


Student Handbook

2024-2025



Rivers Edge Elementary

The School with a  of Gold

William Bickley – Principal

Cassandra Fess – Assistant Principal

This Student-Parent Handbook has been prepared to provide essential information, as well as Rivers Edge and district requirements, to the students and parents that attend Rivers Edge Elementary School.

Dear Rivers Edge Elementary Families,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! On behalf of our entire staff, I'm excited to embark on this new academic journey with you and your children. We are committed to working together to ensure that every student reaches their full potential.

We understand that success in school requires support from both home and school, and a strong partnership between us is crucial. We share the responsibility for your child's success and will strive to fulfill our part diligently. In return, we ask for your support in guiding your child's education by ensuring they:

- Attend school every day and arrive on time; students are marked tardy after 8:45 AM.
- Stay at school for the entire day (from 8:45 AM to 3:15 PM).
- Complete all homework assignments.
- Read daily to foster a love for reading and improve literacy skills.
- Share their school experiences with you to keep you informed about their school life.
- Communicate if they need additional support in any subject.
- Adhere to the dress code for the 2024-2025 school year.

At Rivers Edge Elementary, we aim to provide engaging and meaningful work each day. For the 2024-2025 academic year, we have introduced a 30-minute learning block during the first period to address individual learning needs. This time is dedicated to targeted skill development based on needs assessments and ongoing progress monitoring. Additionally, our teachers will continue to offer small group instruction and adapt their teaching strategies to meet diverse needs. These practices are designed to enhance teaching effectiveness and boost student achievement.

This handbook will help you understand our school and district policies and procedures for the coming year. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call us at 772-785-5600. Thank you for trusting us with your child's education. We look forward to a year of growth and success and appreciate your continued support in making this the best year of learning yet!

Sincerely,

William Bickley
Principal

Rivers Edge Elementary

5600 NE St. James Drive
Port St. Lucie, FL 34983
772-785-5600

School Motto: "The School with a Heart of Gold"
School Emblem: Gold Heart

School Mascot: River Otter
School Colors: Blue and Green

Rivers Edge School Song

We're the school down by the river,
 None other can compare
 We've 'gators, birds & otters
 And pine trees everywhere.
 Our hearts of gold shine brightly
 For all the world to see.
 They symbolize Success for All.
 It's Rivers Edge for me!
 (Tune: Yellow Rose of Texas)

Mission Statement

At Rivers Edge Elementary, all students will be provided challenging, engaging, and satisfying work. All students' individual differences and abilities will be nurtured in a safe and caring environment, ensuring their success each and every day.

Vision

Through the caring, cooperative efforts of parents, staff and community, all students at Rivers Edge Elementary will be academically and socially successful. They will be challenged, engaged, and satisfied with the learning opportunities provided to them.

General Information

- Official School Hours
 - Regular School Day: 8:45 am to 3:15 pm
 - Early Dismissal Days: 8:45 am to 1:15 pm
 - Telephone Hours: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm
- All parents, volunteers, and visitors must report to the office as soon as they arrive on our campus. Please bring a valid driver's license to receive your visitor pass.
- Important Telephone Numbers
 - Office: 785-5600
 - Fax: 785-5625
 - Clinic: 785-5610
 - Cafeteria: 785-5613
 - Guidance:
 - 772-785-5627..... Angelica Gutierrez
 - 772-785-5626..... Claudia Jackson
 - E.S.E. Dept.: 785-5618..... Jennifer Moler
- Transportation: 204-7433
- If parents must call or send messages to students, calls must be made before 1:00 p.m. to ensure delivery.

St. Lucie Public Schools 2024-2025 School Year Calendar

July, 2024							0
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
28	29	30	31				

August, 2024							15
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
				1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

September, 2024							20
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30						

July 4: Holiday for All - 4th of July
 July 22: 11-Month Employees' First Day

Aug. 5 - 9: Teacher Pre-Planning Days (5)
 Aug. 12: Students' First Day

Sept. 2: Holiday for All - Labor Day
 Sept. 18: Early Release Day - FC Choice

January, 2025							19
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
			1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
26	27	28	29	30	31		

Jan 2 : 12-month employees work
 Jan 3: Teacher Workday
 Jan. 6: Students Return
 Jan. 20: Holiday for All - MLK Day

February, 2025							18
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
						1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28		

Feb. 5: Early Release Day - PL
 Feb. 17: Holiday - Presidents' Day
 (12-month employees work Feb.17)
 Feb. 26: 1/2 Teacher PL & 1/2 Recordkeeping

March, 2025							15
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
						1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30	31						

March 14 Early Release Day-FC Choice
 March 14: End of 3rd 9 weeks (47 Days)
 March 17 - 21: Holiday - Spring Break
 (12-month employees work March 17 -21)
 March 24: Teacher Workday

April, 2025							21
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30				

April 18: Holiday for All - Spring Holiday
 April 23: Early Release Day - FC Choice

May, 2025							21
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
				1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

May 26: Holiday for All - Memorial Day
 May 30: Early Release Day - Record Keeping

June, 2025							1
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
29	30						

June 2: Early Release Day - Record Keeping
 June 2: End of 4th 9 weeks (48 Days)
 June 2: Last Day for Students
 June 3: Teacher Workday/Last Day for Teachers
 June 16: Last Day for 11-month employees
 June 19: Holiday for All - Juneteenth

Quarter 1: August 12 - October 11 (43 Days)
 Quarter 2: October 15 - December 20 (42 Days)
Semester 1: 85 Days
 Quarter 3: January 6 - March 14 (47 Days)
 Quarter 4: March 25 - June 2 (48 Days)
Semester 2: 95 Days
Teacher Workday Designation:
 Pre-Planning Days: 8/5 - 8/9 (5 days)
 Teacher Workdays: 10/14, 1/3, 3/24 and 6/3 (4 days)
 Teacher PL Day: 11/5, 1 day
 Teacher 1/2 PL & 1/2 Recordkeeping, 2/26 1 day

Teacher Early Release Day Designation:
 Recordkeeping: 8/28, 5/30, and 6/2
 Professional Learning: 2/5
 Faculty Council (FC) Choice: 9/18, 12/20, 3/14 and 4/23
Summer School Dates:
 TBD: Summer School Teacher PL
 TBD: First day of Summer School for students
 TBD: Last day of Summer School for students
 July 4, 2024 will be a student/teacher holiday
 June 19th, 2025 will be a student/teacher holiday

Approved September 12, 2023

Arrival/Dismissal

Students may be dropped off from **8:15 to 8:40am**. Small group, intensive reading begins at 8:45 each school day. Please make sure you are not late, so that your student does not miss this vital opportunity for reading instruction. Students must be picked up at 3:15 pm on regular days and at 1:15 pm on early dismissal days. **The school does not provide supervision before 8:15 am or after school – this includes suspension from the bus.**

To provide a safe environment for your child, the following will be strictly enforced:

- During the first week, teachers will record the manner in which students arrive and depart from school (St. Lucie County school bus, car rider, bike rider or walker.) **The school office and teacher must receive written instructions in order to dismiss students in any other manner. If written notification is not provided, students will be sent home in their usual manner.**
- Students who are transported to school by parents must be dropped off and picked up in the drop-off zone. To facilitate a safe and smooth traffic pattern, parents are asked to observe all traffic signs and follow the instructions of staff members on duty. **Students are not to be dropped off or picked up in other areas of the campus. Cell phone use in the parent-pickup line is prohibited.**

Early Pick Up of Students

- Parents will follow standard procedures for early pick up. Parents for early pick up must bring ID to the door of the front office. Be prepared to show the ID to the camera upon request prior to gaining entry.
- If you need to take your child from school before his/her dismissal time, it is necessary to report to the office and sign the child out of school. Office personnel will call the child to the office to be dismissed. No student will be released from the classroom unless notified by the office. Please schedule doctor and dentist appointments outside of regular school hours. **Children will not be released from class after 2:45 p.m. without administrative approval.**
- Students will be released only to those persons designated by the parent with their names recorded in writing and on file in the office to safeguard your child. **NO PHONE ALTERATION OF NAMES IS PERMISSIBLE.**
- Parents who are on school grounds to pick up their children at dismissal time must wait in the designated pick-up area. **For safety and supervision of all students, parents are NOT permitted to wait in hallways or go to their child's classroom to pick up their child.**
- Students in grades K – 5 picked up from school before the end of the day will be marked as tardy. The tardy will either be excused or unexcused. The tardy will be excused if the parent provides written documentation that the need to leave school early was for the same reasons that an absence from school would be excused. The parent's notation in the school's early pick-up log may suffice as meeting the requirement to provide written documentation if the notation is sufficient. **Every 5th unexcused tardy for students in grades K - 5 will convert to an unexcused absence and can be used to meet the criteria to file a truancy petition in circuit court.**
- For all students in grades K -12, once the student has accumulated 3 excused tardies or absences due to leaving school early for medical/dental reasons 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. The school principal or designee can approve an early pick-up or release beyond these limits after taking into consideration the reason as well as the student's attendance history, both daily and by period, and the number of early releases.
- Rivers Edge students may not attend other students' assemblies during the school day.

Attendance

School attendance is a prerequisite for student achievement. Official attendance will be taken at the beginning of each school day. Students are expected to attend school daily and to be on time. Poor attendance or persistent tardiness will show itself in poor school progress and will be dealt with as stated in county and school policy and state law. A staff member and a social worker are assigned to phone and/or to make home visits to check on absences and report to the administration.

If your child is going to be absent from school, please call the school office between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. and advise school personnel of the reason for the absence.

Parent/Guardian Responsibility

Each parent and guardian of a child within compulsory attendance age is responsible for the child's attendance as required by law. The only conditions under which the parent or guardian is not responsible are:

- The student missed school with the permission of the principal.
- The student cannot attend due to the financial inability of the parent to provide necessary clothes for the child and this inability is reported in writing to the Department of Student Services or as soon as the inability is determined.

Not reporting the financial inability to the Department of Student Services does enable the school district to pursue all interventions, including filing a truancy petition in the Circuit Court. The inability to provide clothes must be substantiated by the Department of Student Services.

- The student does not attend due to sickness, injury, or other insurmountable conditions, which makes attendance inadvisable, and the student is not eligible for Homebound/Hospitalized services.

Excused Absences -Absences are excused when an appropriate *explanation* is provided by the parent within 3 days of the student's return or by the parent's physician, when the physician authorization threshold has been reached. The written explanation must include the dates of the absences which are sought to be excused and the reason for the absence. An absence note may be e-mailed to the Data Specialist: Elizabeth.Franklin@stlucieschools.org.

- Illness of the student
- Major illness in the student's immediate family
- Medical appointment of the student
- Death of family member or friend
- Required Court Appearance
- Religious holiday of the student or student's family's faith
- Subpoena or forced absence by any law enforcement agency to fulfill civic duties; a copy of the subpoena or court summons is required
- Major disaster that justifies the absence that has been approved by the principal
- Head lice: maximum of 2 days per incident and a maximum of 2 incidents per semester
- Missing the school bus if the bus is more than 5 minutes early or more than 15 minutes late or is not able to make the route
- Other planned absences approved in advance by the principal
- Vacation travel or family outing/activity where the student has accumulated fewer than 10 excused or 5 unexcused absences. The principal can excuse vacation travel that exceeds the threshold after considering the student's attendance history, academic performance, mastery of the curriculum, and reason for the travel.

Absences for this reason cannot exceed 5-days annually and must be approved by the Principal in

advance. Schools have the authority to withdraw students whose absences for this reason exceed this provision using withdrawal for non- attendance procedures described herein.

- Physician Referral for Hospital/Homebound Services absences should be excused from the date the physician's referral for Hospital/Homebound is received. Should the student not be found eligible for Hospital/Homebound services, absences occurring after the determination will be excused or unexcused based on the above policies.
- A student of an active duty military member may be excused from absences related to deployment activities as approved by the Principal.

Unexcused Absences – Unexcused absences are all failures to attend school other than those specifically excused by the principal or designees. (F.S. 1003.26)

- Truancy
- Vacation travel where the student has accumulated more than 10 excused or 5 unexcused absences within a semester and the travel has not been approved in advance by the principal. Absences for this reason cannot exceed 5-days annually and cannot be excused without advance written approval of the principal. Schools have the authority to withdraw students whose absences for this reason exceed this provision using withdrawal for non-attendance procedures described herein.
- "Take Your Son or Daughter to Work Day"
- Failure to provide an explanation of the absence to the school within 3 days of the student's return to school. Student Services staff can, after investigation, advise the school to excuse absence documentation received after the expiration of the 3-day period. Physician explanations received after the 3- day period will also authorize the school to excuse the absence(s).
- Immunization non-compliance
- Non-Attendance due to head lice that exceeds two days per incident and/or exceeds 2-days per semester; students who return to school with lice or nits and who are sent home the same day or who remain in the office /clinic will not be counted as in-attendance and will have the absence unexcused.
- Out of school suspensions

Project ROCK

Students suspended out-of-school who attend Project ROCK can be coded as R (Project ROCK) for the dates that the school confirms that the student attended the program. A day of attendance at Project Rock will not count as out-of-school suspension.

Tardy

A student is considered tardy if they are absent at the time attendance is taken provided the student is in attendance before the close of the day. Tardies will either be excused or unexcused. Acceptable documentation to excuse a tardy is the same as those under the Early Pick-Up Policy and for excused absences. Once the student has accumulated 3 excused tardies or absences due to leaving school early for medical/dental reasons 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.

Schools have the authority to develop a school-specific tardy response system, as approved by an administrative body comprised of representatives from varying district departments.

Students who arrive at school after 8:45 a.m. must report to the office **with their parent** for a tardy pass.

Book Bag Safety

Book bags should be an appropriate size (not carry-on luggage). Rolling book bags are only permitted as long as safety guidelines are followed to ensure other children are not injured due to inappropriate use. Guidelines from transportation must also be followed regarding the size appropriate to be stored under the seat. **It is important that you check your child's book bag daily. It should contain only those items necessary for learning (pencil, paper, school supplies, agendas, etc.)** All toys, spinners, electronics, trading cards of any sort, and other items deemed inappropriate or dangerous, such as laser penlights, will be confiscated and only returned to the parent. Students should not bring purses to school.

Behavior Expectations

Rivers Edge Elementary school is a positive behavior and intervention support (PBIS) school. The purpose of PBIS is to decrease inappropriate behaviors and increase appropriate behaviors, which will enhance a safe and orderly learning environment. Appropriate behaviors will be used as models and positively reinforced.

School-Wide Expectations

- Be Responsible
- Be Respectful
- Be a Role Model

Classroom Expectations

- Follow adult directions
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Come to class with required materials
- Be in dress code
- Signal to speak according to CHAMPS expectations

Cafeteria Expectations

- Enter in single, straight, silent line
- Voice level 2 once seated and remain seated, faced forward
- Eat only your food and place all uneaten, opened food in trash
- Follow dress code
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself

Hallway Expectations – Rivers Edge Walk

- Follow directions and yield for adults
- Be in dress code
- REE Walk – Keeping 2 tiles apart and 1 tile away from the wall
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
 - Voice level 0

Playground Expectations

- Use playground equipment properly
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Use only teacher-approved equipment
- Stay in assigned area; come when called

Bullying/Harassment

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA, DOES NOT TOLERATE ACTS OF BULLYING OR HARASSMENT, INCLUDING BULLYING OR HARASSMENT BASED ON DISABILITY.

BULLYING means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees.

HARASSMENT means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, written or oral statement, or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

- (i) Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to person or property,
- (ii) Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits,
or
- (iii) Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

A single act may constitute prohibited harassment if sufficiently severe.

PROHIBITED CONDUCT INCLUDES acts of bullying or harassment based on protected characteristics such as sex, religion, race/ethnicity, or disability. You can visit <http://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/policies/bullying> for additional information and resources.

Bullying Policy

Bullying Policy 3.43- <https://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/pdf/bullying-harassment-343.pdf>

Bullying Complaint Forms

English- <http://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/pdf/forms/STS0114A.pdf>

Spanish- <http://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/pdf/forms/STS0114B.pdf>

Creole- <http://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/pdf/forms/STS0114C.pdf>

Cafeteria

Breakfast and lunch will be offered at school. Students are prohibited from sharing food or utensils.

If your child brings a packed lunch, **DO NOT send carbonated beverages, candy, or gum. REMINDER: Gum is not permitted in school.** Also, please no red or purple juice as it leaves permanent stains on our carpets and floors if spilled.

All St. Lucie Public School students will receive **meals at no cost for breakfast** for the 2024-2025 school year. Meals will be served according to USDA guidelines so that both students and staff remain safe. Specific meal service procedures are located on our district website at www.stlucieschools.org under the parent/student tab.

- Breakfast PreK-12: \$0.00
- Full Paid Lunch PreK-5: \$2.25
- Reduced Paid Lunch PreK-12: \$0.40
- Adult Breakfast – \$3
- Adult Lunch – \$4

Celebrations

Cakes, cookies, cupcakes and other treats of this nature will only be allowed during a child's designated lunch time; however, they must be brought in to school before 8:45am to give teachers time to evaluate for allergy concerns. All items must be **STORE BOUGHT and PRE-PACKAGED**. Any items brought in for sharing that do not meet the required guidelines will not be delivered to the child's class. Thank you for contributing to the safety and nutritional health of our children. Party invitations are not permitted to be distributed at school.

Clinic (Illness and/or Accidents)

Children who become ill during the day will be sent to the health aide in the clinic for attention, rest, or to be sent home. The Clinic will follow policies in accordance SLPS Health Manual. <https://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/departments/student-services/health-services/#healthmanual>

Accidents

If a child is injured, first aid is administered promptly. The child will be cared for in the clinic, and an attempt will be made to contact the parent by phone if the injury is of a serious nature. An Accident Report is completed following any injury requiring first aid. **It is CRITICAL for you to provide the school with phone numbers where you can be reached, including at least TWO alternate emergency phone numbers in case the child must be transported by ambulance to the hospital.**

Medications

Administration of Prescribed Medication

1. For each prescribed medication, the student's parent/guardian shall provide a completed Physician's Authorization Form (STS0011). This form is to be filled out by the doctor and signed by both the doctor and the parent/guardian.
2. A parental signature on a Medicine Form requesting and authorizing school personnel, without liability, to administer the medication in accordance with the prescription and the Physician's Authorization Form. The medicine must be in the current prescription bottle, with the pharmacy label.
The label is to include a) student's name b) name and dose of medicine c) direction for use d) name of physician e) name and address of pharmacy f) date of prescription.
3. Medication will not be dispensed from an outdated (expired) bottle.
4. No medication will be sent home with a child. A parent/guardian must pick up the remaining medicine.

Administration of Non-Prescription Medication

1. Students may not bring non-prescription medicine to school, **including cough drops.**
2. Should it be necessary for your child to have non-prescription medication at school the parent/guardian shall provide a Physicians Authorization Form (SST0011). This form must be filled out by the doctor and signed by both the doctor and the parent/guardian.
3. The parent shall bring the medicine, in the original container, to the health aide to keep in the clinic.
4. The medicine will be administered as authorized by the doctor.
5. Non-prescription medication will not be dispensed unless the Physicians Authorization Form is filled out by the doctor and signed by both the doctor and the parent/guardian.
6. Medication will not be dispensed from an outdated (expired) bottle.
7. No medication will be sent home with a child. A parent/guardian must pick up the remaining medicine.

Please note: All medications are to be kept in the health clinic. This includes prescription and non-prescription medications.

Conferences and School Visitations

The communication between home and school is a key factor in monitoring a child's progress. Open communication between parents and teachers helps students achieve greater academic success. Conferences with teachers and other school personnel are encouraged and can be made by calling the school (785-5600) or by sending a note to the teacher.

Parent conferences can be conducted virtually. We strongly encourage visits by appointment only. **According to School Board policy, teachers must be allowed 24-hour notice.**

Dress Code



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

We appreciate you supporting our mandatory uniform dress code. Rivers Edge Elementary uniform dress code policy reflects pride and unity and demonstrates school is a place to study and learn. The proven benefits of a uniform 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 climate will enable each student to experience personal success and develop into lifelong learners.

The following is the uniform dress code for the 2024-2025 school year.
If it is not listed below, then it is NOT acceptable to wear to school.

Masks	Optional--disposable or cloth. May NOT have words/phrases or skull/violent designs; No gaiters, bandanas, or vents/ valves permitted.
Shirts	Short or long-sleeved, collared polo or button-down shirts in any color (solid, striped or plaid). Logos not larger than 1" (size of quarter). Shirts must be tucked in at all time while on campus.
Shorts, Pants, Capris, Skirts, & Skorts	Traditional style uniform shorts, pants, capris, skirts, & skorts in solid navy blue, black, or khaki. No cargo shorts or cargo pants. Shorts can NOT be shorter than fingertip length. All bottoms (pants, shorts, skorts) should be worn at the waist.
Jeans	Traditional solid blue or black jean pants, without rips or holes. No distressed denim or embellishment (patches, sequins, glitter, etc.) Jean shorts/ skirts/ skorts are NOT permitted.
Jumpers (Girls), Polo Dresses	Any solid color. Must be knee length. NOT shorter than fingertip length. Uniform style jumpers & polo style dresses only.
Sweatshirts, Cardigans, Sweaters	Any solid, stripe, or plaid. Logos not larger than 1" (size of quarter). Hoods cannot be worn in the classroom. All sweatshirts and sweaters must have a uniform appropriate shirt worn underneath with collar showing.
Shoes	Enclosed athletic (sneakers) and no-heeled, enclosed dress shoes. No boots of any style, flip flops, sandals, or Crocs/clog-style shoes.
Leggings, socks, tights	If leggings are worn, they must be worn under school approved clothing. Socks SHOULD be worn for health reasons.
Belts	Optional; If worn, solid leather or cloth colored belt is acceptable in school colors, black or brown.
Ties	Solid white, navy blue, light blue or hunter green.
Grooming	Natural colored hair; Small head bands, bows and clips in any color; Small jewelry (earrings and necklaces); due to possible health issues cologne, perfumes and strong smelling soaps are not allowed.
PE Items & Spirit Shirts	Any clothing sold through PTO/PE/School is permissible to wear on any day.

The uniform dress code will be strictly enforced. We do expect parents to monitor at home before the child leaves for school. Please contact Rivers Edge Elementary if you have any further questions at 772.785.5600. Students will be given 10 days from the first day of school to comply with the Rivers Edge uniform policy. New students to Rivers Edge will be given 10 days from date of entry to comply with the Rivers Edge uniform policy. After the 10-day grace period, parents will be contacted and requested to bring in appropriate clothing for the student. Uniforms have been donated to the school for families needing assistance to comply with this requirement. Contact the guidance counselor for assistance.

It is strongly encouraged that every student keep a change of uniform in their backpack. If the event that a student uniform becomes soiled (bathroom accidents, lunchroom spilled, recess, etc), the parent/guardian will be called to bring a change of clothes. Extra clothes are not available through the school

Non-compliance of uniform dress code policy:

1st time	• Verbal warning
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2nd time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note goes home from classroom, to be returned to the teacher • a phone call home if not returned signed the next day
3rd time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note goes home from office, to be returned to administration • a phone call home if not returned signed the next day
4th time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student is sent to office and phone call home for appropriate attire to be brought to school and student will lose the next Uniform Optional Day

Common Dress Code Violations (Not permitted)

- Cargo bottoms are not permitted.
- Jean shorts and colored/distressed jeans are not permitted. Bottoms must be navy blue or khaki, or long blue denim jeans.
- Overalls are not permitted.
- Patterned/Design shirts are not permitted.

Ecological Preserve Safety Practices

An integral part of the Rivers Edge Elementary learning environment is the use of the Rivers Edge ecological preserve that surrounds the school. When on trails, near wetlands, or around aquatic areas, students are always closely supervised. Teachers taking students into our “living laboratory” are always in radio contact with the main office, school administration, and the health aide. If your child has any health conditions that would prevent him/her from participating in these activities, it is the parent’s responsibility to notify the teacher and health aide.

Grading

Every effort is made to provide parents with the information they need to fulfill their responsibility. Report cards are sent home every nine weeks. **In addition to progress monitoring through Skyward, parents may request printed bi-weekly progress reports.** Parents will be notified in writing or by documented phone calls during a grading period when it is apparent that the student may fail or is doing unsatisfactory work in any course or grade assignments.

Kindergarten through grade 2 will report skills on an individual basis. Grades 3 – 5 use A, B, C, D and F grades.

Make-Up Work (K- 12)

- Allowed for all absences, excused or unexcused.
- Students have 1 day to 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 (see grade provisions for students in grades 9 -12 below).
- Incomplete grades become “F” or “O” if not replaced with the grade for the makeup work that was turned in on time.
- Students will take announced tests on the first day of return to school. Students will be allowed 2 days to prepare for tests assigned during their absence.

K-5 Provisions

- 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.

Grade 3 Promotion Considerations

Mandatory retention is necessary for third grade students who score Level I on the state ELA assessment unless they qualify for Good Cause exemption.

*For retained third grade students transferring into the District, an individual records review will be conducted if sufficient evidence exists to support an assessment for mid-year promotion.

Promotional Requirements Grades K-5

Student promotion in St. Lucie County is based upon evaluation of each student's achievement in terms of appropriate instructional goals. The determination should reflect teacher judgment based upon the following:

- successful progress in the county adopted curriculum,
- progress monitoring,
- classroom assignments,
- daily observation,
- standardized tests, and
- other objective data.

Laptops

All students are assigned laptops for individual use. Students must adhere to the SLPS internet use policy and only access approved websites.

Students are responsible for any damage to assigned devices. The fees are below:

- Replacement of Damaged Screens: \$75
- Replacement of Damaged Keyboard: \$150

School Organizations

PTO- Parent Teacher Organization- The Rivers Edge Elementary PTO is an organization of our parents, teachers, and other interested adults. It provides services to students, parents, school staff, and the community. The organization's main goal is to provide opportunities to boys and girls that will enhance their educational experiences.

The P.T.O. works cooperatively with school volunteers whose primary goal is the same. Volunteers are requested not to bring preschool age children to school while volunteering or on field trips due to liability issues.

Rivers Edge Elementary has been awarded the Golden School Award for volunteer hours in past years. Volunteers may choose to work with students, work at home on projects, do clerical/library work, or share a special interest, hobby, or talent, such as becoming a scrapbook historian for school events. Parents are urged to volunteer for a minimum of 5 hours each semester (10 hours for the year) either at school, on field trips, or at home doing related activities for the teachers, school, or P.T.O. Our parent volunteer coordinator will assist parents in any way possible to help facilitate this process. The visitor parking area is exclusively reserved for parents and guests visiting or volunteering at our school.

SAC - The School Advisory Council consists of staff, parents, and community members who meet monthly to set forth goals, objectives, and strategies to improve our school.

School Programs and Services

AMP- Advanced Math Placement

Students have the opportunity to be in accelerated coursework through Advanced Math Placement courses. Students can be entered into this placement in first through third grade based on teacher observation and mathematical academic success in grades and state assessment scores.

Students within AMP will take the following FAST Assessments:

- 3rd Grade- 3rd Grade FAST
- 4th Grade- 5th Grade FAST
- 5th Grade- 6th Grade FAST

Upon entry into Middle School, following completion of Rivers Edge's AMP program, students will continue their accelerated path gaining access to high school level Math while attending Middle School.

E.S.O.L.

A program is provided to teach English to Speakers of Other Languages. Students who need additional assistance are identified through the Home Language Survey and assessment scores. We have support staff who work with identified students.

Guidance Services

An elementary school guidance counselor is available to provide services to all students at the school. These services may include classroom, individual or small group guidance, and student support meetings. Parents or guardians will be notified prior to students participating in thematic group counseling activities such as Rainbows.

Library and Media Materials

The library program services all children and the school community under the direction of a media specialist. Children are encouraged to check out books and participate in reading incentive programs. Parents and students are responsible for and must pay for any lost books.

Exceptional Student Education

Identified students receive appropriate instruction at their level in various exceptional student education environments.

Special Recognitions

Otterly Outstanding Student of the Month/Year

Each month one student from each class is recognized for his/her special effort and behavior. A certificate and other incentives are awarded. Students will receive their recognition in class. At the end of the school year, one student from each class will be selected to represent the class as Otterly Outstanding Student of the Year.

Awards Assembly

Students earning special recognition for Perfect Attendance, Honor Roll, and Principal's Honor Roll status are recognized each quarter.

- **Honor Roll:** Students in grades 3-5 will be recognized if they attain all A's and B's on their report card with all S's in other areas. Those students who receive all A's and S's will also be invited to the Principal's Honor Roll Luncheon.
- **Perfect Attendance:** Students with perfect attendance will be recognized every nine weeks. Special recognition is given to those students who have perfect attendance for the year. Unexcused tardiness is a part of the perfect attendance criteria.
- **Of-the-Year:** Recognition will be awarded to students who have perfect attendance for the year and/or 4 quarters of Principal's Honor Roll.

Textbooks/Library Books

Textbooks and library books are loaned free of charge for students. Families will be charged for lost or damaged textbooks or library books. The fee is based on the cost of the book, its age, and condition. A child who has lost a textbook or a library book will not be allowed to take home another book unless financial obligations have been fulfilled. Any unpaid obligations will prevent a child from going on a field trip.

Transportation (Buses)

GENERAL SCHOOL BUS POLICIES

- Students are granted only one bus and bus stop for both the morning and afternoon.
- We are unable to provide service to multiple stops for a student, whether for daycare, custody issues, etc. We serve a limited number of non-profit daycares that can become your child's established stop.
- We require our Bus Drivers to assign seats for all students. We expect our riders to sit in their assigned seats at all times.
- Remove Drawstrings - Clothing your children with drawstrings may not always be safe. Drawstrings can catch in playground equipment, fences, and school bus doors. Remove, shorten or replace drawstrings with another kind of fastener. In accordance with federal voluntary recalls, St. Lucie Public Schools has retrofitted all school and activity bus handrails that will not snag children's clothing.

<https://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/departments/transportation/> **772-204-7433**

BUS RULES FOR PARENTS

The safety of our children is the number one priority of the SLPS Transportation Department. Today's children contend with morning rush hour traffic, few sidewalks, and motorists with their minds elsewhere and their phones in their hands. Parents are the frontline protectors of their children. Help us teach our children school bus and bus stop safety and please support the driver's authority in enforcing school bus safety and behavior rules.

- Parents are encouraged to walk with or transport their children to and from bus stops.
- Parents must ensure that their children arrive at the bus stop in the morning **at least ten (10) minutes prior** to pick up time.
- Parents are responsible for their children's safety and well-being on the way to and from the bus stops and while at the bus stops.
- Parents are responsible for the proper conduct of their children on the way and from and while at the bus stops.
- Parents are responsible for the conduct of their children, along with district personnel while the children are aboard the bus.

- Parents are expected to cooperate with district personnel regarding the safe and effective transport of their children.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school or the transportation department when they observe unsafe conditions.
- Every child should have a responsible parent or designated adult to supervise bus stop safety.

BUS RULES FOR STUDENTS

- Classroom conduct is to be observed.
- Students must sit in their assigned seats and belts must be worn at all times when the bus is in motion. Cooperate and refrain from unnecessary conversation with the driver while the bus is in motion.
- Students must ride their assigned bus and each student must board and depart at a designated bus stop. Students must present a written request from the parent/guardian, receive approval from, the Principal/Designee for any changes. ⚠ Students are requested to be at the bus stop ten (10) minutes before scheduled pick-up as the bus will not wait beyond the scheduled pick-up time.
- Students will stand off the roadway and exhibit appropriate behavior while waiting for the bus. ⚠ Students will board, depart and cross the roadway as per instructions from the bus driver.
- No portions of the body are permitted outside bus windows.
- Reptiles, bugs, animals or marine life (dead or alive) are not permitted on the bus. ⚠ Smoking, use of tobacco products or other mood modifying substances is strictly prohibited.
- Objects that impair the driver's vision, impact safety or seating capacity are prohibited on the school bus. (such as band instruments, school projects or special equipment)
- Inappropriate gestures, obscenities, vulgarity or profanity will not be permitted.
- Eating, drinking or chewing gum is not permitted on the bus.
- Students shall not throw any item in/out of the bus, shout, whistle or gesture from the window.
- Students who are responsible for vandalism will be required to make restitution.
- Students must remain absolutely quiet at railroad crossings and when the dome lights are on.
- Excessive noise on the school bus is prohibited at all times.
- Any behavior that adversely affects the safety or well-being of others is prohibited.

<https://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/pdf/departments/transportation/BusRules.pdf>



- View the real-time location of your child's bus
- Access the app from your smartphone, tablet or computer
- Receive push notifications or email alerts
- Send your child to the bus stop at just the right time, every time

How to get started:

- Download the *Here Comes the Bus* app or visit <http://www.herecomesthebus.com>
- Enter school code 77914 and click "Next" followed by "Confirm"
- Complete the "User Profile" box
- Under "My Students," click "Add." Enter your child's last name and student ID number
- Once you confirm your information, you're ready to begin using *Here Comes the Bus*!

Volunteer Sign-Up Procedures

The Saint Lucie County School Board has a new volunteer sign-up procedure in place. If you are interested in volunteering at Rivers Edge Elementary, please log onto our website: www.stlucieschools.org.

- Click on the "jobs" tab
- Click on "Click to Apply" tab
- Go to "Search current job openings"
- Click on "Click to view current job openings"
- On the first column which is the "Positions," scroll down and click on "Volunteer Box," then click on the "Assignment and Location" box
- Click on "Search for Posted Positions"
- Click on the "Volunteer" box and "View Details and Highlighted Positions"
- Click on "Apply for Position"
- Go to "New Users Please Create a Profile" and click the box and create your profile

After entering and submitting your application, your information will be verified. Allow up to ten days for clearance and check your application online periodically. Thank you for your support. We appreciate you at Rivers Edge Elementary.

Appendix

Rivers Edge Elementary Parent/Student/Teacher Compact: 2024-2025



Parent/Guardian Agreement: *I want my child to achieve. Therefore, I will encourage him/her by doing the following:*

- Check my child's book bag each night
- Check all homework assignments to ensure that they are complete and accurate
- See that my child attends school regularly and on time
- Provide a quiet study area at home and encourage good study habits
- Communicate regularly with my child's teachers
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain proper discipline
- Talk with my child about his/her school activities every day
- Read with my child or listen to my child read at least 20 minutes each day
- Monitor my child's TV viewing and electronic device usage
- Monitor and make sure my child is following the Rivers Edge dress code every school day
- Check Skyward and e-mail
- Be involved in my child's school (events, volunteering, PTO, field trips, etc.)

Parent signature: _____



Student Agreement: *It is important that I work to the best of my ability. Therefore, I will strive to do the following:*

- Always try to do my best in my work and in my behavior
- Work cooperatively with my classmates
- Follow the school-wide expectations; be responsible, be respectful, be a role model
- Take pride in my school and help to keep it clean and beautiful
- Come to school prepared with my homework and my supplies
- Believe that I can learn and will learn
- Complete my homework each night
- Follow the Rivers Edge dress code every school day

Student Signature: _____



Teacher Agreement: *It is important that students achieve. Therefore, I shall strive to do the following:*

- Provide a high-quality curriculum and standard based instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment

- Believe that each student can learn
- Help each child grow to his/her fullest potential
- Provide meaningful and appropriate homework assignments
- Enforce school and classroom rules fairly and consistently
- Plan preferred method of communication between parents and teachers
- Monitor the Rivers Edge dress code policy
- Maintain open lines of communication and accessibility with student and his/her parents, throughout the school year

Teacher signature: _____

NOTE: A copy of this form will be sent home in the first week of school with your child.

The above Parent/Student/Teacher Compact must be signed and returned to your child’s teacher during the first week your child is in attendance at Rivers Edge Elementary. Approved by SAC May 18, 2024



**Notice Regarding the St. Lucie Public Schools Code of Student Conduct
2024-2025**

In order to conserve resources, schools will not distribute paper copies of the Code of Student Conduct to every student. An electronic copy of the Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/departments/student-services/. Parents/guardians may request a printed copy to be provided. To receive a printed copy of the Code of Student Conduct, please check the box below and return this form to your child’s school. A copy will then be provided to your student.

The Code of Student Conduct has been adopted to help your son/daughter gain the greatest possible benefit from his/her education. Please read and discuss the Code of Student Conduct with your son/daughter.

FAILURE TO RETURN THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM WILL NOT RELIEVE A STUDENT OR THE PARENT/ GUARDIAN OF THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT OR ACCOUNTABILITY FOR LOSS OR DAMAGE TO SLPS PROPERTY.

I acknowledge receipt of the notification regarding accessing and/or obtaining a copy of the Code of Student Conduct. I have read and discussed the Code of Student Conduct with my child.

*Please check **only** if you require a printed copy of the 2024-2025 Code of Student Conduct. **One (1) copy per household will be provided.***

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

**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

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 501 N.W. University Drive Port St. Lucie, 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.

[SLPS Student Parent Notification of Attendance Policies.pdf](#)

**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

Book	St. Lucie County School Board Policy Manual
Section	Chapter 2: School Board Governance and Organization
Title	Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint and Investigation Procedures
Code	2.701
Status	Active 1. Definitions.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- a. School District means the St. Lucie County School District.
- b. Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
 - i. A School District employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the school on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
 - ii. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity; or
 - iii. Sexual assault as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).
- c. Complainant means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
- d. Respondent means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
- e. Supportive measures means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the school's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the school's educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Schools must maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the school to provide the supportive measures. The school-based Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures. Remedies are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the school's education program or activity. Remedies may be issued at the conclusion of the grievance process.
- f. Formal complaint refers to a document filed by a complainant or signed by the school-based Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting investigation of the allegation. The formal complaint may be filed in person, by mail, or by electronic mail.
- g. The District Title IX Coordinator ("District Coordinator") is responsible for coordinating School District compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") regulations.
- h. The school-based Title IX Coordinator ("school-based Coordinator") is responsible for coordinating Title IX compliance at an assigned school.

- i. The Title IX investigator (“investigator”) is responsible for conducting the investigation as required by Title IX and preparing the investigative report.
 - j. The Title IX decision-maker (“decision maker”) reviews the evidence, determines responsibility for all formal complaints, and provides a written determination to the parties. The decision-maker cannot be the same person as the school-based Title IX Coordinator or the investigator.
 - k. The Title IX appeals decision-maker (“appeals decision maker”) is responsible for reviewing the written determination and issuing a written decision describing the result and rationale for the appeal.
 - l. Notice. Whenever notice is required in this policy, notice shall be sent to the parent as defined in CFR 99.3 or to the eligible student as defined in CFR 99.3.
2. Scope of Title IX. This policy applies to allegations that meet the definition of sexual harassment as defined in section (1)(b) of this policy, conduct that occurred in a School District education program or activity, and allegations against a person in the United States.
 - a. “Education program or activity” includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the School District exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurred.
 - b. Reporting Sexual Harassment. Any person may report sexual harassment, regardless of whether the reporting person is the alleged victim of the conduct. A report can be made in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information for the District Coordinator or school-based Coordinator. Reports may be made at any time, including during non-business hours. Any person with knowledge of sexual harassment is strongly encouraged to report the incident. Reports should be made as soon as possible after the alleged incident. A formal complaint must be filed within ten (10) school days after the alleged incident. Failure on the part of the complainant to initiate or follow up on the complaint within this period may result in the complaint being deemed abandoned.
 - i. The School District is responsible for responding to complaints of which it has notice even if notice is not received within the aforementioned time frame.
 - c. All School District employees are required to, and must, report, in writing, any allegations of sexual harassment or violations of this policy to the District Coordinator, school-based Coordinator, or appropriate administrator.
3. The Superintendent may identify, upon request of a complainant or respondent, a designee for the District Coordinator when, in the Superintendent’s judgment, it is warranted. Should an alternate be designated to investigate a complaint, the complainant may request a review by the Superintendent.
4. Knowledge of Sexual Harassment. When a school-based employee assigned to an elementary or secondary school has knowledge of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment, the School District is obligated to respond.
5. Response to Knowledge of Sexual Harassment. A school must respond to knowledge of sexual harassment in the school’s education program or activity against a person in the United States within twenty-four (24) hours or no more than two (2) school days.
 - a. If the alleged sexual harassment might constitute a crime the matter shall immediately be reported to the School Resource Officer (“SRO”) or the appropriate law enforcement agency. Any uncertainty regarding whether the alleged sexual harassment might constitute a crime must be resolved in favor of reporting the incident to law enforcement.
 - b. If the alleged sexual harassment might constitute child abuse the matter shall immediately be reported to the Florida Department of Children and Families (“DCF”). Any uncertainty regarding whether the alleged sexual harassment might constitute child abuse must be resolved in favor of reporting the incident.
 - c. When a School District employee is the respondent, the school-based Coordinator or school administrator shall immediately notify the Director of Employee Relations. If the respondent is a School District employee, discipline may be taken, consistent with any applicable

collective bargaining agreement provisions or statutory provisions to resolve a complaint of sexual harassment. Upon knowledge of alleged sexual harassment, the school-based Coordinator must:

- i. Contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures;
 - ii. Consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;
 - iii. Inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint; and
 - iv. Explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.
 - v.
6. Filing of Formal Complaint. The formal complaint may be filed by a complainant, parent or legal guardian, or signed by the school-based Coordinator. At the time of filing a formal complaint, the complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the school's education program or activity.
7. Response to Filing of Formal Complaint.
 - a. When a formal complaint has been filed, the school must immediately determine if:
 - i. The allegations meet the definition of sexual harassment even if proved, as defined in section (1)(b) of this policy;
 - ii. The conduct occurred in a School District education program or activity; and
 - iii. The allegations occurred against a person in the United States.
 - b. If the school determines these requirements are met, the school must follow the grievance process outlined in section (12) of this policy. If the school determines any of these requirements are not met, the school must dismiss the formal complaint. Written Notice of dismissal must be sent.
8. Consolidation of Formal Complaints. Formal complaints involving allegations of sexual harassment arising from the same facts or circumstances may be consolidated against more than one (1) respondent, if multiple complainants file a complaint against multiple respondents, or if one (1) party files a complaint against the other party.
9. Dismissal of Formal Complaints. Schools shall investigate allegations in a formal complaint and determine whether dismissal is required or permitted.
 - a. Required Dismissal.
 - i. The School District must dismiss a formal complaint if the alleged conduct: does not constitute sexual harassment even if proved as defined in section (1)(b) of this policy; or
 - ii. Did not occur in a school's education program or activity; or
 - iii. Did not occur against a person in the United States.
 - iv. The School District may take action under another provision of the Code of Student Conduct in the event dismissal is required.
 - b. Permitted Dismissal. Schools may dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations during the investigation or hearing if:
 - i. The complainant provides written notice to the school-based Coordinator of their intent to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations; or
 - ii. The respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the School District; or
 - iii. Specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination.
 - c. Written Notice of Dismissal. Upon a required or permitted dismissal, schools must send written notice of the dismissal and reasons for the dismissal simultaneously to parties within twenty-four (24) hours or no more than two (2) school days.

- d. Appeal of Dismissal. Parties may request an appeal from a dismissal within two (2) school days of issuance of the dismissal. Requests for an appeal should be sent to the decision-maker, as outlined in section (14) of this policy.

10. Emergency Removal. The School District may remove a respondent from a school's education program or activity on an emergency basis, only after undertaking an individualized safety and risk analysis, and determining if an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and providing the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision within two (2) school days following the removal. This provision may not be construed to modify any rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or the Americans with Disabilities Act

- a. Grievance Process for Formal Complaints of Sexual Harassment. In response to a formal complaint, schools must provide written notice to all known parties and follow a specified grievance process before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions against the respondent. A school must provide written notice of allegations within two (2) school days of the allegations to all known parties upon receipt of a formal complaint.

- i. Written notice must include

- 1. The identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known;
 - 2. The conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment;
 - 3. The date and location of the alleged incident, if known;
 - 4. A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct;
 - 5. The school's grievance process;
 - 6. A statement that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process;
 - 7. A statement informing the parties that they may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney;
 - 8. A statement advising parties that they may inspect and review evidence, as outlined in section (11)(f)(i); and
 - 9. A statement informing the parties of any provision in the school's Code of Student Conduct that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process

- ii. If during the course of an investigation the school decides to investigate allegations about the complainant or respondent that are not included in the original notice, the school must provide written notice of the additional allegations to the known parties within two (2) school days, pursuant to the requirements of written notice in this policy.

- b. Response to Complaint. Parties shall be afforded the opportunity to prepare a response regarding the complaint and provide that response during the initial interview. Parties shall have no less than two (2) school days from the date of the written notice to prepare a response.

The school-based Coordinator shall conduct the initial interviews with both the complainant and the respondent within five (5) school days. Each individual shall be interviewed separately and at no time will the complainant and respondent be interviewed together. This time frame may be modified for good cause. Good cause may include considerations such as the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.

- c. Basic Requirements for Grievance Process. A school's grievance process must:

- i. Treat complainants and respondents equitably by providing remedies to a complainant where a determination of responsibility has been made against the respondent;
 - ii. Require an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence;
 - iii. Include a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until the written determination is made at the end of the grievance process;
 - iv. Ensure the school-based Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, and appeals decision-maker are free from any conflicts of interest or bias for or against any complainants or respondents;

- v. Include reasonably prompt time frames for the conclusion of the grievance process;
- vi. Include reasonably prompt time frames for filing and resolving appeals;
 - vii. Allow for the temporary delay of the grievance process or limited extension of time frames for good cause with written notice to the complainant and the respondent of the delay or extension and the reasons for the action.
 - viii. List the range of possible disciplinary sanctions and remedies that may be implemented;
 - ix. Include the procedures and grounds for appeal;
 - x. Describe the range of supportive measures available to parties;
 - xi. Not allow, require, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that seek disclosure of protected information under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege waives the privilege; and
- xii. Notify parties that the preponderance of the evidence standard will be used to determine responsibility.

11. Procedures for Investigation of a Formal Complaint. The investigation must be completed and evidence provided to the respondent and complainant within five (5) school days of the initial interviews with the complainant and respondent, whichever interview is later. Good cause may include considerations such as the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.

- a. The School District must ensure that the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence rests on the school.
- b. Confidentiality of Medical Records. The School District cannot access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless the school obtains that party's voluntary, written consent to do so for a grievance process under this section. If a party is not an "eligible student," as defined in 34 CFR 99.3, then the school must obtain the voluntary, written consent of a "parent," as defined in 34 CFR 99.3;
- c. Schools shall not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation.
- d. Written Notice of Grievance Proceedings. Notice for any investigative interviews, or meetings must be sent at least two (2) school days prior to the interview or meeting. Notice for any hearings must be sent at least ten (10) school days prior to the hearing. Notice must include the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of meeting to all parties whose participation is expected or invited.
- e. Grievance Proceedings. Both parties must be given an equal opportunity to have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding with an advisor of their choice.
- f. Evidence
 - (i) Inspection and Review of Evidence. Both parties must be given an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in a formal complaint including the evidence upon which the school does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility. OTC must make all evidence subject to the parties' inspection and review available at any hearing to give each party an equal opportunity to refer to such evidence during the hearing, including for purposes of cross-examination.
 - (ii) Prior to completion of the investigative report, schools shall send to each party and their advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy. Parties have ten (10) school days to submit a written response to all evidence, for the investigator to consider before concluding the investigative report. If a response is not received within ten (10) school days, the investigator will deem the non-response as a waiver and continue with the investigative report.
 - (iii) Gathering and Presentation of Evidence. Schools may not restrict the ability of either party to gather and present relevant evidence.

- g. Presenting Witnesses. Both parties shall be given the equal opportunity to present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
 - h. The Investigative Report. The investigator shall create an investigative report that fairly summarizes all relevant evidence presented. The investigator must send the report in an electronic form or a hard copy to all parties and all advisors ten (10) days prior to a hearing for their review and written response, if a hearing is required. If a hearing is not required, schools must send the report to all parties and all advisors for their review and written response ten (10) days prior to any written determination. Parties will have ten (10) days from receipt of the investigative report to provide a written response to the investigative report.
 - i. K-12 Questions. After the investigative report has been sent to all parties and before a determination regarding responsibility is made, each party shall be given two (2) school days to submit written, relevant questions to be asked of any party or witness and provide each party with answers within two (2) school days. Parties shall then be allowed two (2) school days to provide no more than five (5) follow-up questions in total from all parties and witnesses. Parties and witnesses have two (2) school days to respond to any follow-up questions.
 - j. After parties submit written questions, the decision-maker must:
 - (i) Determine whether a question is relevant; and
 - (ii) Explain to the proposing party any decision to exclude a question as not relevant;
 - (iii) Questions and evidence regarding a complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are only relevant if offered to prove someone other than the respondent committed the alleged conduct, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent.
12. Advisors. Parties may have at least one (1) advisor of their choosing.
- a. The following restrictions will be placed on advisors for both parties:
 - i. Advisors may attend interviews with their party only at their party's request, unless the advisor is a parent or legal guardian;
 - ii. Advisors shall not restrict access to their party;
 - iii. Advisors are only permitted to use the investigative report and evidence received for inspection and review for purposes of the grievance process;
 - iv. Advisors will be required to abide by a non-disclosure agreement that complies with both Title IX and FERPA; and
 - v. Advisors may not request education records that are protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA").
13. Procedures for Written Determination. At the conclusion of the grievance process, the decision-maker must apply the preponderance of the evidence standard to reach a determination and then issue a written determination to the parties simultaneously within three (3) school days. The school-based Coordinator is responsible for implementing remedies stated in the written determination.
- a. The written determination must include:
 - i. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment, pursuant to the definition in this policy;
 - ii. A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the written determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather other evidence, and hearings;
 - iii. Findings of fact supporting the determination;
 - iv. Conclusions regarding application of the Code of Student Conduct to the facts;
 - v. The result and rationale as to each allegation;
 - vi. A determination regarding responsibility as to each allegation;
 - vii. Any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent by the school;
 - viii. Whether remedies will be provided by the school to the complainant; and

ix. Permissible procedures and grounds for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

14. Appeals. Each party has the opportunity to appeal from both a written determination, and a dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations. A request for an appeal from a dismissal must be made within two (2) school days of issuance of the dismissal. A request for an appeal from a written determination must be made within two (2) school days of issuance of the written determination. Requests for an appeal should be sent to the decision-maker.

a. If an appeal is not filed, the determination regarding responsibility becomes final on the date after the two (2) school days to file an appeal has passed. If an appeal is filed, the determination regarding responsibility becomes final on the date the school provides the written appeals decision.

b. Grounds for Appeal. Appeals may take place for the following reasons:

i. Procedural issues affected the outcome;

ii. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the written determination or dismissal was made becomes available that could affect the outcome; or
iii. There was a conflict of interest or bias by the school-based Coordinator, investigator, or decision-maker, against any complainant or respondent that affected the outcome.

c. Notification of Appeal. Schools must notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed and implement appeal procedures equally for both parties. Parties must be given three (3) school days to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome of the written determination. If a written statement is not received within three (3) school days, the appeals decision-maker will deem the nonresponse as a waiver and continue with the appeals process.

d. Appeals Decision-Maker. The appeals decision-maker may not be the same person as the investigator, school-based Coordinator, or decisionmaker who reached the initial determination of responsibility or dismissal. The appeals decision-maker must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against any complainant or any respondent.

e. Written Appeals Determination. The written appeals determination describing the result and rationale for the decision must be provided simultaneously to both parties within five (5) school days.

15. Retaliation. No school or other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purposes of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing.

a. Definition of Retaliation.

i. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, constitutes retaliation.

ii. The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation.

iii. A Code of Student Conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith during the course of the grievance process does not constitute retaliation. A determination regarding responsibility alone is insufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

b. Confidentiality of Parties. Schools must keep confidential the identity of the following individuals:

i. Any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination;

ii. Any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment;

iii. Any complainant;

iv. Any individual reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination;

- v. Any respondent; and
 - vi. Any witness.
- c. Exceptions to Confidentiality. The School District may release confidential information as permitted by FERPA, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, or FERPA regulations, 34 CFR part 99, or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of 34 CFR part 106, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder.
- d. Filing of Retaliation Complaints. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the grievance procedures for sex discrimination as outlined in section (6) of this policy.

16. Training. All materials used to train school-based Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and appeals decision-makers must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications.

- a. School-based Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, hearing officers, and appeals decision-makers must receive training on:
 - i. The definition of sexual harassment as defined in (1)(b);
 - ii. The scope of the school's education program or activity;
 - iii. How to conduct an investigation and grievance process, including appeals; and
 - iv. How to serve impartially by avoiding prejudgment of the facts, conflicts of interest, and bias.
- b. Decision-makers must receive training on:
 - i. Any technology used to conduct investigations; and
 - ii. Relevance of questions and evidence, including the relevance of the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior as set forth in section (11)(j)(iii) of this policy.
- c. Investigators must receive training on:
 - i. Issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence; and
 - ii. Sending the investigative report, in an electronic or hard copy, to each party and their advisor for their review and written response.

17. Recordkeeping.

- a. Required Recordkeeping. Schools must create records of any actions, including supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment. If supportive measures are not provided, the school must document the reasons why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.
- b. Maintaining Records. Schools must maintain records related to any sexual harassment investigation for seven (7) years, including records of:
 - i. Any actions taken in response to a report of sexual harassment;
 - ii. Any actions taken in response to a formal complaint of sexual harassment;
 - iii. Any supportive measures provided;
 - iv. Each sexual harassment investigation;
 - v. Any determination regarding responsibility;
 - vi. Any audio or audiovisual recording or transcript;
 - vii. Any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent;
 - viii. Any remedies provided to the complainant;
 - ix. Any appeal and written appeal decision; and
 - x. All materials used to train school-based Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, hearing officers and appeals decision-makers.

18. Dissemination of Policy.
- a. Notification of Title IX Coordinator. The School District must notify students, parents or legal guardians of elementary and secondary school students, employees, applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations the School District holds collective bargaining or professional agreements with, of the name, office address, electronic mail address, and telephone number of the District Coordinator.
 - b. Notification of Policy. The School District must notify students, parents or legal guardians of elementary and secondary school students, employees, applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations the School District holds collective bargaining or professional agreements with, that:
 - i. The School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any education program or activity;
 - ii. The School District is required by Title IX not to discriminate on the basis of sex;
 - iii. The requirement to not discriminate on the basis on sex extends to admission and employment; and
 - iv. Inquiries about Title IX are referred to the District Coordinator.
19. Publication. Schools must not use or distribute a publication that states the School District treats applicants, students, or employees differently on the basis of sex, except as permitted by Title IX.
- a. Website Publication. The School District must prominently display the name, office address, electronic mail address and telephone number of the District Coordinator on the School District's website.
 - b. Handbook Publication. The School District must prominently display the name, office address, electronic mail address and telephone number of the District Coordinator in each handbook or catalog made available to students, parents or legal guardians of elementary and secondary school students, employees, applicants for admission and employment, and all unions or professional organizations who hold collective bargaining or professional agreements with the School District.
 - c. Training Materials Publication. The School District must make all training materials publicly available on the School District's website.
20. FERPA. The School District shall, to the extent possible, interpret Title IX and FERPA in a manner to avoid any conflicts. Where a true conflict exists, the obligation to comply with Title IX is not obviated or alleviated by the FERPA statute, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, or FERPA regulations, 34 CFR part 99.

SPECIFIC AUTHORITY: Sections 760.01; 794.022; 1000.05; 1001.41; 1001.43;
1006.07;
1006.09 and 1012.23, Florida Statutes

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

History: New

ADOPTED: 03/09/2021 Revision Date(s):

Formerly:

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: _____

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



BOARD MEMBERS

Debbie Hawley
Troy Ingersoll
Jack Kelly
Dr. Donna Mills
Jennifer Richardson

SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Jon R. Prince

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION AND SECTION 504 COMPLIANCE

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA, No person shall, 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, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices conducted by this School District, except as provided by law.

Reasonable accommodations are provided for persons with disabilities to complete the application and/or interview process. Applicants/individuals with disabilities requesting accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may contact (772) 429-7500 for assistance.

Non-Discrimination Policy Inquiries and Complaints by Students, Parents, Applicants for Admission to School, and all others except Employees and Applicants for Employment:

Heather Roland, Executive Director of Student Services

9461 Brandywine Lane, Port St. Lucie, FL 34986

Office: (772) 429-4577, Fax: (772) 429-4589, E-mail: SS-GRV@stlucieschools.org

Non-Discrimination Policy Inquiries and Complaints by Employees and Applicants for Employment:

Rafael Sanchez, Executive Director of Human Resources

9461 Brandywine Lane, Port St. Lucie, FL 34986

Office: (772) 429-7508, Fax: (772) 429-7501, E-mail: EMP-GRV@stlucieschools.org

Inquiries and Complaints under **SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973** should be directed to the School Board's Section 504 Compliance Officer, the Executive Director of Student Services, contact information listed above.

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.

Dr. Adrian Ocampo, Executive Director of Assessment and Accountability

Equity Coordinator

9461 Brandywine Lane, Port St. Lucie, FL 34986

Office: (772) 429-5538 E-mail: Adrian.Ocampo@stlucieschools.org

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

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)

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 and Accountability.