

West Gate K-8

Student and Parent Policy Handbook

2025-2026



Grades K- 8

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Student and Parent Policy Handbook Table of Contents

About this Handbook	
West Gate K-8	1
Student and Parent Policy Handbook	1
About this Handbook	4
Arrival and Dismissal for Students	5
Attendance.....	5
Attendance and Behavior Requirements for Extracurricular Activities.....	9
Balloons, Flowers, & Other Gifts.....	9
Before/After School Programs	9
Bicycles/Skateboards	9
Bullying and Harassment School Board Policy - See Discipline.....	10
Bus Transportation.....	10
Cafeteria.....	10
Cellular Phones and Electronic Devices	11
Celebrations	12
Clinic.....	13
Code of Student Conduct – See Discipline.....	13
Communication.....	13
Conferences – Parent/Teacher	14
Discipline	14
Dismissal.....	20
Drop-off/Pick-up	22
Early Release	24
Emergency Card	24
Emergency Management Plan	24
Exceptional Student Education (ESE)	25
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	25
Grading.....	27
Guidance - School Counseling Services.....	29
Health Screenings	29
Homeless Education (McKinney-Vento Act)	29
Homework.....	29
Honor Roll Grades 3rd through 8 th	30
Immunizations Requirements.....	30
Insurance.....	30
Lost and Found.....	30
Lunch Visits	31
Make-Up Work.....	31
Middle School Promotion Requirements.....	31
Mustang of the Month.....	33
Perfect Attendance (Grades K-8)	33
Pledge of Allegiance.....	34
Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (P.B.I.S.).....	34
Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities.....	35
Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment	35
Progress Reports	36
PTO.....	36

School Advisory Council (SAC)	37
School Closings.....	37
School Day & Office Hours	37
School Functions	37
School Improvement Plan (SIP).....	37
Student Daily Planners/Ear Buds	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Student Placement.....	37
Student Progression Plan	37
Student Records.....	38
Technology/Internet	387
Telephones.....	39
Textbooks.....	399
Third Grade Promotion Requirements	399
Toys, Electronic Devices, Games and Playing Cards	409
Valuables	40
Visitors	40
Volunteers.....	40
Withdrawal of Students	40
Zero Tolerance	40
Appendix: District Policy Documents: Title IX, Attendance, Grievance Procedures	

About this Handbook

The *West Gate K-8 Student and Parent Handbook* has been prepared to provide each student and parent with the necessary information concerning policies and procedures for the 2025-2026 school year. It is designed to provide basic information; however additional documents will be provided throughout the year as needed. Policies and procedures discussed in this handbook conform to those established by the *St. Lucie County School Board and the Master Agreement*. The laws and policies of the Federal and State governments and School Board of St. Lucie County will always be the final authority and under which we all work.

MISSION

We empower K–8 students to become confident, empathetic, and critical thinkers in a nurturing and inclusive environment. We are committed to fostering strong relationships and embracing diverse perspectives through collaborative learning environments. Through a rigorous focus on academic excellence and acceleration, we prepare students with the knowledge, skills, and passion to excel in their future educational journeys.

VISION

Our vision is to empower students to become confident, empathic, and critical thinkers who build strong relationships, embrace diversity, collaborate effectively, and develop a better understanding of themselves and the world around them.

OUR BELIEFS

- We believe in the power of collaborative planning to design engaging lessons and prepare for the delivery of high-quality, standards-based lessons which include the gradual release model, cooperative learning, student choice, learning extensions, and data analysis to help drive the instruction.
- We believe that all students have different learning styles and talents, and it is our responsibility to teach them in the manner they learn best.
- We believe in partnering with and communicating with parents, business partners, volunteers, and other community members to set forth the best educational experience possible for our students.
- We believe in designing and facilitating professional learning opportunities that align with the vision and mission of West Gate K8.

FACULTY AND STAFF COMMITMENT

Empower. Embrace. Excel.

SCHOOL COLORS

The school colors are Red, Black, and White

SCHOOL MASCOT

Mustang

ST. LUCIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT



ST. LUCIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Lucie Public Schools is to ensure all students graduate from safe and caring schools, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and desire to succeed.

ST. LUCIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS VISION STATEMENT

St. Lucie Public Schools, in partnership with parents and community, will become premier centers of knowledge that are organized around students and the work provided to them. Our name will be synonymous with the continuous improvement of student achievement and the success of each individual. Our promise is to move from good to great focusing on our core business, the creation of challenging, engaging and satisfying work for each child, every day.

This is the St. Lucie Way!

ST. LUCIE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOCUS AREAS:

Teaching and Learning
Talent Development and Growth
Safe and Caring Schools
Communication/Community Engagement/Customer Service

Arrival and Dismissal for Students

9:05-9:30 am Student drop-off.

9:30am Students report to classes. **Do not drop off students prior to 9:05 am.** There will be no supervision.

9:30am Morning announcements will begin.

4:00pm Dismissal begins.

Students should arrive on school grounds no earlier than 9:05 am since no adult supervision is available prior to that time, unless your child is enrolled in the Before/After School Care program. The Boys and Girls Club is for enrolled students only. Do not drop students off in the audeteria unless they are enrolled in the Boys and Girls Club. Parents on school grounds to pick up their children after school are requested to wait in their car at the Parent Pick-up area. This helps to alleviate a great deal of congestion and confusion on the part of the students and parents.

We must have a written note from the parent if anyone other than the guardian picks up your child. The person designated to pick up your child must be listed on the emergency contact list. Students must have a written note from a parent if the student is going home a different way than usual. (ex. Regular bus rider to walk home).

Attendance

School attendance is a prerequisite for student achievement. Because attendance in school is critical to student success, please review the *Student Progression Plan* that impacts whether absences and tardies will be excused. Please review the district's attendance policies by going to the Student Progression Plan at www.stlucieschools.org. Once on the website, go to *Our District*. You will find the *Student Progression Plan* under *Reports*.

Students who have accumulated a total of 15 excused absences or 8 unexcused absences within the school year will not have subsequent absences of 2 or more days excused unless OR when a student has accumulated a total of 10 excused absences or 5 unexcused absences within a semester, subsequent absences of 3 or more consecutive days may 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 impracticable or inadvisable because of sickness or injury, attested to by a written statement of a physician. The physician's statement must contain the dates of the absences for which the excuse is sought and the reason for the absence. In addition, the physician must be licensed under Chapter 458 (medical practice), 459 (osteopathic medicine), 460 (chiropractic medicine) or Chapter 461 (podiatric Medicine), Florida Statutes.

Learn More: Please read the District Student Progression Plan for more information regarding the Attendance Policies on the Saint Lucie Public Schools website at www.stlucieschools.org.

Tardy and Early Pick Up

Students are expected to attend school daily and to be on time. Poor attendance, persistent tardiness, or leaving early will hinder their school progress. Students who are tardy or picked up early five or more times during the school year will not receive recognition for Perfect Attendance. *Students with 5 unexcused tardies and/or leaving early will convert to an unexcused absence and can be used to meet the criteria to file a truancy petition in circuit court. *Students will not be released after 3:15 p.m., or 1:15 p.m. on an early release day.

Tardies and/or leaving early will be either excused or unexcused. To have a tardy or early departure excused, you must provide a doctor's note that day or within three days to have it excused. Every effort should be made to schedule medical and dental appointments after school hours, student "no school" days or during summer vacation. Every effort should be made to take vacations only during scheduled school breaks.

- When students are absent from school, they must bring a written excuse from home and/ or provide written doctor verification. These are the only forms accepted. No phone calls.
- Any student absent without notification of the absence will be recorded as a non-excused absence.
- Kindergarten through eighth-grade students will be recognized for perfect attendance.
- Excessive absences will result in phone calls home, letters from school, and/or visits from the school's social worker.

(a) Compulsory School Attendance and Declaration of Intent to Terminate School Enrollment

- (1) (F.S. 1003.21) Pursuant to Section (F.S. 1003.21), all children who are either six years of age or who will be six years old by February 1, or who are older than six years of age but who have not attained the age of 18 years, must attend school regularly during the entire school term. A student between 16 and 18 years of age is not subject to compulsory attendance if the student completes a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district school board. The declaration must acknowledge that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce the student's earning potential and that the disenrollment will be reported to the Department of Safety and Motor Vehicles. The declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment must be signed by the student and the student's parent or legal guardian. The school must notify the parent or legal guardian of receipt of the student's declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment. A student who attains the age of 18 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age.

(2.) Official Attendance

The official daily attendance will be taken with each class change for grades three through eight and at the beginning of the day for elementary school students in kindergarten through second grades.

(b.) Enforcement of Attendance (F.S. 1003.26)

When Parent is Required to be Contacted	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• After each unexcused absence or absence for which the reason is unknown
Means of Parent Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact can be by phone, auto call system, mail, or in-person by a school representative
Required Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phone log noting date and time of call, the official making the call, the family member contacted, and the outcome of conversation.• Mail – copy of dated notice or postal service return-receipt• Personal Contact – Parent’s signature on form(s)/letter or Student Services forms
Referrals to Student Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior to or upon the 10th unexcused absence in any 90-day period and after school efforts to resolve have not been successful• Schools will provide Student Services with documentation of their efforts to resolve the truancy
Truancy Petition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Described herein
Referral to CINS/FINS (Children in Need of Services/Families in Need of Services; the CINS/FINS provider is Children’s Home Society)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secondary schools are encouraged to refer habitual truants to the CINS/FINS provider.

(c.) 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 (F.S. 1003.24). The only conditions under which the parent or guardian is not responsible are: (1.) The student missed school with the permission of the principal. (2.) 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. (3.) The student does not attend due to sickness, injury, or other insurmountable condition, which makes attendance inadvisable, and the student is not eligible for Hospital/Homebound services.

(d.) **Project ROCK:** A student suspended out-of-school who attends Project ROCK (north or south) can be coded as “R”(Project ROCK) for the dates that the school confirms that the student attended the program. Students with a disability may attend Project Rock. The day of attendance at Project Rock will not count as an out-of-school suspension.

(e.) Attendance Codes, Excused Absences, Unexcused Absences (F.S.1003.26).

Please review these codes carefully. Excused absences are determined on an individual basis following the guidelines listed below.

Attendance Codes	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. (F.S. 1003.26)	Unexcused Absences - Unexcused absences are all failures to attend school other than those specifically excused by the principal or designees. (F.S. 1003.26)
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<p>C – Clinic</p> <p>E – Excused</p> <p>G – Guidance</p> <p>I – BIC (not an absence)</p> <p>M – Hospital Homebound</p> <p>O – Out of School Suspension</p> <p>R – Project ROCK (not an absence) Students suspended out of school who attend Project ROCK can be coded as “R” for the dates the program verifies.</p> <p>S – School Activity/Field Trip (not an absence) In cases where there is a question about the validity of the activity, the Zone Assistant Superintendent shall make the determination.</p> <p>T – Excused Tardy</p> <p>U- Unexcused Tardy</p> <p>1 – Unexcused Tardy</p> <p>2 – Absence due to excessive tardies (K-5 only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illness of the student • Major illness in the student’s immediate family • Medical appointment of the student • Death of a family member or friend • Required court appearance. • Religious holiday of the students 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. <p>Excused Absences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, more than 15 minutes late, or is not able to make the route. • Other planned absences are 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. <u>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.</u> Schools have the authority to withdraw students whose absences for this reason exceed this provision. Such students will be withdrawn for non-attendance. • Out of school suspensions • Physician Referral for Hospital Homebound Services absences should be excused from the date the physician’s referral for Hospital Homebound is received. The 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. Such students will be withdrawn for non-attendance. <p>Unexcused Absences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 the 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). • Failure to provide a Physician’s Authorization when required. • Missing the school bus if the bus is less than 5 minutes early or less than 15 minutes late • 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.
<p>Reporting Attendance Cases to PST/Attendance Committee (F.S. 1003.26)</p> <p>When: Student has accumulated at least 5 unexcused absences, or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within a calendar month, or 10 unexcused absences or absences for which the reasons are unknown, within 90 calendar days</p> <p>By Whom: Teacher or any school staff with knowledge of the student’s attendance</p> <p>Required Participants: School Social Worker or contracted caseworker; school attendance officer; the parent shall be invited and encouraged to attend</p>	<p>Truancy Petition</p> <p>The Superintendent may file a truancy petition pursuant to procedures in F.S. 984.151 when:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A student has 5 unexcused absences in a calendar month or 10 unexcused absences in a 90 calendar-day-period The PST/SST has met and efforts to correct the attendance have been unsuccessful The parent has been notified as to the unexcused absences or absences for which reasons are unknown <u>and that a Truancy Petition is being filed.</u> 	

<p>Purpose of Meeting: To determine if a pattern of non-attendance is developing or exists and to develop interventions that shall be implemented</p> <p>Interventions: Interventions may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *frequent communication between school and family *mentoring *counseling *evaluation for alternative education program *attendance contracts *agency referral(s) *other interventions, including but not limited to a Truancy Petition pursuant to (F.S. 984.151) <p>Non-Compliant Students: When students subject to compulsory attendance will not comply with attempts to enforce school attendance, the parent, guardian, superintendent or designee may refer the case to the case staffing committee pursuant to F.S. 984.12 and the superintendent may file a truancy petition pursuant to F.S. 984.151.</p>	<p>School's Responsibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with Student Services to prepare the Petition • Provide Student Services with all verifications of notification to and conferences with the parent to inform and discuss attendance • Copies of all parent and physician excuses and phone logs • Verification that the recorded attendance is true and correct according to School Board policy <p>Filing of Truancy Petitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filed in Circuit Court in the 19th Judicial Circuit • All supportive documentation becomes part of the Court file • Parent(s) named in the Petition will receive a copy of the Petition when the Petition is served
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Attendance and Behavior Requirements for Extracurricular Activities

Attendance and participation at sporting events, performances, extracurricular activities, and social functions are privileges that require attendance at school for at least half of the school day of the event. Regular and timely attendance in class is necessary for good academic performance and to meet state statutory requirements for attendance. Referrals and suspensions are also considered for these activities. Students with referrals will be denied participation in extracurricular activities. Teachers will notify parents when, or if, this is a concern. Major infractions will cause an automatic loss of these activities.

Balloons, Flowers, & Other Gifts

Students and parents may not bring these items into the school. If these items are brought on campus, they will be held in the front office until the end of the day.

Before/After School Programs

West Gate K-8 before and after school care program is provided by the Boys and Girls Club. The hours of operation are 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. The telephone number for the Club is (772) 398-0291 (main number) or (772) 216-1957 (WGK8 site). The office is located in the auditoria.

In addition to the Boys and Girls Club, individual teachers offer clubs and other activities for students at various grade levels. Details will be forthcoming throughout the year.

Bicycles/Skateboards

Students who ride bicycles to school are responsible for parking them in the bike rack. All bicycles should be securely locked. West Gate K-8 takes no responsibility for damaged or stolen bicycles or skateboards. Students are not to loiter in the bike rack area. Students **MUST** walk their bikes and skateboards once on campus. Students are not permitted to ride bicycles on the school grounds, bus loading areas, or in the parent pick-up area. Students are reminded that when riding a bicycle, the law requires riders to always wear a helmet. Students who bring their skateboards to school should secure their skateboard in the front office. Skateboards may be picked up at the end of the school day.

Bullying and Harassment School Board Policy - See Discipline

Bus Transportation

Students may use bus transportation if they live two or more miles from school. Students must always abide by the rules of common courtesy and vehicular safety. Students may not eat, drink, smoke or use tobacco products on the school bus. Students may not bring any items on the school buses that are not allowed on school grounds. All students are under the authority of the driver while being transported and must obey his/her requests. Students are to only ride the bus to which they are assigned. Students who fail to abide by bus rules may be suspended from the bus. Plans to ride a different bus home must be made in advance through the school. Students must provide a signed note from home which will be verified by the school.

Cafeteria

Breakfast begins at 9:05 a.m. Students eating breakfast should report to the cafeteria upon arrival and students may be served until 9:25 a.m.

Students eat lunch with their classes at their scheduled times.

2025-2026 Lunch Times

Time	Grade level
11:30-12:00	Kinder
1:30-2:00	First
12:15-12:45	Second
11:40-12:10	Third
11:35-12:05	Fourth
1:00-1:30	Fifth
12:08-12:38	Sixth
12:58-1:28	Seventh
1:47-2:17	Eighth

Breakfast and/or lunch are available for the students and guests.

Breakfast and lunch prices are as follows and may be subject to change. District Approved Meal Prices are reviewed annually. Please check the district website for approved prices @ <https://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/departments/child-nutrition-services/>.

St. Lucie Public Schools Meal Charging Policy/Procedure

All St. Lucie Public Schools must adhere to the Meal Charging Policy set forth by USDA. All students who qualify for a free meal benefit will not be denied a meal even if there are meal charges on the account. Student accounts can accrue up to \$10.00 of charges for reimbursable meals only. Ala carte items are not permitted to be charged. No adults are permitted to charge.

1. Students are allowed to charge up to \$10.00 for receiving a reimbursable meal. The students will be given the same school lunch that other students are receiving.

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

2025-2026 Meal Prices

Breakfast PreK-12: \$0.00
Full Paid Lunch 6-12: \$2.75
Adult Breakfast – \$4

Full Paid Lunch PreK-5: \$2.50
Reduced Paid Lunch PreK-12: \$0.40
Adult Lunch – \$5

We ask all parents to fill out a food service meal application form for the National School Lunch Program. This form must be filled out every year, even if you don't think you qualify. Federal funding is attached to our food service meal applications. If your child is eligible for free or reduced breakfast/lunch a new application must be submitted at the beginning of each school year or they lose their status. Our front office has meal applications, or you can apply online at www.stlucie.k12.fl.us. Under the Parents/Students tab, click on the Meal Application link. We appreciate your support of this important program.

Candy, Gum, and Soft Drinks

Gum is **NOT** allowed at school. Candy is allowed only as part of a packed school lunch and its inclusion is discouraged. Students are **NOT** allowed to sell candy anywhere on school grounds. Glass bottles are **NOT** permitted in school lunches. Food is not permitted to be eaten anywhere other than the lunchroom (even if it is given to you by a staff member). Outside lunch deliveries are **NOT** allowed for students.

Cellular Phones and Electronic Devices

The bill (Chapter 2023-36, L.O.F.) requires public schools to provide instruction for students in grades 6-12 on the social, emotional, and physical effects of social media. The bill requires the Department of Education to make social media safety instructional material available online and district school boards to notify parents of the material's availability.

The bill specifies that district school boards must provide and adopt an Internet safety policy for student access to the Internet provided by the school district which:

- Limits access by students to only age-appropriate subject matter and materials.
- Protects the safety and security of students when using e-mail and other forms of direct electronic communication.

- Prohibits access to data or information, and other unlawful online activities, by students.
- Prevents access to websites, applications, or software that does not protect against the disclosure, use, or dissemination of students' personal information.

The bill requires each district school board to prohibit and prevent students from accessing social media platforms through the use of Internet access provided by the school district, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes.

The bill also requires each school district to prohibit the use of the TikTok platform or any successor platform on Internet access provided by the school district or as a platform to communicate or promote any district school or school activity.

Additionally, the bill prohibits a student from using a wireless communication device during instruction time, except when directed by a teacher for educational purposes, and requires a teacher to designate an area for wireless communications devices during instructional time.

These provisions were approved by the Governor and took effect on July 1, 2023.

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

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

Allowable Exceptions:

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

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

In accordance with

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

Please see the student [Code of Conduct](#) for additional information related to violating this policy.

Consequences of misuse

The policy governing possession/use of electronic devices will be as follows:

1st offense: The student will be given a verbal warning.

2nd offense: The electronic device will be taken, a referral written, and the student will be issued 1 day of BIC.

In an effort to limit interruptions throughout the day, parents may pick up phones/electronic devices between 9:00-9:30 and 4:00-4:30 only.

Celebrations

Any parent, relative or volunteer participating in a classroom celebration should be cleared as a SLPS volunteer on the website <https://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/our-district/volunteers/>. Volunteers are permitted to bring refreshments during

an agreed upon time with the classroom teacher. Treats are for students in your child's classroom only and should be store-packaged (with visible ingredient list) and peanut and nut free.

Clinic

Students who become ill or need first aid will be sent to the clinic. Written parental consent, authorized by a physician, must be provided if you wish the clinic to dispense medication. You will be notified with a phone call if your child is sent to the clinic and the situation requires your immediate attention. **ALL** medications are to be kept in the health clinic. This includes prescription and non-prescription medications.

Self-Carry of Medications

Allowances are made for students to self-carry and self-administer emergency medications for asthma, anaphylaxis, pancreatic insufficiency, and diabetes. Students are responsible for ensuring that these medications are kept safely and securely and out of reach of other students. These may be carried by a student if the student has a **Physician Authorization** for the medication which states the medication can be carried. The **Physician Authorization** must be completed and signed by the licensed healthcare provider and be on file in the health room. The parent's/guardian's responsibility includes having a current and completed *Physician Authorization* or *Diabetes Medical Management Plan* signed by the healthcare provider. **It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to make certain that the student's self-carry medications are not expired and that they bring them to school.** The health paraprofessional should make a copy of the label on the self-carry inhaler box, ensuring the label expiration date is visible.

If a student has a fever (100-degree Fahrenheit or higher,) the parent will be called to take the student home per St. Lucie Public Schools Clinic Policy. Students may return to school when fever free for 24 hours without use of fever reducing medications (Tylenol, Motrin, etc).

Code of Student Conduct – See Discipline

Communication

Communication between school and home is essential to the success of every child and the school. Parents can view their child's progress through Skyward. You must sign up for Skyward Family Access. Please visit the front office to register for access. You must have your current ID available to register.

In order to improve communication between school and home:

1. A newsletter including information regarding curriculum, assessment information, and important upcoming events will be sent via email each month.
2. Parents/guardians should regularly review posted grades in Skyward and contact the teacher via Outlook email with any questions or concerns.
3. Newsletters, events and school calendars will be sent home via email and will also be posted on the West Gate K-8 Facebook page and the website.

To become updated on daily events at West Gate K-8, please follow our Webpage and Facebook page.

Methods of Communication at West Gate K-8:

School Messenger is a phone notification service that quickly delivers large volumes of messages such as: early dismissal, upcoming events, and fundraisers.

St Lucie County website / West Gate K-8 website: <https://schools.stlucie.k12.fl.us/wgk/>

Social Media: Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/West-Gate-K-8>

PTO: Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WestGatePTO>

Parents are requested to notify school personnel in the following sequence if there are concerns:

- 1st** **The Classroom Teacher:** Classroom teachers are the first line of communication. If parents have concerns regarding their child's academic performance, behavior, or social interaction with the teacher or students, they need to first have a conversation with the teacher. Parents may call and leave a message for the teacher to return a call, send a written request to set up a conference, or **email** a teacher with a conference request. Teachers will respond within 24 hours during the work week, Monday through Friday.
- 2nd** **School Counselor:** Following conversations with the classroom teacher on matters of student behavior and academics, parents may request a meeting with the appropriate school counselor. School counselors will be able to work with the teachers, the dean and parents to give suggestions to help your child be successful.
- 3rd** **Assistant Principal:** Following conversations with the School Counselors in matters of student behavior and academics, parents may request a conference with the assistant principal to further discuss an issue. The assistant principal will usually meet with the teacher, and any other necessary personnel who may be directly involved with the child's situation, prior to making the conference arrangements with the parent.
- 4th** **The Principal:** Following conversations with the classroom teacher, school counselor and assistant principal in matters of student behavior and academics, parents may request a conference with the principal to further discuss an issue. The principal will usually meet with the teacher, and any other necessary personnel who may be directly involved with the child's situation prior to making the conference arrangements with the parent. Parents must first contact the assistant principal regarding all other school-related issues. It may be that the assistant principal will refer the individual to the principal, teacher, school counselor, or other appropriate contact for additional information.

Conferences – Parent/Teacher

Parent and teacher communication are an important part of the school year. Teachers frequently communicate information to parents concerning school assignments, upcoming activities, and student progress. Parents should discuss the importance of teacher communication with their children and develop a system to ensure that all notes, memos, etc. reach home and school in a timely manner. All students in grades K-8 are provided a *Student Planner*. Teachers may direct students to use the planners in different ways, but this method of communication has been found to be highly effective in assisting students to develop good organizational skills as well as to provide an effective communication tool between teachers, students, and parents. Teachers are encouraged to have a minimum of one (1) conference with all parents during the school year. Conferences can be face-to-face or by telephone. All conferences need to be scheduled through the teacher of concern. The outline for a conference will typically include: the purpose, goals, strengths, areas for growth/concern and follow up. Contacting the teacher may be through phone message at the front office or email contact. The school counselor is also available by appointment for group conferences as needed. Contact the school counselor to schedule conferences when more than one teacher is involved. If you need to cancel an appointment, please call the school office as soon as possible.

Discipline

West Gate K-8 supports the belief that school should be a place where teachers can teach and students can learn. Maintaining an optimum environment for learning is dependent upon everyone in the school community. The intent of the Code of Conduct is to provide students with the greatest amount of freedom possible while commensurate with an effective teaching-learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is prescribed in Section 1006.07, Florida Statutes and may be supplemented or supplanted by the policies and regulations of SLPS.

The [Student Code of Conduct](#) policy will be discussed during the first week of school and can be accessed via the district and school website. Teachers will review the document with all students. Parents and students will need to review the document and sign off on the acknowledgment form before the deadline. Please note: All discipline rules will apply

during the After-School Program's hours of operation. Please refer to the St Lucie Code of Conduct @ <https://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/departments/student-services/> for more information.

Discipline Behavior Management Plan K-8

School Wide Positive Behavior Support Expectations

Respectful
Responsible
Ready to Learn
Safe

Hallway, Classroom and Auditoria rules align to these expectations. Students are expected to:

Hallway Rules

Keep hands, feet and objects to self

Walk on the right

Walk quietly

Follow adult directions

Classroom/Extended Learning Areas Rules

Follow directions

Stay on task

Keep hands, feet and objects to self

Auditeria Rules

Keep hands, feet and objects to self

Raise hand for help

Stay seated until adult permission is given

All adults on campus are actively supervising students to make sure that they are following these expectations.

Student Behavior Expectations and Disciplinary Procedures

Students are directly taught specific expectations that are to be followed throughout the school day in the entire campus. All staff members have the same expectations for every student. Students are rewarded for following the expectations. Using this system, we will continue to decrease the number of discipline referrals and classroom disruptions, thus, increasing instructional time.

Level 1 Offenses –Classroom Managed

Level 1 offenses are acts of misconduct which interfere with the orderly operation of the classroom, a school function, extracurricular/co-curricular program or approved transportation.

Minor Observations (Teacher Managed): (For strategies to address these behaviors go to PBISworld.com)

BEHAVIOR	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE(S)
Disrespect	Not honoring someone's space, feelings, or belongings – infrequently; low intensity : name calling, not following teacher's directions, taking someone else's things, playing	<p>Forgery/Theft (Low-frequency) theft of other's belongings or signing of another person's name: items valued at \$5.00 or less, taking small items belonging to others (pencils, etc.)</p> <p>Inappropriate Verbal Language (Low-intensity) instance of inappropriate language: slip of tongue not directed at anyone, making direct inappropriate comment, use of foul language</p> <p>Lying/Cheating (Low-intensity) infrequent offenses: copying someone else's classwork/home work (first time only)</p> <p>Misuse of Property (Low-intensity) misuse of property: writing in books or on tables/not major damage</p> <p>Physical Contact (non-serious) inappropriate physical contact: horse playing (arm wrestling, thumb war, playful slap, etc.)</p> <p>Public Display of Affection (PDA)</p> <p>Talking out of Turn Interrupting, interjecting, or talking without permission: shouting answers without raising hand, etc.</p>
Disruption	Low-intensity but inappropriate disruption: shouting out during class, banging on desk, tapping feet, etc.	Misuse of school property
Defiance/Non-Compliant	Brief or low-intensity of failing to respond to adult requests: disregard teacher's requests after warnings; students not working in class should be motivated to do so	<p>Out of seat, wandering around classroom at inappropriate times without permission: getting a drink of water without permission, etc.</p> <p>Chewing gum, texting, use of non-school approved electronics, being in unauthorized area in school</p>
Dress Code Violation	Low-frequency or minor violations of dress code	Wearing ripped jeans, or inappropriate school shirt logos, or any clothing listed on the "not allowed" portion of dress code.

The misconduct will be handled first by the teacher or staff member involved. When additional action becomes necessary because of continued violation or other serious concerns, the student will be referred to the dean for disciplinary action. Before moving to a Level 2 Offense (ODR – Office Driven Referral), the teacher will:

1st Offense – Give student a verbal warning (opportunity to fix dress code violation)

2nd Offense – Call Parent/Lunch Detention

3rd Offense – Referral/call parent/consequence determined by the Dean's Department

OFFICE MANAGED BEHAVIORS (LEVEL 2 AND ABOVE ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT) REQUIRE THAT AN OFFICE DISCIPLINE REFERRAL BE WRITTEN AND AN ACTION BE TAKEN IN MOST CASES.

Level 2 Offenses – Written Referral - Office Managed

Level 2 offenses may include minor acts of misconduct previously identified. It may also include repeated acts of misconduct and acts directed against persons or property, but which do not seriously endanger the health and safety of others. This misconduct will be reported to the dean's office for disciplinary action. The consequences for the referral may be, but are not limited to: lunch detention, morning detention, in school suspension (ISS) in increments of time based on the offense, and out of school suspension (OSS).

Level 3 Offenses –Written Referral – Office Managed

Level 3 offenses include but are not limited to: repeated acts of misconduct, serious disruptions of the orderly conduct of school, threats to the health, safety and property of self or others and other acts of serious misconduct. These acts of misconduct will be reported immediately to the dean's office and may result in immediate removal of the student from school and in case of criminal act, notification of Law Enforcement or School Board Security.

Consequences may include but are not limited to: mandatory parent conference, confiscation of unauthorized materials/objects/contraband, in school suspension (ISS) in increments of time based on the offense, out of school suspension (OSS), or possible recommendation of expulsion.

Level 4 Offenses – Written Referral – Office Managed

Level 4 offenses are those of the most serious category. Any of these acts committed shall be sufficient grounds for recommendation for expulsion, and may result in out of school suspension of up to 10 days with the recommendation for expulsion. These offenses will be reported immediately to the dean's office and may result in immediate removal of the student from school and referral to appropriate law enforcement agency. Consequences may include but are not limited to: mandatory parent conference with administrator or district employee, confiscation of unauthorized materials/objects/contraband, behavior intervention plan, or out of school suspension (OSS) for up to 10 days with recommendation for expulsion.

Major Observations (Office managed):

(Office-managed/referral process) BEHAVIOR	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
Abusive/Profane Inappropriate Language that is disruptive to the entire environment.	Verbal messages that include swearing, name calling, or use of words in an inappropriate way that is a major disruption to the learning environment.	Yelling and cussing out a staff member in front of other students /staff.
Alcohol	Possessing or using alcohol	
Arson	Planning and/or participating in malicious burning of property.	Lighting match or lighter
Bomb Threat/False Alarm	Delivering a message of possible explosive materials being on-campus; pulling fire alarm.	Bomb Threat/False Alarm, stink bombs.
Fighting/Physical Aggression	Action involving serious physical contact where injury may occur.	Includes: hitting, punching, hitting with an object, kicking, hair pulling, scratching, biting, pinching, spitting in someone's face, etc.
Forgery/Theft	Possessing, having passed on, or being responsible for removing someone else's property or has signed a person's name without that person's permission.	Taking someone else's property that is worth \$5.00 or more (cell phone, iPod, fundraiser money, lunch money, etc.)
Reoccurring harassment, Teasing, Taunting & Threats	Delivering disrespectful messages (verbal or gestural) to another person.	Includes: regularly using threats, intimidation, obscene gestures, pictures or written notes, comments

		based on race, religion, gender, age, disability, national origin, or personal matters.
Lying/Cheating	Delivering messages that are untrue and/or deliberately violates rules.	Copying tests, using unauthorized notes during tests, the use of AI without citations.
Other drugs	Possessing or using illegal substances or imitations.	Bringing and/or sharing alcohol, vapes, or any other illicit drug on campus
Property damage	Deliberately impairs the usefulness of property.	Furniture, computers, school property.
Sexual/Pornographic material	Possessing any items of a sexual nature.	Magazines, condoms, videos, pictures in cell phones (MMS), etc.
Contraband Materials	Any item which, relating to its nature, is illegal to be possessed, or sold.	Lighter, pocketknife, any sharp instruments, matches, etc.

Deans determine the consequences for repeated misconduct of higher-level referrals based on the guidelines of the Code of Conduct. School administration becomes involved in disciplinary action when the misconduct is a Level 3 or 4.

Search and Seizure – Section 1006.09(9) Florida Statutes

The school principal, assistant principal, and deans reserve the right to search any school property (e.g. desks, storage areas) for suspected contraband (e.g. drugs, weapons, etc.). Students' clothing, persons, and property may be searched when reasonable suspicion or evidence exists.

There is **Zero Tolerance** for major disruptions, such as fighting in public areas, possession of drugs or other illegal substances, bullying or assault and/or battery of a student or staff member.

Bullying and Harassment School Board Policy (3.43) Completion of Investigations

St. Lucie County School Board Policy (3.43) Against Bullying and Harassment

a. Statement prohibiting bullying and harassment:

It is the policy of the Saint Lucie Public Schools that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The district will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited.

b. Definition of bullying and a definition of harassment:

Bullying means systematically (carried out with a system, method or plan) and chronically (continuing for a long period of time) inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment, cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:

1. Teasing
2. Social Exclusion
3. Threat
4. Intimidation
5. Stalking

6. Cyber-stalking
7. Cyber-bullying
8. Physical violence
9. Theft
10. Sexual, religious, gender, ethnic or racial harassment
11. Harassment of any kind involving sexual orientation, socio-economic status or family background
12. Public humiliation
13. Destruction of property
14. Rumor or spreading of falsehoods

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

1. Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school

Bullying and harassment also encompasses:

1. Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not done in good faith is considered retaliation.
2. Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by:
 - a. Incitement or coercion
 - b. Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system
 - c. Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially like the effect of bullying or harassment

Cyber-stalking as defined in s. 784.048(1)(d), F.S., as a means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

Cyber-bullying is defined as the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of another person or persons through the use of digital technologies, including but not limited to email, blogs, social websites (Facebook, MySpace, etc.), chat rooms, instant messaging, text messaging, digital pictures or images, cellular telephone communications and defamatory websites, regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off school property and with or without school resources. For off-campus conduct, the school will be responsive in cases where the off-campus conduct causes, or threatens to cause, a substantial disruption at school or interference with the rights of students to be safe and secure.

Please refer to the [Code of Student Conduct](#) for additional policy information regarding bullying.

The administration refers suspected illegal violations to the School Resource Deputy who will decide as to whether the citation is a crime. Students who participate in criminal activities or repeated major disruptive behavior will be recommended for expulsion by the administration.

Copies of referrals are sent home within 24 hours of the action being taken. Students receiving in-school school suspension will spend time in the Behavior Intervention Classroom (BIC.) During BIC, students are given behavior

counseling, as well as schoolwork, as are students who attend Project Rock during an out of school suspension. Consequences for behavior infractions may include lunch detention, BIC assignment, out of school suspension, restorative circles or Saturday school.

Thank you for your support of the policies put in place to keep students safe while at West Gate K8. For a more detailed list of discipline codes and possible consequences please refer to the Saint Lucie Public Schools Code of Student Conduct.

Dismissal

Our school policy states that no dismissal changes will be made after 3:15 pm. If you need to notify your child of a dismissal change or sign your child out of school, it must be made prior to 3:15 pm and communicated with the front office as well as the teacher. **We must have a written note from the parent if anyone other than the guardian picks up your child. The person designated to pick up your child must be listed on the emergency contact list. Students must have a written note from a parent if the student is going home a different way than usual. (ex. Regular bus rider to walk home).**

Morning

- Parents may begin dropping off students at 9:05 a.m.
- If a student wishes to eat breakfast, they should arrive no later than 9:05 a.m.
- Parents who drop off students after 9:30 a.m. must physically accompany their child into the main office to sign them in for the day. Any student arriving after 9:30 a.m. is tardy.
- Parents may drop off their students in the front entrance or the cafeteria entrance. Parents will leave their child at the entrance gate unless they need a special pass to accompany their child to the classroom. Normally parents do not accompany their child to the classroom unless a teacher requests it or there is something large to carry.
- If parents choose to park and walk their children to the sidewalk, they must cross in the marked crosswalk.

Afternoon

- Students will be dismissed at 4:00 p.m.
- Kindergarten, first and second grade will be walked to the Parent Pick-up area and seated on the benches designated for their area. The students in grades K-4 will be dismissed from their designated areas. Otherwise, they are released to the gym at 4:15.
- Parents who are picking up their K-4 children should be in the inside lane nearest the guardrail, and 5-8 in the outside lane, and pull forward until the traffic stops.
- **Please do not honk your horn in the parent pick up line**, it encourages students to go to cars unaccompanied and this creates an unsafe environment. Adults will locate and load your child(ren).
- Please do not park your vehicles for student afternoon pick-up.
- Please remain in your vehicles during parent pick-up. The Faculty and Staff will find your child and load them in your car. Students follow the car to the last crosswalk while drivers wait for them.
- Parents should **NOT** be changing lanes until they pass the last crosswalk near Cashmere Blvd.
- **Drivers should not use cell phones in the Parent Pick-up** area as full attention should be paid to the traffic and students.
- All drivers need to use patience and courtesy. Your behavior should serve as an example to our students and your children. Friendly smiles are always welcomed.
- All students need to be picked up by 4:15 p.m.
- If students are not picked up after 4:15 p.m., they will be moved into the main office. Parents will need to park their vehicle and come in to sign them out. This is a state law.

Dress Code 2025-2026

We encourage students to take pride in their attire as it relates to the school setting. Students are to dress in a manner that, in addition to the following guidelines, takes into consideration the safety, health, and welfare of self and others, and does not disrupt the learning environment. **Appropriateness of dress shall be determined by the school administration** per Governing Board Policy. If there is a dress code violation, he/she will be allowed to change clothing and/or will be subject to disciplinary action.



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Permitted	Not Permitted
Tops - Shirts and Blouses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have sleeves, reach hips, & have school appropriate logos, images, and phrases. Bottoms - Pants, Joggers, Jeans, Capris, Shorts, Skirts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be worn at the waist and be fingertip-length or longer. Any clothing with frays or distressed material must <u>not</u> reveal skin. Dresses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must have sleeves and be loosely fitted. Must be fingertip-length or longer. Sweaters, hoodies and Jackets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be worn with a school appropriate shirt underneath. Hoods must remain down while on school grounds. Shoes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All footwear must be closed-toed and have a back or strap. Head Attire/Jewelry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headbands (non-distracting) must be worn on top of the head and not on the forehead. 	Clothing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No spandex, tight fitting, see-through. No leggings, pajama pants, jeggings, onesies, yoga pants, biking/compression shorts. *Leggings/bike shorts may be worn only when under a dress/skirt or shorts of appropriate length* No clothing with alcohol, drugs or weapons references or anything profane, obscene or indicating gang or criminal association. No visible undergarments. No clothing with holes, rips, frays or tears that expose skin. Shoes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No flip flops, house slippers or slides. No shoes with wheels Head Attire/Jewelry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No kerchiefs, caps, hats, sunglasses, bandanas, doo-rags, sweatbands, and combs on hair or similar items are permitted. No spiked jewelry. No headphones, Air Pods, earbuds

****State Law –** Each student is prohibited from, while on school grounds during the regular school day, wearing clothing that exposes underwear or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner or in a manner that disrupts the orderly learning environment. A student who violates this dress policy will be subject to progressive disciplinary actions as outlined by the Code of Conduct.

Disciplinary Action/Consequences

- Verbal warning and opportunity to correct dress code
- Parent Contact
- Conference with administration AND Lunch detention
- Saturday school/In School Suspension
- Violations may result in a modified dress code determined by administration (examples include but are not limited to the requirement of wearing belts, clear backpacks, zippered jackets, etc.)

Due to rapid changes in our society, it may become necessary to modify the dress code or to include additional items at the judgement of administration.

Disciplinary Action/Consequences

- Verbal warning and opportunity to correct dress code
- Parent Contact
- Conference with administration AND Lunch detention
- In School Suspension

Due to rapid changes in our society, it may become necessary to modify the dress code or to include additional items at the judgement of administration.

Non-Dress Code Days

Occasionally there will be days that students will be allowed to wear non-dress code clothing. Examples are spirit days such as pajama day or the 100th day of school. When these days occur, the general guidelines are:

- Clothing must be free from holes, frays and tears, inappropriate graphics or wording, too short, sheer see-through, no shirts without sleeves, no tank tops, no cleavage or stomach showing. Shoes must be closed at the heels and toes.

Drop-off/Pick-up

Our drop off and pick up procedures are for the safety and security of our campus and students. We recognize that they may not always seem to be the most efficient for parent timelines and schedules but please respect our procedures for the safety of ALL students and our employees. We appreciate your cooperation in helping create a safe, effective drop-off/pick-up zone. If any employee makes a request to you, please respect their request and comply knowing that they represent the West Gate Administrative team. Again, student safety is our number one priority.

In the event we need to check your ID for pick up, you may be asked to park your car and go into the front office before we release the student.

Drop Off:

- Students may not be dropped off until 9:05 or until an adult is there to receive and supervise them. You must remain in your car until an adult arrives to begin parent drop off.
- There is one entrance and one exit.
- Please do not run over our cones.
- Pull forward until you see the adult with the STOP sign.
- We only drop off students at the crosswalk, you may not drop off your child(ren) before you reach the adult with the STOP sign.
- Once you have dropped off your child(ren), you may not leave until you get the green GO SLOWLY sign.
- If you need to walk your child(ren) in, you must park your car and walk across at the crosswalk.
- Please turn your music down and refrain from using your cell phones, vaping, and smoking in the line.
- The traffic area is for drop off only, you can schedule parent-teacher conferences by calling the main office.
- Do not park your car or leave your car unattended in this area. This can result in a traffic ticket.

Parent Pick Up:

- The car line opens at school dismissal at 4:00PM. Parents line up before then, but we do not begin calling names until dismissal.
- There is one entrance and one exit.
- All students who are parent pick are to be picked up through the line, do not park and walk up to the line.
- Non-employees are not permitted on the sidewalk during dismissal.
- Please do not run over our cones.
- We use an intercom system, your child's name will be called over the intercom and adults will direct your child(ren) to your car and load them, and belt them in if needed.
- Have your hang tag visible for us to read it, use thick, dark sharpie marker indicating your child(ren)'s first and last name, grade and teacher. If your windows are tinted, roll your window down as you approach.
- Please turn your music down and refrain from using your cell phones, vaping, and smoking in the line.

- We only load children into cars where there are employees. If you see your child, they must wait for an employee and not cross lanes or cross gates alone, no matter how old they are. Please do not encourage this behavior.
- Please do not honk your horn to get your child's attention.
- Often, we will ask you to pull forward to the crosswalk for loading, your child will follow your car.
- Do not exit your car at any time.
- Do not change lanes once in the parent pick up lane unless instructed to do so by an employee. There are many little feet being moved across the lanes and we want to protect them and our big feet also.
- The traffic area is for pick-up only, you can schedule parent-teacher conferences by calling the main office.
- Do not park your car or leave your car unattended in this area. This can result in a traffic ticket.
- ***NOTE*** The first week is usually longer than usual but after that we have the parent pick up line to completion in 30 minutes. We have many families that pick up their children. We appreciate our Mustang involvement and welcome the opportunity to interact with each of you at the end of our day. Remember patience and kindness with our teachers and staff.

Bus Loading Zone:

- There is no parking in the bus zone at any time on the curb, by the breezeway. If you have business in the front office or signing your child(ren) in or out, you must park your car in a visitor parking lot south of the faculty parking lot.
- Do not park your car or leave your car unattended in this area for any reason.
- Buses should be able to access the school loading zone without obstructions.

Walkers:

- Students who are walkers, are just that, walking home.
- Students should walk off campus on sidewalks and use crosswalks with crossing guards if crossing the street
- Walkers do not walk to cars illegally parked in the faculty parking lot, in the grass area or in the parking spots at the front of the car line.

Grass Area Surrounding Campus:

- We do not monitor this area, student safety is not supervised by West Gate K8
- Dropping off students in the middle of the street is illegal.
- Parking on the grass and calling your child(ren) to go to your car violates our safety procedures for dismissal. We cannot monitor your child's safety when they are running off from designated supervised areas. Please do not begin this practice this year.

Pre-K Drop off/Pick Up:

- ONLY CARS WITH PRE-IDENTIFIED YELLOW PASSES ARE PERMITTED IN THE FACULTY PARKING LOT.
- Drop off is at 9:45 A.M. and pick up is at 3:45 P.M.
- The assigned yellow 2025-2026 parking pass must be displayed hanging from the rear-view mirror.
- The adult picking up the student will park in a parking space.
- You may not park or drive in the bus loop area (by the curb or breezeway).
- If your child needs supervision, the adult picking up the child must walk to the breezeway area and receive the student from the supervising staff.
- Staff will not walk into the parking lot area to drop students off to individual cars.
- Do not double park.
- Do not use handicap spaces unless you have a handicap decal.
- Parents are to wait outside the school gates and may not enter the campus through the side gate. If you need to enter the school, you must sign in at the front office.
- Early pick-up must be documented at the front office. Students will not be released through the side gate/bus loop area before 3:45 PM.

Early Pick up of Students

Students will not be released to persons other than parents or legal guardians unless the identity and authority of the person has been established by notification from the parent or guardian in writing and the name is included on the official emergency contact list. The release request shall be denied if proper identification is not provided or if the person picking up the child is not on the emergency contact list. When a student is leaving school before the regular dismissal time, a note must be sent with the student. Teachers will deliver all such requests to the main office for verification before the child is released. Students must be released through the front office. The parent/guardian must “sign out” the student at the school office. If the student returns before the end of the school day, he/she must report to the office with a parent/guardian to “sign in” and get an *Admission Slip* to return to class. **PLEASE DO NOT REQUEST EARLY DISMISSALS within 45 minutes of a dismissal time**, as this interferes with the general dismissal procedures and compromises school safety and security measures. Students may not change their dismissal method without a written note from their parent.

Emergency Card

Please update the information on this card each year and each time something changes. Only the registering parent can add or remove an emergency contact. They must do so in person. Only people listed on the emergency contact list can pick up your child.

Emergency Management Plan

West Gate K-8 will follow the St. Lucie County School Board Emergency Management Plan in the event of an emergency at the school. A copy of the plan is housed in the Principal’s Office, the front desk, and the custodial office.

Teachers have information regarding what to do in the event of an emergency as part of their handbook. This information is reviewed with students regularly prior to scheduled drills including Fire Drills, Tornado Drills, and Code Red and Yellow Drills.

Nuclear Emergency Procedures:

In the event of a nuclear emergency that would require evacuation of the St. Lucie Public Schools, the Principal will implement school nuclear evacuation procedures:

- No action would be taken with the class of emergency known as “unusual event.” This emergency classification generally involves a minor incident at the plant site that requires no public action.
- In a “site area emergency” or “general emergency,” which involves a more serious incident, evacuation may be required with students being transported to pre-determined centers. Buses will be activated at the alert stage. Parents will not be permitted to pick up students at the school.
- In case of a nuclear evacuation, the school will be notified that buses are En Route to the school. The procedures for evacuating students to the bus loading zones are:
 - ❖ Students and teachers will return to homeroom.
 - ❖ Teachers must take their grade book and any available contact information with them.
 - ❖ All faculty members must accompany the students on the buses.
 - ❖ Clerical and cafeteria personnel without private vehicles will be evacuated by bus.
 - ❖ When the buses have arrived, we will dismiss classes to the bus loading zone in the designated.
 - ❖ If evacuation is required, the St. Lucie County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will notify affected schools. Please note that not all schools may be affected.
 - ❖ Teachers and school personnel will assist students with the school’s evacuation process.
 - ❖ St. Lucie Public Schools will evacuate all affected students and school personnel to the St. Lucie County Fairgrounds, 15601 West Midway Road, Fort Pierce. In order that we may evacuate the area in a timely manner to ensure students’ safety, parents may not pick up students at the school.
 - ❖ Local radio and television stations will announce when and where parents can pick up their students.

- ❖ Teachers will man pick-up stations at the Fairgrounds and will account for and supervise students until parents pick them up.

Exceptional Student Education (ESE)

West Gate K-8 provides a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) with continuum of services in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for each child. The teachers and staff at West Gate K-8 work collaboratively with parents to develop Individual Educational Plans (IEP's) with appropriate services and accommodations based on students' academic and behavioral needs. If you have any questions you may call: ESE clerk: 772-807-7608 or one of the ESE School Specialists at 772-807-5080 or 772-807-5081.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

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

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

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

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

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

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

Parents or eligible students may ask the School District of St. Lucie County to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of a student's privacy rights. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of a student's privacy rights. If the District decides not to amend the records as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

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

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

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

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

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

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

* * *

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

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

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

* * *

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

Field Trips

Students may participate in field trips only with written permission from their parents. For each field trip, a form is provided for permission with a space for a parent/guardian's signature. These forms must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the classroom teacher. Out-of-County permission forms must be notarized. Field Trips are an extension of the curriculum and attendance is a privilege. Repeated misbehavior and/or referrals will prevent your child from participating. If a child has more than one referral or engages in a serious offense from the time the letter is sent home until the day of the trip, the trip can be denied; final decisions are made by administration. Parents may not chaperone unless cleared as a volunteer. Siblings may not accompany parents that are chaperoning a school-sponsored trip. Specific details regarding field trips will be sent home in advance of the trip.

Based on the St. Lucie County Student Code of Conduct, any student with a summative of 3 level points thru date of trip will be required to receive administrative approval prior to attending the trip. **NO REFUNDS WILL BE PROVIDED AFTER THE FIELD TRIP CUT-OFF DATE**

For example:

A student has 3 level 1 referrals (Level 1 + Level 1 + Level 1 = 3)

A student has 1 level 2 referral and 1 level 1 referral (Level 2 + Level 1 = 3)

A student has 1 level 3 referral (Level 3 = 3).

Parents who chaperone must be willing to ride the bus and be there to supervise on the way to and from the trip. Driving separately or leaving the group at the end of the trip to extend your stay at the location is **not** allowed. Student safety and supervision are the purposes of having chaperones and they are needed the entire trip start to finish. Please consider this before volunteering to be a chaperone.

Although most field trip's locations are open to the public, only approved chaperones are allowed to be with West Gate K-8 classes at the location. Parents who choose not to be chaperones may not meet the group at the location, join the group, or check their child(ren) out at the field trip location.

If your child needs any medication administered during the off-campus field trip, you need to obtain a Physician Authorization form from your school clinic or family physician. If your child has been receiving medication at school and the paperwork is in place, please ignore this request. This is for new medication or new requests for field trips. This form must be signed by both the physician and parent/guardian. This is St. Lucie Public School Board policy.

Grading

Uniform Grading System

In grades K-2, the indicators are:

4 (Above Standard)

3 (At Standard)

2 (Approaching Standard)

1 (Below Standard)

0 (Not Attempted)

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

Grade	Percent	Grade Point Average	Definition
A	90-100	4	Outstanding progress
B	80-89	3	Above average progress
C	70-79	2	Average progress
D	60-69	1	Lowest acceptable progress
F	0-59	0	Failure

I	0	0	Incomplete*
W	N/A	N/A	Withdrawn Dual Enrollment

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

Calculation of Middle School Grades Full Year

1st 9 weeks = 40%	3rd 9 weeks = 40%	
2nd 9 weeks = 40%	4th 9 weeks = 40%	<i>Semester 1 / Semester 2 Only</i>
Semester exam = 20%	Semester exam = 20%	1st 9 weeks = 40%
Total First Semester	Total Second Semester	2nd 9 weeks = 40%
Grade = 100%	Grade = 100%	Semester exam = 20%

In courses with State End-Of-Course Exams, the grading algorithm will change in alignment with F.S. 1008.22:

Full Year

1st 9 weeks = 35 %

2nd 9 weeks = 35%

Comprehensive State End-of-Course Exam = 30%

Total First Semester Grade = 100% *

3rd 9 Weeks = 35%

4th 9 Weeks = 35%

Comprehensive State End-Of-Course Exam = 30%

Total Second Semester Grade = 100%

Semester 1 / Semester 2 Only

1st 9 weeks = 35 %

2nd 9 weeks = 35%

Comprehensive State End-of-Course Exam = 30%

*** No credit or grade** will be earned in the first semester in courses with End-of-Course State Exams until scores are received and applied for 30% of the grade.

A student with a disability, as defined by Sec. 1007.02(2), F.S., for whom the individual education plan team determines that the end-of-course assessment cannot accurately measure the student's abilities, taking into consideration all allowable accommodations, shall have the end-of-course assessment results waived for purposes of determining the student's course grade and competing requirements for middle grades promotion.

Grade Point Average Calculations

Point Value: A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, F = 0

Total points divided by 10 (this number is derived by counting each nine weeks 2 times and the semester exams one) = GPA to letter grade

Grade Point Average Grade Given

3.51 - 4.0 A

2.51 - 3.50 B

1.51 - 2.50 C

.51 - 1.50 D

0 - .50 F

If a student receives two report card academic grades of "F" in a semester of a course, the semester average is automatically determined as an "F" except in EOC courses.

Pass (P) and Fail (F) Letter Grades

PASS (P) or FAIL (F) letter grades, for which equivalent numerical grade point average values and percent as those outlined in (F.S.1003.437) cannot be ascertained, will be omitted when calculating the cumulative grade point average of students for class ranking. However, a course with a letter grade of PASS (P) will be counted as credit for the purpose of determining credit requirements for grade classification, participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities, and graduation.

PASS (P) and FAIL (F) letter grades, with equivalent numerical grade point average values and percent as those outlined in (F.S. 1003.437), will be included when calculating the cumulative grade point average of students for participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities, class ranking, graduation, and determining credit requirements for grade classification.

Upon receipt of PASS (P) and FAIL (F) letter grades for an identified student, a identified staff member for the receiving school shall request in writing an interpretation of the letter grades from the sending school district(s).

Written correspondence between the receiving school's staff member and letter grades verification from the sending school district(s) will be placed in the identified student's cumulative folder for future reference.

Guidance - School Counseling Services

West Gate K-8 employs full-time certified school counselors. Counselors consistently monitor and enhance academic progress and achievement. They advocate for educational and career planning and strive to remove barriers to learning. School counselors are qualified to address the developmental needs of all students through a comprehensive school counseling program targeting the academic, career and social-emotional development of all students. School counselors are available by email or by appointment to discuss student issues with parents/guardians.

Health Screenings

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

The screenings will include:

- Height/weight, which will include Body Mass Index (BMI) calculation for Grades 1, 3, & 6
- Vision and hearing screenings for Grades K, 1, 3, and 6
- Scoliosis screenings for Grade 6

Parents will be informed, in writing, if their child fails to meet any of the screening standards and are encouraged to seek further professional assistance. If a parent DOES NOT want their child to participate in school health screenings, they must NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IN WRITING AND INCLUDE THE CHILD'S NAME AND GRADE. In addition to these screening activities, students will receive first aid and care in the event he/she is injured or becomes ill while in school

Homeless Education (McKinney-Vento Act)

If you lost your housing due to foreclosure and now live doubled-up with family or friends; in a shelter, motel, vehicle, camping ground, or temporary trailer; on the street; or in another type of temporary or inadequate housing, your child(ren) may be able to receive help through a federal law called the McKinney-Vento Act. Additional information is available in the front office or through our middle school counselor, our school's liaison.

Homework

Research indicates that meaningful and realistic homework, along with parent support results in better student academic performance of students. Homework provides practice and support to concepts provided during the school day. It is also used to prepare for future concept acquisition and exploration of areas of interest for individual students through targeted or teacher –designed skill development. Homework assists in developing good study habits and responsibility. Parents/guardians can assist children with their homework by providing a quiet workspace with minimal

distractions, plenty of materials, and supervision to ensure students stay on task. Parents/guardians are encouraged to verify completion of homework, but not to mask student difficulties by completing work for the child or correcting all practice sets. The direct involvement with homework should diminish as a child enters middle school and develops independent work skills.

* All K-5 students are expected to complete 45 minutes on iReady Reading and 45 minutes on iReady Math per week.

Honor Roll Grades 3rd through 8th

Grades 3-5 Criteria

All "A's	Principal's Honor Roll	No C's, D's, or F's, in any class NO P's or N's in conduct All grades for 9 weeks must be earned at WGK8
A's & B's	A/B" Honor Roll	

Grades 6-8 Criteria

4.0	Principal's Honor Roll	NO C's except for HS Courses (Alg/Geo/Spanish 1) NO N's, P's or U's in conduct All grades for 9 weeks must be earned at WGK8
3.5-3.99	Honor Roll	
3.0-3.49	Honor Roll	

Immunizations Requirements

Students may not enter school unless the school clinic has received proof of immunization on a Florida 680 form:

- 5 doses DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
- 4 doses Polio vaccine
- 3 doses Hepatitis B (or 2 dose series)
- 2 doses MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)
- 2 doses Varicella (required for K through 6th grade)
- 1 dose Varicella (Grades 2 – 5)

In addition to the above, incoming 7th graders are required to have **completed** the following before entering school:

- 1 dose Tdap Booster (Tetanus-Diphtheria, pertussis)

Insurance

Your child will be provided the safest of school environments. However, an injury can result from an accident and Saint Lucie Public Schools does not assume liability in these instances. We encourage parents to enroll their child in the Student Accidental Insurance Program available through the school. Paperwork is sent home the first week of school.

Lost and Found

All articles lost on the bus or at school will be turned into the Lost and Found area, located in the front office. Please label all coats, lunch boxes, and other personal items. **All items remaining after the last day of school will be donated to a charity.**

Lunch Visits

Parents are not permitted to eat lunch at the auditoria tables. Lunch is an appropriate time to foster social development among peers. We strongly encourage that you consider having lunch with your child for special occasions only, upon approval from Administration.

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 will take announced tests on the first day of returning to school. Students will be allowed 2 days to prepare for tests assigned during their absence.

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.
- Middle school teachers use Canvas and students have access to many of their assignments and the ability to turn in work should an absence occur.
- Teachers are not required to accept incomplete work late, but often do. Be sure you are in communication with the teacher on his/her specific late or extra credit policies beyond the SLPS Make up Work Policy.

Middle School Promotion Requirements

Students in grades 6-8 will use the course system by semester instead of a yearlong point system for grading. Students must pass each semester with a grade of "D" or higher in both semesters in the following core subject areas to be promoted to 9th grade:

- **Mathematics:** Three middle school or higher courses in mathematics. (Six Semesters) Each middle school must offer at least one high school-level mathematics course for which students may earn high school credit.
 - ❖ The Algebra I EOC will count for 30% of the student's grade.
 - ❖ The Geometry EOC will count for 30% of the student's grade.
- **English:** Three middle school or higher courses. (Six Semesters) These courses shall emphasize literature, composition and technical text.
- **Science:** Three middle school or higher courses. (Six Semesters)
- **Social Studies:** (Six Semesters), one of which must include the study of State and Federal Government and Civic education.
 - ❖ Beginning with students entering Grade 6 in the 2012-13 school year, one of these courses must be at least one semester of a civics education course that a student successfully completes in accordance with s.1008.22(3)(c). Students transferring in from out of state, private or home school during second semester of 8th grade are exempt from the Civics requirement.

Students who complete one of the required courses with a passing grade have met the successful completion requirements. In addition, the following options may be used as alternate documentation of successful completion of required courses:

- Student has successfully completed the course through a virtual school program or comparable computer-based program.
- Student has scored an acceptable level on subject-related state assessment or EOC.
- Student has completed the course through a summer or tutorial program.

- Student is a transfer student demonstrating mastery as outlined in Statute 6A-1.09942, State Uniform Transfer of Students in Middle Grades.
- Student has documented mastery of course requirements by receiving a passing grade on a final exam, semester exams, or an end-of-course exit exam.

Students completing eighth grade will be promoted to ninth grade following successful completion of the above requirements. Students will be retained in eighth grade if any of the above requirements are not met.

If a student does not pass a required core semester class in sixth, seventh or eighth grade, and does not meet one of the alternate documentation methods, parents will be notified that the student will not be eligible for promotion to high school and will be retained in 8th grade unless the courses are successfully completed through repeating a course within the school day or credit recovery options. Such notification must be provided at the end of each semester in which a student fails a core class.

If a sixth or seventh grade student fails multiple core classes and an attainable remediation plan cannot be developed, the student may be recommended to an alternative program or retained in grade level. The final decision regarding grade placement is the responsibility of the principal.

In Addition to the Four Core Subjects

- Middle school students will receive instruction in a selection of electives chosen from, but not limited to, reading, art, music, and foreign language. The scheduling of this instruction shall be determined annually by the School Board (F.S. 1001.40)
- Students enrolled in grades 6-8 must have the equivalent of one class period per day of physical education for one semester of each year (225 minutes).
- *PE Waiver*
Students in grade K-8 are eligible to waive the physical education requirement if they meet any of the following criteria:
The student is enrolled or required to enroll in a remedial course, the student 's parent indicates in writing to the school that the parent requests the student be enrolled in another course from among the courses offered as options by the school district; or the student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirement
- Students must complete one course with a career and education planning component.
The course must be internet-based and customizable for each student. This research- based class will assist students in identifying educational and career options, as well as setting goals including an emphasis on entrepreneurship skills.
- The course may be taken during 6th, 7th or 8th grade.
- The course may be taught by any member of the instructional staff; and must include career exploration. The course must result in the completion of a personalized academic and career plan and emphasize technology or the application of technology in career fields.

The required personalized academic and career plan must inform students of high school graduation requirements, high school assessment and college entrance test requirements, Florida Bright Futures Scholarship requirements, state university and Florida College System institution admission requirements, and programs through which a high school student can earn college credit, including Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advance International Certificate of Education, dual enrollment, career academy and career themed course opportunities, courses that lead to national industry certification, and diploma designation.

Each student shall complete a personal education plan that must be signed by the student and the student's parent.

Students repeating a course for credit recovery may waive electives until the semester that they are back on track to meet promotion criteria.

For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or 2 or identified levels as determined by the state on the mathematics portion of the state assessment, the student must receive remediation the following year, which may be integrated into the student's required math course. Students taking Intensive Math (1204000) can only count it one time as a math course during 6th, 7th or 8th grade even if the course is taken multiple times.

- Students in Grades 6, 7, or 8 who are not enrolled in schools with a middle grade configuration are subject to the promotion requirements of this section.

Middle School Course Recovery

Students in grades 6-8 must validate mastery of the content standards in the failed course(s) through the following options:

- Retaking the course through course recovery or participating in an on-line, competency-based course. The students will waive the right to an elective course and enroll in the appropriate remedial course(s):
 - On-line competency-based course in the evening or summer from home, if available.
 - Repeating the course at school during an elective period.

Alternatives to 8th Grade Retention

An 8th grade student who has not met State requirements for promotion to 9th grade may enroll in a district 8-9 transition program at an alternative site (if funding is available) where the student will receive course work to complete middle school requirements and complete five (5) credits of 9th grade high school course work, entering high school in the first semester of the next academic year as a 10th grade student, under the following conditions:

- The student was not promoted to ninth grade as a result of failing one (1) semester of a core course but not more than two (2) semesters of core courses in grades 6-8,
- The student maintains good attendance, follows the Code of Student Conduct, and a commitment to academic progress is evident at the alternative site.
- The student and parent understand that the 8-9 transition program is a mandatory one-year program, and that, once enrolled, withdrawing prior to the end of the school year in June will result in the student's assignment to his/her zone middle school or K8 school for the remainder of the school year to complete grade 8. The student would then enter high school as a 9th grade student in the first semester of the next academic year IF the student meets 8th grade promotion requirements.

The above promotion requirements for middle school students also apply to students with disabilities following the Florida Standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.

Mustang of the Month

Each grade in K-2 will be given the opportunity to nominate two students, grades 3-5 will nominate one student and each homeroom teacher in grades 6-8 will be given the opportunity to nominate one student as "Student of the Month."

In grades K-2 one student will be selected for Character Pillar; the other student will be selected for Academic Improvement. Students in grades 3-8 will ONLY be recognized for "Character Pillar."

Perfect Attendance (Grades K-8)

Students who have obtained Perfect Attendance will receive a certificate for the nine-week period earned. Students with tardiness or early pickups will not be recognized for Perfect Attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Florida Legislature in the 1987 session enacted legislation requiring the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag be recited at the beginning of the day in every public elementary and secondary school in the state. According to the Pledge of Allegiance Act of 2007, a written request of a parent/guardian is necessary for a student to be exempt.

Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (P.B.I.S.)

To maintain a well-disciplined school, all members of the school staff, along with cooperative and supportive parents, must be concerned with consistent enforcement of disciplinary guidelines. School discipline is a learning process guiding students into patterns of desirable conduct. This establishes a school environment where students can receive an education commensurate with the expectations of society. West Gate will continue to implement the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) Program. PBIS is an approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS supports the success of ALL students.

PBIS Mission Statement – West Gate K-8 works to facilitate positive behavior in our students. Our mission is to increase instructional time through the development of effective, proactive and education-oriented interventions that result in a reduction of inappropriate behaviors by students. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a school-wide system of support that includes proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environment. Parents are an important part of the school's P.B.I. S. implementation. We encourage parents to use the same expectations and rules that the school teaches. This common language creates consistency and a unified support for expected student behavior. Parents are asked to discuss the common rules and expectations and help us reinforce them. Children thrive when they have consistent, predictable expectations and consequences.

What Happens When A Student Follows the Expectations?

The instructional educational plan can be implemented at its best when students all follow the expectations. Teachers are able to teach in an environment conducive to learning and students are able to learn in an environment that is comfortable and safe. Students earn Mustang Bucks when they abide by the expectations, which can then be used to earn special rewards. Some of the rewards are listed below:

- P.B.I. S. events that are scheduled throughout the school year
- Drawings for special gifts
- Sit with a friend in the cafeteria
- Special themed dress code days

Tiered Model of Support for Behavior

Each intervention tier of the model defines the level and intensity of services required for a student to progress behaviorally.

Tier 1: Tier 1 is intended for all students and in all settings. It is preventative and proactive. At this level students learn the rules and expectations, and when a rule or expectation is broken, the student responds to a reminder or a consequence. These are minor violations of the Code of Conduct and don't occur frequently.

Tier 2: Students in Tier 2 are identified "at risk" behaviorally. Students at this level often repeat the same misbehaviors on a regular basis in multiple settings. At this level, specific behaviors are identified, and students are made aware of when they occur through a behavior chart. Students are given frequent feedback at this level as well as reinforcement for identified behaviors. The goal at this tier is to reduce the identified behaviors through rewards, consequences and feedback.

Tier 3: Students in Tier 3 are identified through examining discipline data over a period of time and are considered "at risk." Students at this level are not responding to the interventions used for Tier 1 or Tier 2. At this tier, the student receives very small group or individual counseling that addresses the identified behaviors and/or a behavioral intervention plan.

Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities

This documentation is available on the Saint Lucie Public Schools website. Go to the homepage then to the Exceptional Student Education Department, click on the Exceptional Student Education Policies & Procedures link.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

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 PPRA Notice.doc
- (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 with 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

Progress Reports

Parents can monitor their child's progress through Skyward Family Access system. Please see main office staff to obtain your password and login.

PTO

Perhaps the single best way to make this happen is to join the PTO, which has traditionally stood for 'Parent Teacher Organization'. As its name implies, the PTO is concerned primarily with connecting teachers and parents so that they can better discuss the nature of their child's education, the benefits and challenges facing the school district, and how volunteer efforts, or any level of involvement, might benefit all stakeholders in a dramatic, dynamic way. West Gate K-8's PTO sponsors family events as well as fundraising opportunities throughout the school year that support the School Improvement Plan. Parents/guardians will be notified of upcoming events throughout the school year in the monthly newsletter or on their Facebook page. Any parent is welcome to join PTO by contacting the main office. All parents/guardians are invited to attend monthly PTO meetings.

School Advisory Council (SAC)

School Advisory Councils (SAC) have been established in Florida public schools as a component of the decision-making process for school improvement and accountability at the school level. SAC's primary mission is to assist the Principal in the preparation and evaluation of the School Improvement Plan and the school budget. Because each public school is unique and has its own community setting, resources, challenges, and most importantly, a student population unlike any other, the people best suited to decide what will be effective in helping our students learn are the people closest to each school: the principal, faculty and staff, parents, students, local businesspeople, and community members. These "stakeholders" are represented on your advisory council. Meetings are held monthly, and all stakeholders are invited to attend and listen to the discussions, and welcome to join by contacting the main office.

School Closings

In the event of a campus emergency, weather emergency or other unusual event that would necessitate the closing of school, the process and updates will be made available on the Saint Lucie Public Schools web page and the School Messenger phone system would be activated. In order for the School Messenger system to be effective, it requires that we have an accurate database with current parent contact information. Please notify the front office staff anytime you change your phone or email contact information.

School Day & Office Hours

The school office is open Monday through Friday 8:00am - 4:30pm. Early dismissal days, as designated by St. Lucie Public Schools dismiss two hours earlier. The early dismissal office hours are 8:00 - 3:00 PM. The school's telephone number is (772) 807-7600.

School Functions

School functions and activities, such as picnics, parties, excursions, and similar activities, under the sponsorship of the school shall be chaperoned by adults. All adults must have completed [on-line volunteer applications](#) and be approved at least 2 weeks prior to the event.

School Improvement Plan (SIP)

The *School Improvement Plan* is a state-mandated document written annually by the School Advisory Council, with input from all concerned stakeholders, and approved by the school's Advisory Board. The SIP outlines strategic goals and objectives aimed at improving many varied aspects of West Gate K-8. All staff members and parents are invited to attend SAC meetings to offer input for this important document. West Gate's K-8 SIP is available for viewing online.

Student Placement and Schedule Changes

We take extreme care in how we place students from year to year and make decisions that are best for our Mustangs' academic success. We recognize that families sometimes have requests for teachers, and we cannot make any promises to honor those requests. We also do not subscribe to schedule changes without due process through our guidance department. We are solution based and will seek to rectify any issues first between students and students as well as students and adults prior to considering a change to a schedule. Often a change is more complex and intrusive to the student's overall schedule than it might appear, and we would like to maintain consistency for the benefit of our Mustangs as much as possible. In the event there is a question, please reach out to your child's school counselor by calling the front office or sending an email.

Student Progression Plan

West Gate K-8 School will follow the St. Lucie Public Schools *Student Progression Plan*. The plan clearly defines state and district grade-level proficiencies, grading criteria, and promotion and retention criteria. Please refer to this document (available online) for more information.

Student Records

All student record requests by a parent and/or guardian shall be honored within three business days. No request will be given without proper identification (i.e. driver's license).

Technology/Internet

At West Gate K-8, students can utilize various technological resources as provided by the classroom teacher.

The rules and regulations are provided here so that students and parents/guardians are aware of the responsibilities that students accept when they use a district-owned computer. In general, this requires efficient, ethical and legal utilization of all technology resources. Violations of these rules and guidelines will result in disciplinary action.

General Guidelines:

All use of technology must:

- Support learning
- Follow local, state, and federal laws
- Be school appropriate

Security Reminders

- Do not share logins or passwords
- Do not develop programs to harass others, hack, bring in viruses, or change others' files
- Follow internet safety guidelines

Activities Requiring Teacher Permissions are unauthorized on campus

- Sending email
- Instant-messaging through Office365 or Teams
- No Social Media sites during class
- No Listening to music or watching movies or videos
- No playing games that are not academic in nature

Inappropriate materials include explicit or implicit references to:

- Alcohol, tobacco or drugs
- Gangs
- Obscene language or nudity
- Bullying or harassment
- Discriminatory or prejudicial behavior

If any student breaks any of these guidelines, depending on the nature of the infraction or the cumulative number of infractions, continued use of the system will be in jeopardy and consequences will be enforced as indicated in the *Student Code of Conduct*. Parents will also be charged for intended damage to technology. The new policy for student computer responsibility, network and internet use is included in the revised *Student Code of Conduct*.

All students have a Microsoft Office 365 account which gives them access to a suite of [Microsoft Office products](#). These applications will assist them academically in their overall success leading to high school graduation. Over their course of time at West Gate K-8 they will learn how to use these applications in their classes. Below are some guidelines to help them be successful in their usage.

Office 365 Email

Purpose: Office365 allows students to effectively communicate and collaborate with SLPS staff and classmates, giving them an authentic purpose for writing.

The effective use of email is

- A 21st Century communication tool.
- Used in careers and higher education settings.
- A way to meet the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS).

Guidelines and Reminders

- Email should be used for educational purposes only.

- Email transmissions may be monitored by staff at any time to ensure appropriate use. This means that teachers may check students' email.
- Students should not delete email unless instructed to do so by a teacher. Deleting email will be interpreted as suspicious behavior and may be followed up with further investigation or disciplinary action.
- Email should only be used by the authorized owner of the account.
- Students need to protect their passwords.

Restrictions and Limitations

- Student email defaults to a "student only" view in the address book, but students may email teachers and other staff as well.
- Mailbox size is restricted.

Unacceptable Use Examples

- Non-education related forwards (e.g. jokes, chain letters, images).
- Harassment, profanity, obscenity, racist terms.
- Cyber-bullying, hate mail, discriminatory remarks.
- Email for individual profit or gain, advertisement, or political activities

Webcams

Purpose: Each student laptop is equipped with a web cam. This equipment offers students an extraordinary opportunity to experience a 21st Century tool and to develop 21st Century communication skills.

Examples

Web cams are to be used for educational purposes only, under the direction of a teacher. Examples include:

- Recording videos or taking pictures to include in a project
- Recording a student giving a speech and playing it back for rehearsal and improvement.

Telephones

General use of the classroom and office telephones by students is discouraged. No phone calls should be allowed for missing assignments, musical instruments, lunches, or after school plans. A teacher may send a student to the office with a note authorizing use of the phone when necessary. Telephones throughout the school may not be used by students unless authorized and supervised by staff. Teachers will encourage students to come to school prepared and to make social and transportation plans ahead of time. Please refer to the section in this document regarding "cell phones."

Textbooks

All are issued free of charge to students. Families will be charged for lost or damaged textbooks.

- Damaged/Lost books will be assessed and charged individually

New Book – 1-year	Replacement cost 100%
2-3 years	Replacement cost 75%
4 years or more	Replacement cost 50%

Third Grade Promotion Requirements

The state of Florida has a mandatory retention for third grade students who score a Level I on the state FAST English Language Arts assessment unless they qualify for a Good Cause exemption.

Good Cause Exemptions:

1. The student is a Limited Proficient (LEP) student who has less than two years of instruction in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program.
2. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) indicates that participation in the statewide assessment program is not appropriate for the student.

3. The student has demonstrated an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading assessment approved by the State Board of Education (SAT-9 or SAT-10)

4. The student demonstrates through portfolio, that he or she is reading on grade level as evidenced by demonstration of mastery of the ELA Florida Standards equal to at least a Level 2 or the identified state level for performance on the state ELA assessment.

5. The student participated in the state assessment and has an IEP or Section 504 plan that reflects the student has received intensive remediation as required by Florida law for more than two years but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and has been retained once in either kindergarten, first, second or third grade.

6. The student has received intensive remediation in reading as required by Florida Law for two or more years, but still demonstrates a deficiency in reading and has been previously retained in either kindergarten, first, second or third grade for a total of two years.

Retained students must be provided intensive interventions in reading to ameliorate the student's specific reading deficiency, as identified by a valid and reliable diagnostic assessment. The intensive intervention must include effective instructional strategies, participation in summer reading camp, appropriate teaching methodologies necessary to assist those students in becoming successful readers, able to read at or above grade level as indicated by the score on the state ELA assessment or SAT-10 and able to be promoted to the next grade.

Intensive Interventions may include:

- a minimum of 90 minutes of daily, uninterrupted, scientifically based reading instruction
- small group instruction
- reduced teacher-student ratio
- more frequent progress monitoring
- tutoring or mentoring
- extended school day, week or year
- summer reading camps
- State law requires that teachers of retained third grade students meet "highly effective" criteria. The Board will make every attempt to comply with State statute in the employment of instructional personnel for the retained third grade students. Additionally, students must be provided at least one of the following:
 - Supplemental tutoring in addition to the regular reading block which could be before and/or after school
 - read-at-home plan
 - a mentor or tutor with specialized reading training

Toys, Electronic Devices, Games and Playing Cards

These items, and any other items that may prove to be a distraction to the educational process, are not allowed during instructional time. This includes fidget spinners and cubes. If students bring these items to school and they are lost or stolen, the school is **NOT** responsible for replacement.

Valuables

Parents/guardians are urged to see that students do not wear valuable jewelry or bring large amounts of money to school. School staff will take due care to help guard against loss of personal belongings but will not bear responsibility for any loss. Please label your child's personal belongings and clothing so that lost items may be returned quickly and with the least amount of lost class time and hurt feelings.

Found articles are kept in the Lost & Found located in the cafeteria. All unclaimed articles of clothing will be donated to a charity at the end of each semester. Please be sure to periodically check *Lost & Found* for missing items.

Visitors

To continually improve the safety and security of your children, St. Lucie Public Schools uses a system called **RAPTOR** to check visitors in the front office. All campus visitors, including parents and alumni, will need to provide their driver's license or military ID to the front desk for the duration of your visit. The Raptor system accesses a national database, preventing anyone who should not be on our campus from gaining access. No one will be on campus without a picture ID badge printed by the Raptor system. Upon leaving campus, visitors must check out through the front office. The first time you submit your ID, this sophisticated system takes about one minute to process. We will not require Raptor badges for morning drop-off; however, we encourage you to stop by and process your ID if time requires.

Providing a safe school environment is one of the school's major goals. Frequent inspections by the State Fire Marshall, Environmental Specialists from the health department and university personnel help to ensure a safe environment for the students. The school's safety officer is charged with identifying areas of concern and monitoring the status of safety issues. The following procedures have been developed to help provide a safe, orderly environment for the students:

1. Unless otherwise specified, ALL VISITORS MUST REPORT TO THE MAIN OFFICE BEFORE ENTERING THE SCHOOL. This includes, but is not limited to volunteers, parents, family members, service personnel, and guests.
2. Visitors and volunteers must sign in, provide a photo ID, and wear an official name tag while on campus. Parents and visitors are only given permission to visit the area of the school they signed up to visit. School personnel will report to the administration of all unauthorized visitors on campus.
3. Parents reporting for conferences must also check in at the front office and wear an official tag.
4. Parents must not visit classrooms unless it was pre-arranged with the teacher. If parents wish to visit, contact the teacher concerning the requested visit. Teachers may not be immediately available, and visitors will need to schedule an alternative time. You are invited to visit the school; however, you must notify us at least 24 hours in advance if you wish to visit a classroom or schedule meetings with the teacher (This is a district policy as negotiated with the Classroom Teachers' Association.) Meetings with Administration should be scheduled through the Executive Secretary.
5. Official tags must be displayed on the upper chest area during the entire visit. Upon leaving campus, visitors must check out through the front office.

By signing in via the RAPTOR System, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the St. Lucie Public Schools Visitor's Policy.

Volunteers

- [On-line volunteer applications](#) must be filled out and signed every year.
- Volunteer applications should be submitted on-line at least two week in advance of chaperoning field trips/events on campus.
- All volunteers must have clearance to participate with and/or accompany West Gate students on field trips.
- All volunteers will have background checks through St. Lucie County as well as the State of Florida Department of Law Enforcement.
- Parents will need to adhere to the statement of understanding to maintain their status as an active volunteer.
- Volunteers will only volunteer in the area to which they are assigned.
- All volunteers must wear the district provided badge at all times.

Withdrawal of Students

The parent or guardian shall notify the school at least a week in advance of a student's withdrawal. Parents will be made aware of any books or materials that must be returned or of outstanding accounts to be paid. The students' records will be forwarded to the new school upon receipt of that school's request. Student records may not be

released until outstanding fees have been paid to West Gate K-8. All student record requests by a parent and/or guardian shall be honored within three business days. No request will be given without proper identification (i.e. driver's license). After a student has withdrawn, they will not be able to re-enter without having to go through the school assignment process.

Zero Tolerance

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, and fighting on this campus or at school-sponsored events will not be tolerated. Such inappropriate behavior will result in immediate suspension, possible expulsion for a period of up to two (2) years and the potential for arrest. A student may possess a wireless communications device while on school property or attending a school function, but such device must be inactivated or "OFF" during all classes and other participatory functions. Any disruptive, harassing, or other inappropriate use of a wireless communications device shall be cause for disciplinary action under the heading, including confiscation of the device. The use of a wireless communications device shall be cause for disciplinary action and/or criminal penalties if the device is used in a criminal act.



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



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: 5.6



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. BoardDocs® Pro
<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 1 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM
- 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 BoardDocs® Pro <https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 2 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM 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. BoardDocs® Pro <https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 3 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM

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. BoardDocs® Pro

<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 4 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM

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 BoardDocs® Pro

<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 5 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM

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. BoardDocs® Pro
<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#6> of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM 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.

a. 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. BoardDocs® Pro

<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 7 of 18
5/21/2021, 7:53 AM 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, decisionmaker, 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; BoardDocs® Pro
<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 8 of 18
5/21/2021, 7:53 AM
- 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 BoardDocs® Pro <https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 9 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM 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. BoardDocs® Pro <https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 10 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM

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 BoardDocs® Pro <https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 11 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM 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.
- BoardDocs® Pro <https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 12 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM

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 BoardDocs® Pro
<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 13 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM 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; BoardDocs® Pro
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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. BoardDocs® Pro

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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; BoardDocs® Pro
<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 16 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM
- 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 BoardDocs® Pro
<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 17 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:53 AM
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: BoardDocs® Pro
<https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/stlucie/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies#> 18 of 18 5/21/2021, 7:5

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: _____

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