quality public schools.
- The community is responsible for providing and supporting the facilities infrastructure necessary to accommodate growth.
- All district employees are committed to sharing our vision and engaging the community in successfully confronting our common challenges.
- The school district is obligated to achieve quality results for the schools and the community.

A healthy school system is key to the maintenance of a healthy democracy.

- Quality schools develop productive, contributing citizens.
- Quality schools improve the quality of community life.
- We strengthen relationships and broaden perspectives by embracing diversity.
- We model principles of representative democracy both in our schools and throughout the district.
- Systems of checks and balances contribute to quality decisions.

- We share a fundamental common commitment to the common good.
- Leaders are responsible both to constituents and for shaping the future.

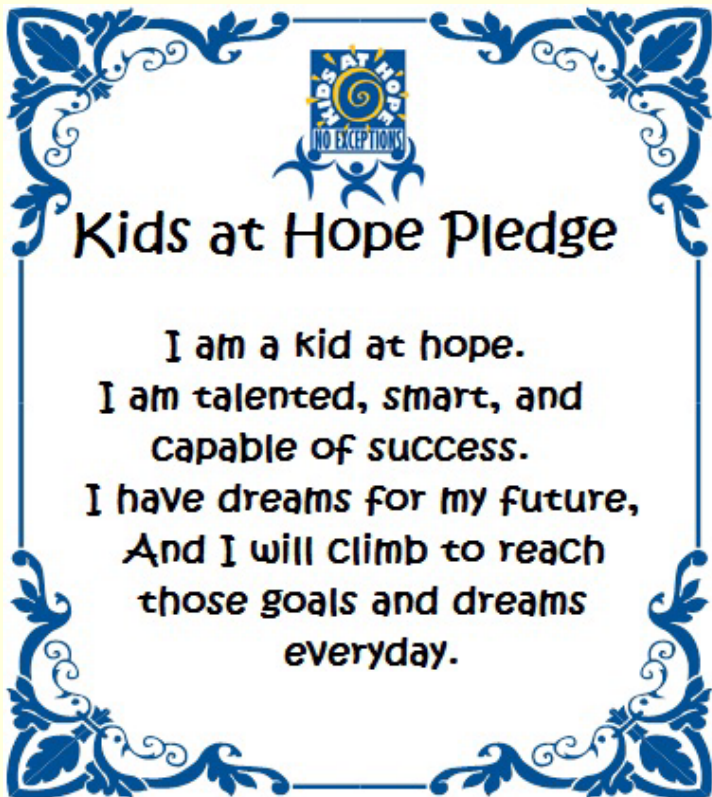
The district and its employees have mutual obligations for support and development toward continuous improvement.

- Our core values are fairness, respect, trust, integrity, and commitment to improvement.
- We develop leaders committed to our common vision at all levels in the system.
- Collegiality and collaboration are key to our success.
- All district employees provide prompt and courteous attention to their customers.
- We are a school system, not a system of schools.
- We are a learning organization, in which all roles serve the common purpose of pursuing continuous improvement in quality learning experiences for all.

Therefore, we promise continuous improvement in student achievement and in the success of each individual.

- We are committed to a common vision.
- We use our beliefs and vision as the key criteria for making decisions.
- We lead and manage by results.
- We hold ourselves mutually accountable for quality effort.
- We assess progress toward agreed – upon goals on a regular basis.
- We expect and we work to bring out the best in every employee.
- We accept change as inevitable and shape it into opportunity.

Morningside Elementary is a Kids at Hope School!



GENERAL INFORMATION

OFFICIAL SCHOOL HOURS

Official school hours are 8:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. with the school opening for students at 8:15 a.m. Students will sit at a designated area with their classmates until they are dismissed to their classrooms. Do not drop students off before the 8:15 a.m. bell. **NO STUDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED ON CAMPUS BEFORE 8:15 A.M. AS THERE IS NO SUPERVISION UNTIL THAT TIME.** Students may be picked up at 3:15 p.m., but no later than 3:45 p.m. on regular school days, and at 1:15 p.m., but not later than 1:45 p.m., on early dismissal days. We have a before, and after-school care program sponsored and conducted by the Boys and Girls Club for those who need this service for their children. Please call the **Boys and Girls Club at 772-419-9110 Ext. 407** for information.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

During the first week of school, teachers will record the way students arrive and depart from school (riding a bike, walking, riding a bus, or being picked up by parent). **The school MUST receive written instructions from the parent to dismiss in any other manner.**

The bell to dismiss students into their classroom rings at 8:42 a.m. The tardy bell rings at 8:45 a.m. **The doors to the car rider line will close promptly at 8:45 a.m.** At that point, parents in the car loop are to park and come in and sign their child in through the school office. If a student is a **car rider who plans on eating breakfast** in the school cafeteria, he/she **should arrive no later than 8:30 a.m.** to allow for sufficient time to eat and arrive to class on time. To facilitate a safe and smooth traffic pattern, parents are asked to observe all traffic signs and follow the instructions from all staff members on duty. Please note that the Port St. Lucie Police will issue tickets to cars parked in front of property owner's lots. Parents are asked not to leave their cars unattended in the drive-through areas. Students are dismissed at **3:15 p.m.**

Students must be picked up from the office if the parent is removing the student from class during school hours. No student will be released from the classroom unless notified by the office. **Students will not be released between 2:45-3:15 p.m.**

Students will be released only to those persons designated by the parent with their names recorded in writing on the Emergency Card which is on file in the office. No one else will be permitted to take a student off campus. No minors should be designated to pick up students. Proper identification will be requested to ensure your child's safety.

In addition, we ask that you observe the following rules to ensure the safety of all students:

1. Park in designated areas only.
2. Please remain in your car when stopping to pick up and drop off students. **Avoid the use of cell phones** while in the pickup and drop off loop.
3. Please **ENTER** the campus parking area **only at the northeast entrance**, avoiding the bus loading area. Only a LEFT turn will be permitted from the parent pick-up and drop-off area.
4. Please **DO NOT** drop off or arrange to pick up students in the back of the building. This area is the designated bicycle and walker entrance.
5. Please **DO NOT** park or drive in the bus pick up and drop off loading area in front of the school.
6. Please **DO NOT** walk across the bus loading area with your child. Students will not be permitted to cross the bus loading area to get to your car.
7. For your child's safety, have him/her exit and enter the car from the passenger side.

BIKE RACK

Children who ride their bikes to school are to dismount and walk their bikes upon reaching the school grounds. There are two fenced-in bike racks at the front and rear of the building where bikes are to be left during school hours. For security, the bikes should be locked with a chain or other device. We do not assume responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged bikes.

We urge parents to register bikes with the local law enforcement agencies. All students should wear helmets, and all other bicycle safety laws must be adhered to.

BIRTHDAYS/ FOOD ITEMS

Celebration of students' birthdays are permitted during lunch time only. If you bring snacks /goodies for students in your child's classroom, **they must be store bought and include a nutrition label**. There are many students with various allergies. Snack/goodies brought in must be individual portions that can be quickly passed out (ie: cupcakes, cookies, brownies). Sorry cakes and pull-apart cupcakes are not permitted.

BUS CONDUCT RULES FOR STUDENTS

It is the responsibility of students to obey the bus driver and abide by the rules for riding the bus to ensure the safety of all students. Failure to abide by these rules will result in students being reported by the driver to the school's administration. **The administration has the authority to suspend and/or recommend expulsion of the student's bus riding privileges.**

Bus safety rules include the following. Please review them carefully with your child.

1. Use a safe route walking to the bus stops. Stay away from the traveled portion of the road as much as possible if there is no sidewalk.
2. Do not ride a bus other than the one to which you are assigned without authorization from the principal of your school.
3. Arrive at the designated bus stop ahead of the scheduled route pick up/drop off time.
4. Stand off the roadway while awaiting the bus.
5. Wait for the driver's signal before crossing the road. Cross (5) five feet in front of the bus when the driver has signaled.
6. Enter and exit from the front door of the bus unless otherwise directed by an authorized person.
7. **Obey the driver. The driver is in full charge of the bus and passengers.**
8. Do not engage in unnecessary conversation with the bus driver.
9. Sit in your assigned seat if the driver feels it is necessary.
10. Always stay in your seat when the bus is moving.
11. Exhibit conduct appropriate to the classroom while on the bus.
12. Keep your arms, legs, head, and other parts of your body inside the bus, (i.e., using kind words, keeping hands and feet to self, speaking in an inside voice, etc.)
13. Do not throw or discard objects from the bus window.
14. Do not wear shoes with cleats, spikes, or "built in" skates on the bus.
15. Do not use abusive or profane language while on the bus.
16. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
17. Do not abuse the privileges of riding the bus.
18. Do not bring items on the bus which interferes with the seating and safety of others.
19. Do not bring reptiles, snakes, bugs, animals, marine life (dead or alive) or plants on the bus.
20. Do not bring glass containers on the bus.
21. Be absolutely silent at all railroad crossings.
22. Use care when leaving the bus stop. Use the same precautions when leaving the bus stop as when approaching the bus stop.
23. Stand away from the bus as it pulls away.

CELL PHONE USE:

Beginning with the 2025 – 2026 school year, elementary and middle school students **are not permitted to use** a wireless communication device including cell phones **during the school day.**

In accordance with new legislation recently signed into law, students may not use their cell phones or wireless communication devices at school throughout the entire school day including during lunch or class changes.

Allowable Exceptions:

Students may only use their cell phone or wireless communication device during the school day for the following reasons:

1. If authorized by a school administrator in the front office or clinic.
2. If a physician licensed under Chapter 458 or Chapter 459 has certified in writing that it is necessary based on clinical reasoning or evidence or,

In accordance with

3. The student's Individual Education Plan or,
4. The students 504 Plan under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Please see the student Code of Conduct for additional information related to violating this policy.

CEREMONIES/SIBLINGS:

School-aged siblings may not attend award ceremonies, other than 5th Grade Graduation. For all other assemblies, students should remain in class as instructional time must be protected and should not be missed.

CHANGING THE WAY A STUDENT GOES HOME

Should a parent wish to change the way the student goes home, he/she must do the following:

Send a written note with the child to be turned in to the teacher within 24-hour notice, including student name, date of change, and parent contact information.

Ex. "My child will be a car rider instead of a bus rider on 08/18/19."

- If the parent is unable to send a written note due to emergency, we will not take changes over the phone. In such cases, a parent may fax a change to (772) 337-6744 or send an email to the Front Office. To ensure confirmation of your receipt of electronic communication must be received by the parent. You can send emails to MSEAttendance@stlucieschools.org
- If a parent would like a student to go home with another student (via car or bus), the parents of BOTH children must send a note about the arrangements. Both notes must be turned in to an administrator for approval. Teachers must send notes from parents to the office in the attendance folder. Teachers will be notified before the afternoon bell of any changes for students' dismissal.

Friday/Communication Folders

Every student is provided a Friday/Communication Folder. All parent communication, (i.e., notes, flyers, newsletters, etc.) are sent home in these folders. Please make sure you check your child's communication folder every week to stay updated.

CONFERENCES

Conferences with teachers are encouraged. Please make any arrangements for conferences at least twenty-four hours in advance. This is a district policy as negotiated by the Classroom Teachers Association. Conferences will be held between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. unless another time is agreed upon.

HONOR ROLL POLICY/PERFECT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Honor Roll is for Grades 3-5 only.

Principal's Honor Roll - All A's in every area, including all S's in the areas of conduct.

Honor Roll - All A's and B's on report card, including all S's in the areas of conduct.

LUNCH

At this time, parents are not permitted to have lunch with their child. Students are also not permitted to be signed out and leave campus for lunch.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be distributed after 4 and ½ weeks of a quarter beginning. Parents can also access grades/report cards on the Parent Portal. Please visit the district website at www.stlucie.k12.fl.us and click on the Skyward Family Access link at the top of the page to access your account.



2025-2026 Student Dress Code

We know you have a choice in St. Lucie County, and we are excited you chose Morningside Elementary for your student's elementary education!

We appreciate your support of our mandatory dress code. Morningside Elementary dress code policy reflects pride and unity and demonstrates that school is a place to study and learn. The proven benefits of a dress code include increased focus on teaching and learning; reduced distraction, peer pressure and behavioral issues; strengthened school pride, and improved school safety. We believe that the school's positive climate will enable each student to experience personal success and develop into lifelong learners.

The following is the dress code for the 2024-2025 school year.

If it is not listed below, then it is NOT acceptable to wear to school.

<u>Masks</u>	Masks are optional and can be disposable or cloth. No gaiters, bandanas or vents/valves permitted. Masks can be any color or design but must be school appropriate with no offensive writing or images.
<u>Shirts</u>	Any solid-color shirt with collar and sleeves, (polo or button down). Logos must be no larger than 1" (size of a quarter). Morningside Elementary Spirit (MSE) shirts are always allowed.
<u>Shorts, Skorts, Skirts & Capris</u>	Students may wear traditional style uniform shorts, capris, shorts, & skorts in any solid color. Basketball shorts are allowed. All bottoms must be fitted at the waist. Shorts/skirts/dresses must be school appropriate length (they must reach mid-thigh). Belts are optional. Logos must be no larger than 1" (size of a quarter).
<u>Pants & Jeans</u>	Traditional uniform style pants or joggers in any solid color are allowed. All bottoms must be fitted at the waist. Jeans are allowed every day and must not have patterns, patches, holes or be frayed/distressed. Belts are optional. Logos must be no larger than 1" (size of a quarter). Jeggings are not allowed.
<u>Spandex, Leggings, Bike Shorts & tights</u>	If leggings, bicycle shorts, tights, or any spandex-like bottoms are worn, they must be worn under school approved clothing.
<u>Jumpers/Dresses</u>	Any solid-color uniform style jumper/polo dress. Dresses must be school appropriate length (mid-thigh or longer) and have a collar.
<u>Sweatshirts, Cardigans & Sweaters</u>	Any solid-color sweatshirt, cardigan or sweater. Hoods may not be worn on the head. A dress code appropriate shirt must be on under any sweater, sweatshirt or cardigan.
<u>Shoes</u>	Any enclosed athletic shoe and non-heeled dress shoe is allowed. All shoes must be closed toe and have a back. No flip-flips, any style sandals, slides, cleats, CROCS, nor shoes with wheels are allowed.
<u>Head, Hair, & Facial Attire</u>	Small, non-distracting headbands/bows/clips are allowed. Hair may be colored if not distracting to the learning environment. Small jewelry such as earrings and necklaces only. Pimple patches, stickers, and other facial embellishments are

	not permitted unless a religious or medical exemption is provided. Clear pimple patches are permitted.
<u>MSE Spirit Shirts</u>	<i>MSE Spirit Shirts may be worn Monday-Friday.</i>

The uniform dress code will be strictly enforced. We do expect parents to monitor at home before the child leaves for school. Please contact Morningside Elementary School if you have any further questions at (772) 337-6730.

MESSAGES AND TELEPHONE CALLS

Students will not be permitted to use the office phone for personal calls except in case of emergency and with staff permission. In the event a student receives a call, he/she will be called out of class only in the case of an emergency. Messages must be called in no later than 1:45 p.m. to ensure delivery.

NUCLEAR EVACUATION PLAN

If an emergency nuclear evacuation of students is necessary, the St. Lucie County evacuation policy for schools is as follows:

- If evacuation is required, the St. Lucie County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will notify affected schools. Please note that not all schools may be affected.
- Principals will direct school personnel to assist students with the school's evacuation procedures.
- The St. Lucie County School District will evacuate all affected students and school personnel to the St. Lucie County Fairgrounds. In order that we may evacuate the area in a timely manner to ensure your child's safety, **do not attempt to pick your child up at school.**
- Local radio and television stations will announce when and where parents may pick up their children.
- Teachers will staff pick-up stations at the fairgrounds and will account for and supervise students until parents pick them up.
- To ensure their safety, students not picked up at school sites, within two hours, will be transported to St. Lucie County Fairgrounds located on Midway Road in Fort Pierce, where parents may pick them up.

OVERDUE LIBRARY BOOKS

Students may be limited in borrowing additional books until overdue books are returned, or fines for lost books are paid.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

We strongly encourage all students to leave valuables at home. Students SHOULD NOT bring electronics or toys to school. The probability of damage and/or theft is too great, and those items are a distraction to students throughout the day. Such items will be removed from the child's care and placed in the teacher's desk or office for the day. If the items are causing a disturbance, they will be confiscated from the child and may be retrieved by the parent from the school office. Students are permitted to carry a cell phone. The cell phone must remain in their book bag and turned off during the day.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXEMPTION

If your child needs to be excused from participating in physical education for a day, please send a note to the physical education instructor. For students to be exempt for a longer period, a doctor's statement will need to be placed on file in the clinic.

RAINY DAY DISMISSAL

In case of inclement weather (including lightning activity at dismissal), the following procedures will be followed:

1. Bike riders, walkers and car riders will remain in their classrooms until 3:15 p.m., when they will be dismissed to a corresponding hallway near the parent pick up loop. Students will remain inside the school building. Staff members will call students names and escort students to their car.
2. After 3:45 p.m., bikers, walkers, and car riders will be picked up from the front office and escorted by their parents to their cars.
3. Bike riders whose parents do not pick them up will be allowed to leave only after the rain and/or lightning has ceased.

SCHOOL CAFETERIA

Starting July 1, parents may go on the district website at www.stlucieschools.org to apply for free or reduced lunches. Meals will be served according to USDA guidelines so that both students and staff remain safe. Specific meal service procedures are also located on our district website under the parent/student tab.

The updated 25-26 Meal Policy and Prices are below. They are reviewed annually to ensure they meet USDA pricing guidelines. CEP schools offer free meals to all students; however, students must have a positive cafeteria account balance to purchase a la carte items.

- **Breakfast (K-12):** Free for all students
- **Elementary (K-5) Lunch:** Only **\$2.50**
- **Middle & High (6-12) Lunch:** Just **\$2.75**
- **Adult Breakfast:** \$4.00
- **Adult Lunch:** \$5.00

UPDATED: St. Lucie Public Schools Meal Charging Policy/Procedure

All St. Lucie Public Schools must adhere to the Meal Charging Policy set forth by the USDA. All students who qualify for a free meal benefit will not be denied a meal even if there are meal charges on the account. Students' accounts can accrue up to \$25.00 of charges for reimbursable meals only. No à la carte items are permitted to be charged. No adults are allowed to charge.

1. Students are allowed to charge up to \$25.00 for receiving a reimbursable meal. The students will receive the same school lunch as other students.
2. Students who have accrued a negative balance will receive notification of charges through the district communication system, written notification, and/or a phone call from the school. Parents will be encouraged to make payments through either our online prepayment system or in the cafeteria.
3. Households will continue to receive notification of charges until the charges are paid in full. Notifications will be sent through the district communication system twice a week.
4. Up to three courtesy meals will be offered to students who have maximized their charge limit. A courtesy meal consists of a cheese sandwich, a vegetable, a fruit, and low-fat white milk. The school meals program will maintain a list of students who receive or refuse a courtesy meal.
5. If a pattern of receiving courtesy meals is evident, the Child Nutrition Services Department will attempt to discuss the issue with the parent or guardian to encourage them to complete a free and reduced meal application. If the practice continues and the parents/guardians remain unresponsive, the Child Nutrition Services Department will initiate a plan for Student Services to contact the household to complete a meal application for the student and determine if the student is known to be eligible for free or reduced meals.
6. Any time there is an uncollected balance in a student's meal account, the student will be prevented from purchasing à la carte items.
7. Any unpaid balance on a student's account will be carried over from year to year.
8. The parent is responsible for the uncollected balance.

SCHOOL CLINIC (ILLNESS AND/OR ACCIDENTS)

Children who become ill during the day will be sent to the clinic for attention, rest, or to be sent home. In order to administer prescribed medication to students during school hours, exclusive of injections, the following requirements must be met:

1. The parents must provide the school with a doctor's statement on the proper form, explaining the necessity of the medication.
2. The parents must complete Form ST0011, to be signed by the doctor and the parents. This form shall include:
 - a. *DIRECTIONS (for example: with meals)*
 - b. *FREQUENCY*
 - c. *DOSAGE*
 - d. *METHOD OF ADMINISTRATION*
 - e. *POSSIBLE REACTIONS*

The form includes a statement of authorization for the medication to be administered by personnel.

3. All medication must remain in its original container.
4. Nonprescription medication will not be administered unless Form ST0011 has been properly completed.
5. All medication will be kept in the clinic and administered only by the school designated personnel once all requirements are met.
6. If a student is injured, first-aid will be promptly administered. The student will usually be cared for in the clinic. If the injury is of a serious nature, an attempt will be made to contact the parent by phone. If emergency treatment is required, 911 will be called and we will attempt to notify the parent. An accident report is completed following any injury requiring first-aid.

IT IS CRITICAL FOR YOU TO COMPLETE THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARD PROVIDED BY THE HEALTH AIDE. Please be sure to include home phone, work phone number (parents), and any additional emergency contact(s) phone numbers. **We MUST have a number whereby we can always reach you. Students MAY NOT carry medication (prescription or over the counter) on campus at any time. Doing so could result in disciplinary action as outlined by the St. Lucie Public School Code of Conduct.**

R3. Misuse of NonPrescription Medication Misuse of any non-prescription ("over-the-counter") medication or supplement, including but not limited to (1) any use inconsistent with the manufacturer's directions or generally accepted guidelines or (2) any distribution or use with the intended or actual effect of inducing physical, emotional, or behavioral change that either (a) is contrary to the will of the actual user, or (b) exceeds the change that such medication or supplement was designed to induce. **Administration of medication to a student or possession of any medication by a student, must adhere to the school board policy for medication administration as outlined in the district health services manual. No medication, prescription or nonprescription i.e., Tylenol, aspirin, cough drops, can be given at school without a written Physician Authorization For Medication Form filled out completely and correctly by the physician and signed by the physician. Any medication found on school property without authorization on file will be treated as any other illegal substance and will be turned over to the Principal or School Resource Officer (SRO). This will result in a Code of Student Conduct Violation and the student will be subject to disciplinary action.

Medical Emergencies:

I. For the purpose of this policy the following are to be considered serious medical emergencies:

1. Difficulty breathing or has stopped breathing
2. Bleeding which appears difficult to control
3. State of shock because of excessive bleeding, severe pain, insulin reaction, or diabetic coma
4. Unconscious (beyond fainting)
5. Extensive burns
6. Drug overdose or oral poison other than drugs
7. Severe allergic reaction that appears to be life threatening
8. Inhalers and epi-pens may be carried by students with physician and parent approval.

II. In the event of a serious medical emergency requiring medical attention, the principal or a designee will call 911.

III. Once the emergency medical service (EMS) personnel arrive at the scene, they assume the responsibility for the care of the individual.

IV. If a person attached to EMS is on campus for other than official business, such as a resource person in the classroom, and offers emergency assistance, it is the principal who decides if they are allowed to care for the individual.

STUDENT CONDUCT

At all times, teachers have a right to teach and students have a right to learn. If this is to be accomplished, it is absolutely necessary that the school environment be free of disruptions which interfere with teaching and learning.

Teachers will inform students and parents of specific classroom rules and disciplinary actions.

A Code of Student Conduct book will not be sent home at the beginning of the year. It is available online and copies are available upon request. Parents are asked to please read it with their children and sign and return the last page to the teacher.

UNIFORM GRADING SYSTEM

The following grading scale will be used in grades K-2:

4	Above Standard
3	At Standard
2	Approaching Standard
1	Below Standard
0	Not Attempted

Teachers will be grading students on their progress toward the mastery of the Standards throughout the year. As teachers enter events into Skyward, you will be able to see if your child is progressing steadily along the way through the grades assigned in the events.

Instruction will be paced to support your child in mastering all of the grade level content prior to the end of the year. A three would indicate that your child is making steady progress based on the instruction and assessments provided thus far.

You may see individual scores fluctuate sometimes, which is not necessarily cause for concern. As your child learns new skills, he/she will find some concepts and targets much easier to master than others. As a parent, you should be looking at the overall trend of grades to see the overall pattern.

Students in grades 3-12 will be awarded letter grades to indicate student progress.

Grade	Percent	Grade Point Average	Definition
A	90-100	4	outstanding progress
B	80-89	3	above average progress
C	70-79	2	average progress
D	60-69	1	lowest acceptable progress
F	0-59	0	failure
I	0	0	Incomplete*
W	N/A	N/A	withdrawn Dual Enrollment

*A student who receives an incomplete, must complete the work within the guidelines of the make-up work policy contained herein. If the student does not make-up all work by the designated time frame, then a grade of Zero will be entered by the teacher and the final grade will be calculated. NOTE: the "I" will calculate as a Zero on the report card until the "I" is replaced with a grade. At that time an adjusted GPA will be calculated for the student.

Make-Up Work

K- 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">*Allowed for all absences, excused or unexcused*Student has <u>1 day to</u> make up the work for each day absent, not including the day of return, unless the principal approves an extension due to unusual circumstances. Previously assigned work is due on the day the student returns to school.*All work, regardless of the number of days absent, must be made up on or before grades are due in the final quarter of the school year. *Students whose work is turned in after the end of the grading period for quarters one through three, will receive an “I” or incomplete. If the work is turned in on-time, the student will receive the grade for the work*Incomplete grades become “F” or “0” if not replaced with the grade for the makeup work that was turned in on time* Students will take announced tests on their first day of return to school. Student will be allowed 2-days to prepare for tests assigned during the absence
K -5 Provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">*Teacher will inform student/parent of work to be made up as specifically as plans will allow, but is not expected to develop special assignments*Graded at full credit

VISITORS TO CAMPUS

All parents, volunteers and visitors **MUST** report to the office with their photo ID as soon as they enter the building. All parents and visitors must be checked in through our Raptor System and receive a **Visitor Pass**. Unauthorized persons will not be permitted to enter the halls or any classroom without a **Visitor’s Pass**. Parents are not permitted to go to the child’s classroom or wait outside of the classroom unless previous arrangements have been made as indicated in the Classroom Teachers Association Contract. Children not enrolled at Morningside Elementary School may NOT attend in-school events during the school day. This would include field day, fun runs, fundraisers, bounce house events, etc.

WITHDRAWAL

Parents should complete withdrawal forms at the office before transferring a student. This helps expedite the transfer of a child’s records.

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION (BUSINESS PARTNERS)

Morningside enjoys a strong base of partnerships with numerous members of our business community. Our business partners provide services or materials that help to augment the success of our educational program. Because of our excellent work with and within the community, we have been designated as a Five Star School. Should you have a business, or be a member of a business, that would like to invest in the future of our nation, America’s youth, please contact our Assistant Principal or Principal for further information.

SAFETY PATROL

Morningside selects fifth grade students as Safety Patrol members to help students and parents. Patrol members help by aiding visitors and reminding students about the school rules and safety procedures. Students not obeying school rules will be reported to an adult supervisor or administrator for disciplinary action, which can include removal from the safety patrol team. Safety Patrol members are expected to follow the SOAR Expectations every day. Any Safety Patrol member receiving an Office Disciplinary Referral will be removed from Safety Patrol.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The School Advisory Council is a committee that guides and oversees the implementation of a system of school improvement and accountability, which results in educational excellence and the highest level of student learning. The primary focus of the School Advisory Council is to develop the School Improvement Plan and to prepare our children for future success. The council consists of parents, faculty and staff, community members, and business partners. Anyone interested in serving on the School Advisory Council should contact the school office.

VOLUNTEERS

Morningside Elementary has been awarded the Golden School Award for volunteer hours earned in past years. Parent and community involvement help to ensure the success of our students. Volunteers must fill out an application online

yearly and be approved by the St. Lucie County School Board. All parents accompanying their child on a field trip, must have an approved volunteer application on file. Volunteer applications take at least 2 weeks to process.

School Volunteer Program: Volunteers are an essential part of the MSE school program. Volunteers provide a variety of services such as chaperoning field trips, assisting in office, preparing/supervising events (Color Run/Field Day), and much, much more! We value our parents and consider them a true partner at Morningside!

To further enhance student safety, **all school volunteers will now be required to complete a Level 2 background screening, which includes fingerprinting.**

Key Updates:

- **Fingerprinting Requirement (Valid for 5 Years):**
 - All volunteers must complete a Level 2 background screening every five years. The cost is **\$75**, and fingerprinting can be completed at the District Office during onboarding hours (8:00 AM–2:00 PM, no appointment necessary).
 - Volunteers who continue beyond five years will be required to **renew their fingerprinting and pay the associated fee** at that time.
- **Annual Volunteer Application:**
 - Volunteers must continue to submit a new application each school year to remain eligible.
- **Volunteer Badge Fee:**
 - A **\$6 annual fee** will be required for the issuance of a volunteer badge, which is mandatory for campus access.
 - Please note: Volunteer badges expire at the end of each school year and must be renewed annually. The renewal fee will be collected at the time of the application submission for the new school year.

Compliance Reminders:

- **No Badge, No Volunteering:**
 - Volunteers must have a current badge to be permitted on campus. No exceptions will be made.
- **Plan Ahead:**
 - Volunteers are encouraged to complete their application and fingerprinting well in advance of their intended start date to allow time for processing and clearance.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

Each month Morningside honors students selected as Citizen of the Month. This program helps to build our students' self-esteem and respect for others. Most Citizen of the Month assemblies are held on the last Thursday of the month. Fliers will go home prior to the assembly informing parents of the exact date and time.

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION

Our Student Support Specialist works with the regular education teachers to integrate exceptional students into the total school community. Our educational environment provides exceptional students an opportunity to reach their potential in the least restrictive environment. The consultant provides special services to the regular classroom teacher, which might include specialized materials, course modifications, instructional and behavioral accommodations, and assistive devices.

PBIS/ S.O.A.R

The Positive Behavior Support incentive program is designed to help students follow school wide expectations. Students and classes are recognized with Blue/Green/White Bucks. In addition to the classroom and resource teachers, bus drivers are also encouraged to select students to reward for excellent bus behavior.

The expectations are:

Safety first

Organized and ready to learn

Act responsibly

Respect others

GIFTED

Morningside houses an exceptionally strong full-time Gifted Program. Students enrolled in the Gifted Program take part in specific enrichment activities that address a broad range of topics of interest to students. The program is designed to stress higher level thinking skills, increase independent research skills, and encourage creative ideas, solutions, and products.

GUIDANCE

Students receive individual counseling as the need arises. This may be teacher, parent, or self-referred. In addition, the counselors, work with groups of students daily, and some students are seen in their classrooms for group lessons. These lessons support students in learning to cope with their problems in productive and socially positive ways.

MTSS- Multi-Tiered System of Support is a process that provides intervention and educational support to all students at increasing levels of intensity based on their individual needs. The goal is to intervene to close educational gaps so that students can be successful.

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND Odyssey of the mind is the world's largest creative problem-solving competition for children. This non-profit program begins anew each year, when five Long-Term problems are received by schools which have registered with the International Creative Competitions, Inc. office. Odyssey fosters creative thinking and problem-solving skills among participating students from kindergarten through college. Students solve problems in a variety of areas from building mechanical devices such as spring-driven vehicles to giving their own interpretations of literary classics.

Odyssey of the Mind's mission is to foster the development of creative thinking and problem-solving skills. Emphasis is placed on teaching students that great minds do not necessarily think alike- and often march to different drummers; that there are no "right" answers; that creative solutions come from teamwork, cooperation and risk taking. The Odyssey program strives to help young people realize the importance of personal growth and life-long learning. Odyssey of the Mind contends that the quest for knowledge can and should be FUN! Students participating in Odyssey of the Mind must demonstrate SOAR Expectations every day. Any more of OOTM who receives an Office Disciplinary Referral will be dismissed from the program.

SOCIAL WORKER

The social worker helps to establish the Home-School Connection. The social worker may visit the home to check on attendance, obtain health and family history information, and to conference with the parent regarding school concerns.

SPEECH PATHOLOGIST

Qualifying students receive speech and/or language assistance through a resource program with a specially trained speech pathologist.

TECHNOLOGY/CELL PHONES

House Bill 1105: Elementary students may NOT use any personal communication devices during any period of the school day. This includes but is not limited to; cell phones, smart watches, tablets, etc.

Morningside is committed to providing our students with the skills and tools necessary to participate in a diverse and evolving world of technology. We envision a use of technology that will result in greater student achievement, staff development, and parental involvement. All students are assigned a laptop. Laptops are for school appropriate use only.

LATOP/COMPUTER USAGE

All students are assigned laptops for individual use. Laptops are used to enrich and enhance academic success and prepare 21st Century learners. Students are expected to follow the S.O.A.R. Expectations when using laptops. Students are responsible for any damage to assigned devices.

Replacement of Charger: \$35

Replacement of Damaged Screens: \$60

Replacement of Damaged Keyboard: \$100

Placement of Lost or Damaged Laptop: \$400

PARENT RESPONSE/HEALTH SCREENINGS

In accordance with Florida Statute 381.0056, the St. Lucie County School District in cooperation with the St. Lucie County Health Department will conduct health screening activities for selected student groups during the school year.

The screenings will include:

- Height and Weight, which will include Body Mass Index (BMI) calculation for grades 1 and 3
- Vision and Hearing Screenings for grades K, 1, and 3

In addition to these screening activities, your child will receive first aid and care in the event he/she is injured or becomes ill while at school.

You will be informed, in writing, if your child fails to meet any of the screening standards. You are encouraged to seek further professional assistance.

Notification to School of Student Absence

Instructions: This page may be copied or used as an example of the written verification of student absence(s) that the parent is required to send to the school for every absence.

DATE: _____

My child _____ **, Date of Birth** _____ **was**
First Name Last Name

absent from school on the following date(s) _____
give month/day/ year for each day the student was absent

because _____

My child saw the doctor. ☐ **yes** ☐ **no** **If yes, please give the name of the doctor:** _____
Doctor's name

Verification of the doctor's visit is attached. ☐ **yes** ☐ **no**

Parent's Signature _____

Date signed _____

**St. Lucie County School District
Student/Parent Notification of Attendance Policies**

Florida State Statute 1003.24-*Each parent of a child within the compulsory attendance age is responsible for the child's school attendance as required by law. The absence of a student from school is prima facie evidence of a violation of this section; however, criminal prosecution under this chapter may not be brought against a parent until the provisions of s.1003.26 have been complied with.*

- Every absence will be listed as unexcused until the school receives a note within 3 days that has been signed by the parent and contains the following information: student's name, date of absences, reason for the absences, and a daytime telephone number.
- Tardies/early pickups will be excused or unexcused. Excused tardies/early pickups must meet the same criteria as an excused absence and must have a parent note.
- Once a student in grades K-12 has accumulated 3 excused tardies or absences due to leaving school early for medical/dental appointments within a semester, the parent must provide documentation from a physician that the student had a medical/dental appointment for subsequent class absences or tardies to be excused.
- A student diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and who has an appointment, partial day or full day with a health care practitioner to receive generally recognized services such as applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy will have the absence excused when the school is provided appropriate documentation (see student progression plan for further information).
- Students who have accumulated more than 10 excused or 5 unexcused absences in a semester, must have vacation travel approved by the principal in advance for the absences to be excused.
- Missing the bus is excused if the bus is more than 5 minutes early or more than 15 minutes late, as confirmed by the school.

Physician Authorization Requirement-A note from a physician containing the dates of the absences for which excuse is sought and the reason for the absence is required in the following circumstances:

- Student has accumulated a total of 10 excused or 5 unexcused absences within a semester, subsequent absences of 3 or more consecutive days may not be excused unless documentation is received demonstrating that attendance was impractical or inadvisable on account of sickness or injury, attested to by a written statement of a physician.
- Student has accumulated a total of 15 excused absences or 8 unexcused absences within the school year, subsequent absences of 2 or more consecutive days will not be excused unless: (a) the parent has on file with the school a statement from a licensed physician documenting the student's chronic medical condition and a valid release allowing the school to communicate with the physician, and/or (b) documentation is received demonstrating that attendance was impractical or inadvisable on account of sickness or injury, attested to by a written statement of a physician

Lack of attendance can result in court action-As required by law, truancy cases are filed in the Circuit Court in St. Lucie County. A Truancy Petition can be filed when a student has 5 unexcused absences in a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences in a 90-calendar day period. Truancy cases are official judicial cases. Penalties include, but are not limited to: monetary fines, jail time, student being placed in a shelter, community service and loss of custody. Middle and high school truancy cases may be also referred to CINS/FINS for intervention.

You may view your child's records (including attendance) online through Skyward Family Access, which may be activated at your child's school.

Please read the District Student Progression Plan for more information regarding the Attendance Policies in the Saint Lucie County School District at www.stlucie.k12.fl.us

Student/Parent Copy

St. Lucie Public Schools Notice Of Non-Discrimination, Title IX, and Section 504



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA, does not discriminate in employment, treatment, in admission or access to its programs and activities on the basis of age, ancestry, citizenship status, color, disability, ethnicity, genetic information, gender, gender expression, gender identity, marital status, medical condition, national origin, political beliefs, pregnancy, race, religion, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation or veteran status. No person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity or any employment conditions or practices conducted by this School District, except as provided by law. The School Board provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups¹. This holds true for all students who are interested in participating in educational programs and/or extracurricular school activities. (SLPS SB Policy 2.7)

ADULTS (2.70) EQUITY POLICY: PROHIBITING HARASSMENT

- A. Harassment concerning an individual's race, color, sex, age, religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, marital status, or disability is a form of misconduct which undermines the integrity of the employment relationship.
- B. Adverse remarks or epithets and other forms of harassment concerning an individual's race, color, sex, age, relation, national or ethnic background or disability are strictly prohibited. A disability exists when an individual has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of the individual's major life activities.

STUDENTS (2.70) EQUITY POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the SLPS School Board to offer students the opportunity to participate in appropriate programs, services and activities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, parenthood, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, or social and family background.
- B. Students, while they are in school or participating in school-related activities, are entitled to an

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment or discrimination, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated.

Adult COMPLAINT PROCEDURES:

If an **adult** needs to report an alleged violation of these policies, an informal equity complaint should be made to a principal or department designee. If the situation cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint should be directed to the Superintendent's designee listed below.

Dr. Rafael Sanchez, Jr.
Executive Director of Human Resources
Office: (772) 429-7508
e-mail: EMP-GRV@stlucieschools.org

Student COMPLAINT PROCEDURES:

If a **student** needs to report an alleged violation of these policies, an informal equity complaint should be made to the Principal or principal designee. If the situation cannot be resolved informally, a formal complaint should be directed to the Superintendent's designee listed below.

Heather Roland
Executive Director of Student Services
Office: (772) 429-4577
e-mail: SS-GRV@stlucieschools.org

TITLE IX POLICY (2.71): PROHIBITING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is prohibited in the District, on all District property, and all District sponsored activities or events. Students and employees who feel that they have been subject to sexual harassment are encouraged to file a complaint in accordance with the procedure outlined in the Title IX Policy (2.71). Employees who become aware of sexual harassment must report to the appropriate personnel so the District can conduct a thorough investigation. Sexual harassment by an employee or student to another individual (student or adult) is strictly prohibited by School Board Policies 2.70, 2.701, and 3.43. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Title IX Complaint Procedures: Any person may report sexual harassment, whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment, in person, by mail, telephone, or electronic mail, using the Title IX Complaint Procedures to the following contacts:

Employee Related:

Aaron Clements
Director of Employee Relations
Phone: (772) 429-7529
e-mail: Aaron.clements@stlucieschools.org

Student Related:

Esther Rivera
Director of Student Services
Phone: (772) 429-4526
e-mail: Esther.rivera@stlucieschools.org

If, due to a disability, you need special accommodations to receive School Board information or to participate in School Board functions, call (772) 429-3600 and ask for the School Board Secretary. Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) phone (772) 429-3919.

¹For Further information on notice of non-discrimination, visit <https://ocras.ed.gov/contact-ocr> or contact the SLPS District Equity Coordinator:

Dr. Adrian Ocampo
Executive Director of Assessment & Accountability
Phone: (772) 429-5538
e-mail: Adrian.ocampo@stlucieschools.org

School or Department Designee(s)**Adult/Employee Related:****Student Related:**

**SCHOOL BOARD OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA
NOTICE OF PROTECTION OF PUPIL
RIGHTS AMENDMENT**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, affords parents certain rights for the protection of student privacy. These include the right to:

1. *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 ("ED") –

- (a) Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
- (b) Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
- (c) Sex behavior or attitudes;
- (d) Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- (e) Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- (f) Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- (g) Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents;
or
- (h) Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

2. *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –*

- (a) Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
- (b) Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination, or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or 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 examination or screening permitted or required under State law; and
- (c) Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

3. *Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use –

- (a) Protected information surveys of students;
- (b) Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and

(c) Instructional material 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.

The School Board of St. Lucie County has developed and adopted policies, 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. The School Board will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive change. The School Board 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 of the specific activity or survey. The School Board will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the Board 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 will 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 ED.
- 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, D.C. 20202-5901

SCHOOL BOARD OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA

NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g (FERPA), and corollary state law, Section 1002.22, Fla. Stat., afford parents and students who have attained 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to each student's education records. These rights are:

- (1) The right of privacy with respect to the student's education records.

Personally identifiable records or reports of a student, and any personal information contained in these reports, are confidential. The School District of St. Lucie County will not release the education records of a student without the written consent of the eligible student or the student's parents or guardian, except to the extent FERPA and state law authorizes disclosure without consent.

- (2) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 30 days of the day the District receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- (3) The right to request amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of a student's privacy rights.

Parents or eligible students may ask the School District of St. Lucie County to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of a student's privacy rights. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of a student's privacy rights.

If the District decides not to amend the records as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- (4) The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and state law authorize disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the District has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official

committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled.

(5) The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

* * *

Other disclosures without prior consent; parents' right to limit:

School administrators may disclose directory information about a student without the consent of either the student or his/her parents(s)/guardian(s) unless, within ten (10) days after enrolling or beginning school, the student or parent/guardian notifies the school in writing that any or all directory information should not be released. Directory information includes the student's name and grade level. A limited release of information is required for participation in student athletics as described on the Parent and Player Agreement, Permission, and Release form.

Military recruiters and institutions of higher education have access to the name, address, and telephone listing of each secondary school student unless, within 10 days of enrolling in or beginning school, the student or the parent notifies the school in writing that such information should not be released without the prior written consent of the parent.

* * *

The School District of St. Lucie County policy on education records of students is set forth in District Policy 5.70 Student Records and the District's Student Education Records Manual. The policy and manual are available for inspection at the District Administration Office located at 4204 Okeechobee Road, Ft. Pierce, Florida. Office hours are Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. A copy of the policy and the manual may be obtained, free of charge, upon request.

Book	St. Lucie County School Board Policy Manual
Section	Chapter 5: Students
Title	Equity Grievance Procedure for Students
Code	5.71
Status	Active

(1) Grievance. For purposes of this policy, a grievance is a complaint by a student of or applicant for admission to the public schools in St. Lucie County alleging (a) a violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of an established policy governing students individually or collectively, (b) an act of discrimination or intimidation against the student, or any other conduct or practice prohibited by Policy 2.70 Prohibiting Discrimination, or (c) any other act in violation of the student's rights, but not including complaints regarding identification, evaluation, or educational placement arising under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Complaints regarding identification, evaluation, or educational placement under Section 504 should be filed under the procedures set forth in the Section 504 Manual. For complaints of bullying and harassment, the District shall follow the procedures in Policy 3.43, Bullying and Harassment.

(2) Student Grievance Coordinator. The Superintendent shall appoint a Student Grievance Coordinator ("Coordinator") whose responsibility is to ensure that the District is in compliance with the Florida Educational Equity Act, Section 1000.05, Florida Statutes, and School Board Policy 2.70. As used in this policy, the term Coordinator shall also refer to the Coordinator's designee. The Coordinator shall be trained in the impartial investigation of complaints of all forms of discrimination prohibited by Policy 2.70, and shall not be subject to direct or indirect supervision by any school-based administrator.

(3) Procedure

- (a) Any student or applicant for admission who believes he or she has an equity grievance should first discuss the grievance with the principal of the school involved. If the grievant is not satisfied with the outcome of such discussion, or if the school principal is involved in the alleged incident, the grievant should communicate the grievance and the specific relief requested in writing to the Coordinator within sixty (60) calendar days of the alleged incident.
- (b) The Coordinator, after receiving the grievance shall notify the school principal of the filing of the grievance within fifteen (15) working days of the filing of the complaint.
- (c) If the Coordinator determines that the grievance alleges a potential violation, that there is probable cause that such a violation has occurred, and that the School Board is able to provide the specific relief requested, the Coordinator shall set a date for an informal hearing and include any essential personnel germane to the case. If the Coordinator determines that the grievance is insufficient, that there is no probable cause to proceed, or that the School Board is not able to provide the specific relief requested the Coordinator shall so notify the grievant in writing. A determination of insufficiency, of no probable cause, or of unavailable relief shall be subject to appeal as provided in subsections (3)(g) and (h) of this policy.
- (d) If an informal hearing is set, the Coordinator shall encourage the grievant to discuss the matter informally with the person against whom the grievance has been lodged. Upon request, the Coordinator shall accompany the grievant in an attempt to conciliate the matter. If conciliation is not effected, the hearing shall proceed.
- (e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, the grievant shall not be required to confront the person against whom the grievance has been lodged, particularly in instances in which the grievant has alleged acts or practices of discrimination, including but not limited to harassment, retaliation, or coercion. At the informal hearing, both the grievant and the person against whom the grievance has been lodged shall be afforded an opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence in support or defense of the grievance.
- (f) If an informal hearing is held, the Coordinator shall render a recommendation in writing to the grievant and the person against whom the grievance has been lodged within ten (10) working days of such hearing. The principal of the involved school shall be responsible for taking any action required to implement the Coordinator's recommendations.
- (g) Either the grievant or the person against whom the grievance has been lodged may appeal the recommendation of the Coordinator to the Superintendent with ten (10) working days of receiving notice of such recommendation. Any appeal to, and the decision rendered by, the Superintendent shall be in writing. The decision of the Superintendent shall be rendered within ten (10) working days of the filing of an appeal from the Coordinator recommendation.

(h) The decision of the Superintendent may be appealed to the School Board within ten (10) working days of the appealing party receiving notice of such decision. Any appeal to, the School Board shall be in writing and shall appear on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled public meeting that will be held not less than seven (7) working days after receipt of the appeal. The School Board shall render a written decision on the appeal within ten (10) working days of the meeting. All affected parties will be notified and provided with a copy of the decision of the School Board. The decision of the School Board shall be administratively final.

(i) If a violation is determined to have occurred, the District shall take appropriate steps to prevent the recurrence of any discrimination and to correct the discriminatory effects on the grievant and others. Based upon the circumstances, such steps may include, but are not limited to:

1. Imposing consequences, including referral for discipline when appropriate, upon the person against whom the grievance was lodged,
2. Undertaking such remedial measures as appropriate in the circumstances to address and resolve the grievance and to protect the grievant and witnesses for the grievant from retaliation or future discrimination,
3. Undertaking referrals for counseling, when appropriate, of the grievant and the person against whom the grievance was lodged, and
4. Re-emphasizing instruction of students and training of employees on identifying, preventing, and responding to acts of discrimination.

(j) All proceedings and records of proceedings related to a grievance filed by a student of, or applicant for admission to, the public schools in St. Lucie County shall be confidential as provided in Section 1002.22, Florida Statutes, and other applicable law.

(4) Information in Student Handbooks. All student handbooks for District schools shall incorporate the text of the Board's policy of non-discrimination and educational equity as set forth in Policy 2.70, and this policy establishing an equity grievance procedure for students.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 1001.41, 1001.42, F. S.
LAWS IMPLEMENTED: 1000.05, F.S.

History:

Adopted: 03/30/2004

Revision Date(s): 10/28/2008, 06/08/2010, 09/13/2011

Formerly: 5.65

St. Lucie Public Schools

Title IX Formal Complaint

My name is _____ and I am a student/employee at _____.

School Name

_____ sexually harassed me on or about _____ at

Name

Date/Time

_____.

Location

Please explain the incident below:

I am requesting that _____ investigate these allegations.

Title IX Coordinator's Name

Name: _____

Signature: _____