



*Southeast Polk Community School District*

**2023-2024**  
**Spring Creek Sixth Grade**  
**Student Handbook**

**8031 NE University Avenue**

**Pleasant Hill, IA 50327**

**515-967-5533**

[www.southeastpolk.org](http://www.southeastpolk.org)

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**ENGAGE ALL STUDENTS IN LEARNING A CHALLENGING CURRICULUM DELIVERED  
THROUGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION.**

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**LEARN. LEAD. LIVE.**

Success for college, career, and civic life.

**SPRING CREEK CREED**

We Are Spring  
Creek.

We are Respectful, We Act Responsibly. We are Motivated  
Learners. We have Pride, Drive, and Perseverance.

We ARE Spring Creek

## **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Meetings of the board are held on the first and third Thursdays of the month, starting at 5:30 p.m. Meeting locations, agendas and minutes are posted on the district website, [www.southeastpolk.org](http://www.southeastpolk.org).

## **DISTRICT OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS**

Dr. Dirk Halupnik, Superintendent	957-3406
Joseph M. Horton, Associate Superintendent	957-3403
Jo Ellen Latham, Director of Curriculum & Instruction	957-3407
Kevin Baccam, Executive Director of Business Services	957-3413
Lea Morris, Director of Special Education	957-3428
Dr. Margi Belger, Executive Director of Human Resources	957-3402

## **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT - DIRECTORS**

Jason Kurth, Technology	957-3446
Dan Schultz, Transportation	967-3793
Amy A'Hearn, Food & Nutrition	957-3431
Gary Haines, Buildings and Grounds	957-3434

<b>School</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Fax</b>	<b>Principal</b>
Altoona Elementary	301 6th Street SW, Altoona 50009	967-3771	967-2079	Morgan Miller
Centennial Elementary	910 7th Avenue SE, Altoona 50009	967-2109	967-7076	Lori Waddell
Clay Elementary	3200 First Ave. So, Altoona 50009	967-4198	967-2018	Andrea Bruns
Delaware Elementary	4401 E 46th Street, Des Moines 50317	262-3197	264-8239	Chelsea Clark
Four Mile Elementary	670 SE 68th Street, Pleasant Hill 50327	265-1972	262-1933	Tammy Steenhoek
Mitchellville Elementary	308 Elm Avenue, NW, Mitchellville 50169	967-4274	967-4934	Blake Kielman
Runnells Elementary	6575 SE 116th, Runnells 50237	966-2068	966-2396	Jake Bartels
Willowbrook Elementary	300 17th Avenue SW, Altoona 50009	967-7512	967-1620	George Panosh
Spring Creek Sixth Grade	8031 NE University Ave., Pleasant Hill 50327	967-5533	957-3459	Nathan Ballagh
SEP Junior High School	8325 NE University Ave., Pleasant Hill 50327	967-5509	967-1676	Michael Dailey
SEP High School	7945 NE University Ave., Pleasant Hill 50327	967-6631	967-5117	Steve Pettit
Activities Office	7945 NE University Ave., Pleasant Hill 50327	967-2944	957-3498	Jayson Campbell

## **SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The district's complete listing of policies can be found on the website at [www.southeastpolk.org](http://www.southeastpolk.org). In addition, required annual notifications can also be found on the district's website.

## **DISTRICT RESPECT CODE**

At Southeast Polk Community Schools...

We respect ourselves, others, property, and class time.

We strive to be and do our best.

We treat others the way we want to be treated.

We respect the property of the school and others.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISTRICT RESPECT CODE	2
SPRING CREEK STUDENT HANDBOOK	3
DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS	4
SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	2
BUILDING PROCEDURES	5
STUDENT LOCKERS AND DESKS	5
ATTITUDE, BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE	5
SUSPENSION/EXPULSION	5
TECHNOLOGY USER AGREEMENT	5
MEDIA CENTER/INTERNET	6
RESTRICTED MATERIAL	6
UNAUTHORIZED COSTS	6
ATTENDANCE	6
ABSENCE	6
TARDINESS	6
TARDY/ABSENCE TIMES	6
WEDNESDAY LATE STARTS	7
LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY	7
TRANSFERS OUT OF DISTRICT	7
SCHOOL VISITORS	7
FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS	7
WEATHER AND EMERGENCIES	7
PROGRESS REPORTS	7
INFINITE CAMPUS	7
PROMOTION – RETENTION	8
CONFERENCES	8
MULTIPLE-FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS	8
P.E. REQUEST	8
STUDENT CHECKOUT - END OF YEAR	8
SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM	8
ONLINE PAYMENT PROCESS	8
2023-2024 MEAL PRICES	9
FREE OR REDUCED MEAL PROGRAM	9
LUNCH OPTIONS	9
DIET MODIFICATION REQUESTS	9
CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY	9
GUM, SNACKS AND BEVERAGES	10
USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES	10
HALL PASSES	10
CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONICS	10
DRESS CODE	10
WEAPONS	11
GIFTS AND GIFT DELIVERY	11
HEALTH POLICIES	11
RECOMMENDED HEALTH PROCEDURE	11
IMMUNIZATIONS	12

TESTING AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION	12
MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION	13
HAWK-I INSURANCE FOR CHILDREN	13
SEVERE ALLERGIES	13
BAN OF HOME-BAKED GOODS	13
ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS AT SCHOOL	13
STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	14
TRANSPORTATION	14
BUS RIDING GUIDELINES	14
BASIC RULES FOR BUS RIDERS	14
BUS ROUTE PLANNING	14
FEE-BASED TRANSPORTATION PLAN	15
DISTRICT NOTICES	15
ABUSE OF STUDENTS BY EMPLOYEES	15
CHILD ABUSE NOTIFICATION	15
DISTRICT FEES	15
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION	15
HOMELESS STUDENTS	15
HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT	16
PARENTAL RIGHTS	16
OPEN ENROLLMENT	17
SCHOOL PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS	17
TOBACCO-FREE AND DRUG-FREE	17
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT, RESTRAINT, AND PHYSICAL CONFINEMENT AND DETENTION	17
SECTION 504	17
EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY	17
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION	18
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES	17
<b>DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS</b>	

The district and its schools communicate in various ways to students, parents and the community. Most communications are distributed electronically and require a current e-mail address.

- Digital Backpack – The digital backpack allows the district to distribute school and community information electronically to parents, staff, and students. The backpack can be found at southeastpolk.org under the community tab and is updated daily.
- Campus Portal – e-mail, text, and phone tool used to share information with parents and students.
- Follow us on social media by adding **SEPSchools** on:



## **BUILDING PROCEDURES**

### **STUDENT LOCKERS AND DESKS**

Student lockers and desks are the property of the school district. Students shall use the lockers and desks assigned to them for storing their school materials and personal items necessary for attendance at school. It is the responsibility of each student to keep the student's assigned locker and desk clean and undamaged.

The expenses to repair damage done to a student's locker and desk are charged to the student. Students are expected to keep lockers clean both inside and out. **DO NOT WRITE ON THEM.** Keep them locked. Do NOT leave billfolds, purses or money in lockers. The school cannot be responsible for valuables or books taken from lockers.

Although school lockers, desks and other spaces are temporarily assigned to individual students, they remain the property of the school district at all times. The school district has a reasonable and valid interest in ensuring lockers, desks and other spaces are properly maintained. For this reason, lockers, desks and other spaces are subject to unannounced inspections and students have no legitimate expectations of privacy in the locker, desk or other space. Periodic inspections of all or a random selection of lockers, desks or other space may be conducted by school officials in the presence of the student or another individual. Any contraband discovered during such searches shall be confiscated by school officials and may be turned over to law enforcement officials.

The contents of a student's locker, desk or other space (coat, backpack, purse, etc.) may be searched when a school official has a reasonable and articulable suspicion that the contents contains illegal or contraband items or evidence of a violation of law or school policy or rule. Such searches should be conducted in the presence of another adult witness when feasible. Board Policy 502.7.

### **ATTITUDE, BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

Children who are excited about learning and focused on getting along with others will do their best in school. Our focus with conduct and discipline policies is to teach acceptable behavior and self-discipline to all students. Guidelines for this teaching are contained in Southeast Polk's Respect Code: "At Southeast Polk Community Schools, we respect ourselves, others, property, and class time."

- We strive to be and do our best.
- We treat others the way we want to be treated.

- We respect the property of the school and others.
- We respect the right of teachers to teach and learners to learn."

Harassment (including sexual harassment and abuse are serious violations of school and district policies, rules, and regulations. Such behavior will not be tolerated." Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal, physical, or written harassment or abuse;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature regarding religion, race, national origin, gender, age, appearance or disability;
- Engaging in demeaning jokes, stories or activities;
- Unwelcome visual, verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature that interferes with a person's education.

Students/families who feel they have encountered a situation involving harassment should "immediately" communicate their concerns to a teacher, counselor, or principal. Other family resources available are:

- DHS Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-362-2178
- Iowa Health Student Assistance Program at (515) 263-4004
- Polk County Victim Services at 286-3600

### **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION**

A student who violates the rules of the school, or whose conduct is such as to disrupt the educational process for that student or others, will be subject to suspension and/or expulsion from school. In such a case, the principal may suspend a student and establish the procedure by which the student may be readmitted. (Violators are given due notice that suspension will result from continued misbehaviors.)

In more severe cases, the principal may recommend the student be expelled. The Board of Education will act on the recommendations of the administrator and provide the student and his/her representative with the opportunity to present evidence as to why expulsion should not take place.

### **TECHNOLOGY USER AGREEMENT**

The district encourages the responsible use of technology-based tools and information resources by students. These resources include district-provided computers, productivity software

tools, instructional software, networks, electronic media, and telecommunications tools, such as access to Internet resource. These district-provided resources and tools are the property of the district and are provided solely for the advancement and promotion of learning and teaching. The use of these resources will be consistent with the district's educational vision, mission and core values, as well as state and federal laws and regulations.

Access to district networks and electronic information resources is a privilege and not a right, and will be provided for the student as is appropriate to the school building and grade level. Students are to use district technology and communications resources at times and locations where they are directly or indirectly supervised by district staff. Students may be given access to Internet resources external to the district without specific parent/guardian permission.

### **MEDIA CENTER/INTERNET**

All students may check out materials. Overdue books will result in a temporary loss of library borrowing privileges.

The resources available on the Internet are available to students when aligned with the district's acceptable use agreement. Failure to fulfill the terms of the acceptable use agreement will result in the loss of the Internet pass. The duration of the loss of privileges is at the discretion of the teacher and/or the principal.

The school library media center is a place to be used for research work, selecting reading materials and creating products for class assignments. The school media center is a classroom and it is expected that students conduct themselves in a manner not disruptive to other students.

Students will be able to access the Internet with supervision from their teachers using their individual student accounts. It is a goal to allow teachers and students access to the rich opportunities on the Internet while protecting the rights of students and parents who choose not to risk exposure to questionable material. The use of the network is a privilege and may be taken away for violation of board policy or regulations.

### **RESTRICTED MATERIAL**

Students will not intentionally access or download any text file or picture or engage in any conference that includes material which is obscene, libelous, indecent, vulgar, profane or lewd. Students will not deliberately advertise or view any product or service not permitted to minors by law.

They will not constitute insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses others or presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or the manner of distribution, it will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities.

### **UNAUTHORIZED COSTS**

If a student gains access to any service via the Internet which has a cost involved or if a student incurs other types of costs, the student accessing such a service will be responsible for those costs.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Iowa law requires that all children attend school regularly. Every day at school is important. Just as it is important for parents to be present at their job each day, effort to be at school each day is also essential. Please refer to school board policy 501-9 excused absences for questions regarding excused or unexcused absences

### **ABSENCE**

Being absent from school is sometimes necessary. Students should not attend school if they are ill because others may be exposed to that illness. When students are absent, parents should call the school by 9a.m. that day, explaining the absence. Students are marked absent if they are not in school, regardless of the reason, and are required to make up work missed in class. School Board policy requires that the building principal notify families by letter when absences have gone beyond 7 (Level 1), 10 (Level 2), and 15 (Level 3) days in a school year. Habitual absences may result in a juvenile court liaison involvement.

### **TARDINESS**

When tardiness cannot be avoided, it is much better to be tardy than to be absent for the whole day. Parents should bring a student to school if s/he misses the bus.

### **TARDY/ABSENCE TIMES**

- 7:35 a.m. is the official start time. Attendance will be taken at that time.
- Leaving school between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. – student is considered absent half day.
- 2:45 is the official end time.

## **WEDNESDAY LATE STARTS**

To support the collaborative professional development program for teachers of grades 6-12, the school day will be delayed by two hours on Wednesdays with the exception of parent-teacher conference dates. The late start schedule can also be found on the district school calendar.

## **LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY**

Students who need to leave school must be excused from the office. Parents who wish to have a child excused during the day should call first to make arrangements, and then stop by the office to sign out your child. If a child is to leave school with someone other than parents, a note or call is necessary. All dismissals will be made from the office.

## **TRANSFERS OUT OF DISTRICT**

When a student moves out of the district, we ask that parents give advance notice so that student records can be prepared. Parents have the right to review the child's records prior to the records being sent to the receiving school.

All books must be checked in, electronic devices returned and all charges must be paid leaving the district.

## **SCHOOL VISITORS**

For the safety and security of our students, visitors must check in to the main office/front entrance of the building upon arrival and present a valid state-issued ID for office staff to scan through the Raptor Visitor Management System. Once approved, the visitor will be issued a visitor's sticker that must be worn visibly at all times while on school grounds. Visitors need to check out prior to leaving, the badge will be collected and destroyed. Children who do not have a valid ID may be allowed to visit as long as they are accompanied at all times by an adult who has completed the ID process and been issued a badge.

If you are meeting with staff, please make an appointment. School days are tightly scheduled for responding to student needs and staff collaboration. To make the best use of your time and ensure that the staff person you need to see will be available, please take a few minutes to call or email to schedule a time to meet. By doing so, you can be sure that the staff member will be available to speak with you and they will have the necessary information to respond to your questions.

Parents are always welcome to visit our school. We ask that parents not bring younger brothers or sisters to visit, as they distract the class from a normal routine. Students from other schools may not visit and

spend the day at school.

## **FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS**

Fire drills and tornado drills are each practiced four times a year.

## **WEATHER AND EMERGENCIES**

In event of any emergency such as storms, bad roads, power or heating failure, water system failure, or other emergency, parents are reminded to maintain current contact information in Infinite Campus. In an emergency, parents will be contacted via email, phone, and/or text. Information will also be posted on the website.

- When school is cancelled, delayed or dismissed early, parents will be notified via email, phone, and text notifications made through Infinite Campus.
- School cancellation, delay, and early dismissal information will also be broadcast on local radio and TV stations.
- If a delay occurs, information will be posted and distributed in the same manner.
- If school is in session and an emergency occurs, students will be transported as soon as possible following the incident.
- In the event of an emergency, parents are requested not to call the school, but monitor the website, email, and text messages.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Student progress is formally reported to parents at the end of each 12-week trimester. However, reports to parents regarding their children's progress may be made any time at the discretion of the teacher or building administrator, or at the request of parents. The majority of these will be sent electronically every three weeks.

## **INFINITE CAMPUS**

Infinite Campus gives parents web-based access to information on their student(s) kept in the Infinite Campus system. You can access Infinite Campus at [www.southeastpolk.org](http://www.southeastpolk.org). When logged in, parents can access school notices, announcements, calendars, schedules, attendance, behavior and grades. A user name and password will be given to parents by the district.

## **PROMOTION – RETENTION**

Pupils will be promoted upon recommendation of their teachers and the approval of the principal. If it seems that a student would benefit from repeating the same grade another year, a conference will be held including parents and staff to discuss options and alternatives. If agreement cannot be reached among parents, teacher and principal, final placement of any pupil lies with the school district as described in district policy.

## **CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences are held two times a year. Conferences offer an opportunity to exchange information on the child's interests, progress, and total development. Parents may be asked to complete a parent survey after conferencing. Parents should feel free to arrange additional conferences if desired.

## **MULTIPLE-FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS**

Students impacted by a multiple-household family situation must be handled effectively and legally. Knowledge of custodial arrangements is important for school personnel. A copy of the parenting section of the court document should be provided and kept in the child's cumulative folder. All parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's education, including attending conferences and other school-related functions.

Parents receive a variety of newsletters, announcements of special events, and report cards. Non-custodial parents are encouraged to register their contact preferences in the Campus Portal to receive email, phone and text notifications. Contact your school office to have an account created.

## **P.E. AND ACTIVITY REQUESTS**

Parents sometimes request that a student not participate in P.E. However, a child well enough to attend school should be well enough to participate fully in all school activities, including P.E. Requests to not participate in P.E. must be accompanied by a doctor's note. In addition, in the event of an injury, surgery, or other medical procedure or condition, it is requested that a medical release signed by the health care provider (MD, DO, ARNP, or PA) be turned into the school indicating the okay to return to school, PE, and other activities.

## **STUDENT CHECKOUT - END OF YEAR**

- clean out locker
- remove stickers
- “unjam” doors
- maintain list of damage repairs needed
- empty lockers completely (recycle appropriately)
- salvage pens, paper, calculators .
- check-in textbooks
- return borrowed items and library materials
- settle breakfast/lunch accounts in office
- turn in all uniforms and equipment

## **FOOD AND NUTRITION PROGRAM**

Southeast Polk operates a National School Lunch and Breakfast program under the direction of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for all students and staff. School meals are designed to supply the proper nutritional levels and calories based on the age of the student.

At lunch, there is always a protein source, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and milk. At breakfast, milk, juice, fruit, and whole grains are always offered. Menus are available from the district website under Quick Links at the top of the page. Students and parents can download a free app called SchoolCafe to receive menus and nutrition information on their smartphone or tablet.

## **PAYMENT PROCESS**

There are 2 avenues to make payments- online or check/cash. Online payments can be made from the district website under Quick Links called RamMall. Click the icon for Food Payments. Follow the prompts to complete the online payment. Checks and cash may be delivered to the school offices for deposit.

## **MEAL ACCOUNT BALANCE REMINDERS**

Parents/guardians are able to set meal balance reminders in 2 locations. SchoolCafe as well as through RamMall. Each individual may decide at what balance amount they would like notified via email. The Food & Nutrition Services Department sends emails when students with Paid eligibility accounts reach \$10.00 or below, Reduced \$3.00 or below and Free \$0.00 or below.



## MEAL CHARGE POLICY

Per School Board Policy 711-04, all students will be served a lunch no matter the balance in their account. When the meal account balance reaches \$0.00 or less, students are not allowed to charge extra items or a la carte. Students who qualify for free meals will never be denied a breakfast or lunch but must have sufficient funds in their account to purchase extra items and a la carte.

A student may not borrow another student's ID card for purchase of breakfast or lunch, nor may a student buy a lunch for another student.

Families are encouraged to complete the Meal Eligibility Application through our online app SchoolCafe or by logging into SchoolCafe.com. Paper copies are available at every school office upon request.

## 2023-2024 MEAL PRICES

Elementary Breakfast	\$ 1.80
Elementary Lunch	\$ 2.90
Spring Creek Breakfast	\$ 1.90
Spring Creek Lunch	\$ 2.95
Junior High Breakfast	\$ 1.90
Junior High Lunch	\$ 2.95
High School Breakfast	\$ 1.95
High School Lunch	\$ 3.05
Adult Breakfast	\$ 2.40
Adult Lunch	\$ 4.84
Milk	\$ 0.50
Breakfast (Reduced)	\$ 0.30
Lunch (Reduced)	\$ 0.40

## FREE OR REDUCED MEAL PROGRAM

To become eligible for free or reduced price meals, families must annually complete the Iowa Eligibility Application (one per family). These applications are available each year after July 1 online at the food service page of the district website and paper copies are available at every school office. Applications will be processed as quickly as possible. Families will be notified of the outcome by a letter or email. If families are receiving food assistance, their children may be directly certified for free meals and will be notified via letter or email. In which case, they do not need to fill out an application. Free and reduced eligibility is strictly confidential.

## LUNCH OPTIONS

Breakfast and lunch are served daily at each building. We encourage you to utilize the district meal program but families may elect to send lunch from home for their

children. Please think of food safety and realize lunches may be at room temperature for more than four hours. Also, appropriate nutrition is essential for students who bring cold lunch as children need a good source of protein, fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Milk can be purchased at school for \$0.50. Carbonated beverages /soft drinks are not allowed at any time. Parents may not bring fast food lunches to school. For any questions or concerns about the school nutrition program, please contact the Food & Nutrition Services Department at 515-957-3432 or email at school.nutrition@southeastpolk.org.

## DIET MODIFICATION REQUESTS

If your student has a special dietary need, download the Diet Modification Request Form from the district website. Form must be completed by a licensed, prescribing medical professional. Once completed, submit the form to your school nurse. No special diets or substitutions will be made unless this form is properly completed and approved by the Food Service Director.

## USDA NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

All FNS nutrition assistance programs, State or local agencies, and their sub recipients, must post the following Nondiscrimination Statement:

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number,

and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant

Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

#### Guidelines

1. The new nondiscrimination statement may not be altered in any way including the formatting and spacing.
2. The text must be easily readable in Time New Roman font or other standard font (black or dark color)
3. The ideal font size of the full statement is 11.
4. A font size as small as 9 point may be used.
5. If the document is a one page document, the font size must be the same as the rest of the font used to maintain equal importance.
6. If the full statement does not fit, use the abbreviated "equal opportunity" statement. The abbreviated statement font must be the same size as the font size used in the document.

### **IOWA NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

It is the policy of this CNP provider not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, age, or religion in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code section 216.6, 216.7, and 216.9. If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by this CNP Provider, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E 14th St, Des Moines, IA 50319-1004; phone number 515-281-4121 or 800-457-4416; website: <https://icrc.iowa.gov/>.

### **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Students and all others who use school property should care for school property such as books, desks and equipment as if it were their own. Any person found willfully breaking or damaging property belonging to the school will be held responsible for the replacement of such property and all costs will be the obligation of the offender. Anyone observing such damage should note names, license number of car or any other information that could be useful and report it to the

local law enforcement authorities. School personnel should also be notified.

### **SNACKS AND WATER BOTTLES**

Snacks are allowed at teacher's discretion. No pop, energy drinks, etc. will be allowed during school hours. Water bottles are allowed at school as long they securely close (no lid with only a straw). Any open beverage containers that are not water will be taken from the student immediately. Only water is allowed in student water bottles. Misuse of water bottles can result in this privilege being revoked. Water bottles will be able to be filled at the appropriate water bottle filling stations.

### **USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES**

The facilities of the Southeast Polk Community School District are for the primary use of students for curricular and extracurricular activities. School facilities are available for the community when such use does not conflict with school activities or maintenance projects. The district will determine the appropriate charges for the use of facilities based on classification, activity, personnel costs, equipment, fee schedule, and deposits, if required. If you would like to rent a school facility, go to the district's website or contact the Activities Office.

For scheduling district-related events at Spring Creek Sixth Grade, contact the principal. No outdoor sports will be allowed indoor space for practice (except for district high school teams).

### **HALL PASSES**

Students must have a hall pass to be in the halls when classes are in session. Students may obtain a hall pass from their teacher or the office. Spring Creek utilizes a digital pass system via the district issued Chromebook.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY**

Students may carry their cell phones/electronic devices at their own risk. Southeast Polk is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cell phones or other electronic devices. Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and left in a student's locker during the day. Use in locker rooms, bathrooms and videoing prohibited actions in the school building will result in the minimum of a parent pick up of the device. At the end of the school day, students may use cell phones throughout the building but must have teacher permission to use the cell phone in a teacher's classroom. In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians and students are to use the school phones. Phones are located in the main office and every classroom. Parents/guardians may call the office to relay emergency information. If a student must use a cell phone for medical, family,

vocational, or other reasons, permission must be obtained from the building administration.

Consequences:

1st Offense: Student can pick up a cell phone in the main office at the end of the day.

2nd and all subsequent offenses: Parent/guardian can pick up the cell phone after 2:45 p.m. Student is responsible for communicating with parent/guardian and making arrangements to pick up the cell phone. Violation of this policy can result in the following, up to and including but not limited to: loss of privileges, detention, in-school and out-of-school suspension. Cell phone consequences will reset at the end of each quarter.

### **DRESS CODE**

Students are expected to remove hats, caps, and headgear while in the building. Exceptions to this policy will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Spring Creek administration, based on individual student needs

Students are prohibited from wearing clothing advertising or promoting items illegal for use by minors including, but not limited to, alcohol or tobacco; from wearing clothing displaying obscenity, profanity, vulgarity, racial or sexual remarks, making reference to prohibited conduct or similar displays.

Guidelines for students include; shorts and skirts must be an appropriate length, no exposed stomachs or mid- sections, no spaghetti strap tank tops, no exposed undergarments, no billfold chains, no display of known correlation to gang involvement. For issues of safety, students are to not wear coats or carry backpacks to class. Under certain circumstances or during certain classes or activities, a stricter dress code may be appropriate and students must comply with the stricter requirement.

To ensure student safety, appropriate shoes must be worn at all times.

Students appearing on school grounds in violation of the dress code shall be asked to change clothes in order to dress properly for school.

### **WEAPONS**

Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-alikes in a school cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment and present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district. School district facilities are not an appropriate place for weapons or dangerous objects and look-alikes. Weapons and other dangerous objects and look-alikes shall be taken from the students and others who bring them onto the school district property or onto the property within the jurisdiction of the school district or from students who are within the control of the school district.

Parents of students found to possess weapons or dangerous objects or look-a-likes on school property will be notified of the incident.

Students bringing firearms to school or knowingly possessing firearms at school will be suspended and subject to a board hearing.

### **FIGHTING & THREATS OF VIOLENCE**

All threats of violence, whether oral, physical, written or symbolic, against students, employees, visitors or to school facilities are prohibited. All such threats will be promptly investigated. Law enforcement may be contacted. Threats issued and delivered away from school or school activities may be grounds for disciplinary action if the threat impacts the orderly and efficient operation of the school. Students engaging in threatening behavior will face disciplinary consequences up to and including expulsion. The following factors will be considered in determining the extent to which a student will be disciplined for threatening or terroristic behavior; the background of the student, including any history of violence or prior threatening behavior; the student's access to weapons of any kind; the circumstances surrounding the threat; the age of the student; the mental and emotional maturity of the student; cooperation of the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) in the investigation; the existence of the student's juvenile or criminal history; the degree of legitimate alarm or concern in the school community created by the threat; and any other relevant information from any credible source.

Incidents of fighting and physical aggression are prohibited. Students engaging in these behaviors will face disciplinary consequences up to and including expulsion.

### **GIFTS AND GIFT DELIVERY**

The district discourages gift giving. Students should never feel obligated to give gifts to their teachers. Schools will not accept flower and balloon deliveries for students. The florist will be asked instead to deliver orders to the student's home.

### **BULLYING DEFINITION**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose

## **SPRING CREEK BULLYING AND HARASSMENT PROCEDURES**

Harassment and abuse are violations of school district policies, rules and regulations and, in some cases, may also be a violation of criminal or other laws. The school district has the authority to report students violating this rule to law enforcement officials. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is in place at Spring Creek. For additional information for parents and students, please visit our website.

### **STUDENTS WHO FEEL THAT THEY HAVE BEEN HARASSED SHOULD:**

1. Communicate to the harasser that the student expects the behavior to stop, if the student is comfortable doing so. If the student needs assistance communicating with the harasser, the student should ask the counselor, teacher, administrator or trusted adult for help.
2. If the harassment continues, the student will need to report it to a teacher, counselor or administrator.
3. The school official will begin the investigation and meet with the harasser to process the bullying and harassment issue. If the issue is severe enough an immediate consequence will be issued. The school official will contact the parent/guardian of the harasser and the victim making them aware of the situation and inform each party of the next steps.
4. If there is another reported incident of bullying or harassment by the same student, then the consequences will increase and the school resource officer will be involved.

### **HOW TO REPORT BULLYING AT SPRING CREEK**

1. Tell a trusted adult. If you are not comfortable reporting the issue to school officials please tell a trusted adult and ask them to contact the school or law enforcement.
2. Report the issue to your counselor. Your counselor will then investigate the issue and act accordingly.
3. Fill out the online Spring Creek Bullying Report form. This form will be sent to the administration who will work with the counselor to investigate.

## **HEALTH POLICIES**

### **HEALTH PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOLS**

Southeast Polk Community School District collaborates with the Polk County Health Department, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and local healthcare providers to provide guidelines that define when a student is well enough to attend school. The general message to families, students, and staff is to stay home if you are not feeling well.

If a student becomes ill at school, School Nurses will use professional judgment to determine if a student may be returned to class, be referred for further medical evaluation, or be sent home for rest and observation. In order to promote, maintain, and restore healthy teaching and learning environments, we ask that these basic principles be followed:

- A student dismissed from school because of illness should remain indoors and under observation for at least 12 hours.
- A student with a fever of 100.4 or greater must remain home until their temperature is normal for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication.(i.e.: Tylenol, Motrin)
- A student who has been vomiting or having diarrhea needs to remain home for 24 hours after the last vomiting or diarrhea episode, without medications.
- A student who is taking antibiotics for various bacterial infections needs to stay home for at least the first 24 hours after starting the antibiotic.
- All children should be closely observed for skin rashes or sores since illnesses that cause rashes or sores can be highly contagious (i.e., scabies, ringworm, impetigo, etc.). Children with questionable rashes may be excluded from school at the discretion of the school nurse until seen by a physician and the condition is determined as non-contagious. A doctor's note or medication prescription label showing treatment is required before the child can be readmitted to school.
- The regulations set by the Iowa Department of Public Health, and published in the EPI Manual, are the guidelines used to determine exclusion and re-admittance of students with communicable diseases. Some examples of those diseases are COVID-19, chickenpox, conjunctivitis,

and strep throat.

- If a student is home ill for 3 consecutive days, the school nurse may request a note from the student's provider.
- For the safety of students and staff with allergies and asthma, strong perfumes, essential oils, and other scents should not be worn at school.
- Head lice is a concern seen each year. Please observe your child's head for lice. If your child does contract head lice, please notify the school nurse, who can help you with treatment protocol. Parents should assume that lice are present where children are, and should screen their own children on a weekly basis. If head lice are detected, an information packet for treatment will be sent home and parents will be notified. One of the best preventatives for lice outbreaks is early detection by alerting parents and staff members.
- The disease Reye's Syndrome can affect children from infancy through adolescence. After a viral infection, (such as chickenpox, upper respiratory illness, and influenza) has seemingly run its course (3-7 days), the following symptoms should be treated as serious and as possibly the first indication of Reye's syndrome: persistent or continuous vomiting, listlessness, personality change, disorientation, and delirium or convulsions. Contact the doctor immediately if any of these symptoms are noted. Because of the association of aspirin with Reye's Syndrome, parents should consult their doctor before giving aspirin to their child.
- For the safety of students and staff, all personnel will implement universal precautions when providing health care to any individual.
  - Good handwashing practices will be observed when administering health service to any individual.
  - Disposable gloves will be utilized when handling any body fluids.
  - Students will be encouraged to handle the initial care of minor injuries when possible.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

Iowa law requires evidence of immunization before any student, preschool through 12th grade, can be enrolled in the Southeast Polk Community School

District. A certificate documenting the required immunizations must be on file at school for each student. The certificate may be obtained from your doctor's office or from the school nurse. Students with immunizations partially completed will be issued a provisional certificate allowing an additional 60 days to complete the remaining immunizations.

Students transferring from another school system may be granted provisional enrollment, as well. If, at the end of the provisional enrollment period, the student has not submitted a Certificate of Immunization, the student may be excluded from the total school program. The student will be re-admitted when the school has received a validated Certificate of Immunization.

## TESTING AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Hearing screenings are periodically provided by Heartland Area Education Agency staff. Parents will be notified about the results of these screenings only if problems requiring follow-up are noted. If you do not want your child to participate in the screening programs, please contact the school nurse. .

Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, all incoming kindergarten and 3rd grade students are required to submit record of a completed vision screening to the school. Screenings should be conducted no earlier than one year before and no later than six months after the date of enrollment in both kindergarten and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Distance vision screenings are conducted by the school nurse in accordance with the law and as directed by the Iowa Department of Public Health. Students are not screened for up-close (reading) vision, and it is recommended that if there are vision concerns to have your child evaluated by a professional eye doctor. Parents and other school personnel may refer children not already scheduled for screening. Again, parents will be notified if a problem is identified. If your student needs a professional eye exam and you are unable to afford one, notify your school nurse for available resources.

The speech-language pathologist conducts communication adequacy screenings for students PK through 6th grade during the school year at a teacher or parent's request. Parents or guardians will be contacted if there are any concerns about a child's communication skills.

An authorized health care provider's examination is requested of all children entering preschool and kindergarten. This physical can be back-dated to one year prior to enrollment and can be on any health care provider physical form, or the form supplied by the district. In addition, any student entering 7th - 12th grades who will be participating in any school-sponsored activity, is required to have a current Iowa Athletic Pre-Participation Physical Examination on

file with the activities office.

Students entering kindergarten and 9th grade are required to show verification of a dental screening. For incoming kindergarten students, a screening that is done between the ages of 3 and 6 is acceptable. For incoming 9th graders, a screening completed within one year prior to enrollment is acceptable. A dentist, dental hygienist, physician, physician assistant, or nurse may provide screening for kindergarten students. A dentist or dental hygienist may provide screening for the 9th grade requirement.

### **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

Only medications prescribed by an authorized health care provider will be given in school. This means that medications such as headache, cold and stomach remedies, cough medications, cough drops or any other drug purchased without a written prescription cannot be given unless accompanied by an authorized health care provider order. Only medications with a dosage schedule that cannot be adjusted for before or after school hours should be given during the day. Secondary students, grades 6-12, may be given up to 5 doses acetaminophen or Ibuprofen only with parental permission, per written medication policy.

Medication must be brought in a container appropriately labeled by the physician or pharmacist or in the original container in which the medication was packaged. The pharmacy will, for a nominal charge, provide parents with a separately labeled bottle to send medication to school. All medications must be brought to and from school by the parent/guardian or an adult designated by the parent/guardian.

Medications will be kept in the nurse's office and dispensed from there. No medications are allowed in students' bags, desks, or lockers. Exception is made for inhalers used for asthma or other respiratory conditions and epi-pens for self-administration due to allergic reactions. Students may carry the inhalers and epi-pens with them and use as needed with written parent and authorized health care provider consent.

Written parent consent is required for administration of all medications at school. The Medication Authorization form is available on the district website and in the nurse's office.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE FOR CHILDREN**

Parents can apply for low- or no-cost health insurance for their children through the state's Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa Program (HAWK-I) or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Children birth to 19 years who meet certain criteria are eligible. The coverage includes doctor's visits, hearing services, dental care, prescriptions, immunizations, physical therapy, vision care, speech therapy and hospital services, to name a

few. Parents are urged to call 1-800-257-8563 (toll-free) or go to the web site at <https://dhs.iowa.gov/hawki> for more information.

### **SEVERE ALLERGIES**

If your student has a severe allergy PLEASE make sure you communicate the information to your school nurse. The school nurse will work with you to develop an individual health plan, and if needed an emergency response plan, for your student.

### **BAN OF HOME-BAKED GOODS**

Students, parents and staff do not bring home-baked goods to school for the consumption by Southeast Polk students.

Students and teachers do not bring home-baked treats/snacks for classroom celebrations, projects, etc.

Cheerleaders (and others) do not bring home-baked treats for athletes and participants in other school events as spirit activities.

Groups do not hold sales of home-baked goods for general distribution to Southeast Polk students and families.

Only store-bought, individually wrapped goods are used for these purposes. Only foods made in kitchens regularly inspected by state/county health departments are excluded from the store bought, individually wrapped requirement.

Team potlucks are not affected by this policy, as they are attended voluntarily.

### **ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS AT SCHOOL**

When a child becomes ill or has an accident at school, parents may need to be notified. It is very important that the emergency contact information be as accurate and complete as possible. When there is a change in address, parents MUST contact the school office to update that information. Updates to phone numbers and email addresses can be made by the parent in the Campus Portal. No child is sent home until arrangements have been made. In cases where parents cannot be contacted, the school will contact the listed emergency contact. If no one can be reached and in extreme emergencies, the student will be transported to the nearest physician or hospital by the most appropriate transportation available. All information regarding your child's health will be shared with the necessary staff involved with your child unless otherwise specified.

### **P.E. AND ACTIVITY REQUESTS**

Parents sometimes request that a student not participate in P.E. However, a child well enough to attend school should be well enough to participate fully in all school activities, including P.E. Requests to not participate in P.E. must be accompanied by a doctor's note. In

addition, in the event of an injury, surgery, or other medical procedure or condition, it is requested that a medical release signed by the health care provider (MD, DO, ARNP, or PA) be turned into the school indicating the okay to return to school, PE, and other activities.

### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The Board of Education provides a counseling service for students and their families who may be having problems which affect the student's behavior and performance at school. The service is confidential and available to students and their parents at no charge.

This service provides students with the opportunity to obtain appropriate assistance in evaluating and dealing with problems. Parents are encouraged to call their guidance counselor if they perceive a need for counseling for either the child or the family.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **BUS RIDING GUIDELINES**

Riding a school bus is an important aspect of the school day for many Southeast Polk students. Bus transportation is a privilege that can be terminated for students who cannot abide by the established school bus regulations. Information regarding behavior expectations and consequences can be found on the district's website District |Board of Education | Policies - 712-02, 712-02R1, 712-02R2

### **BASIC RULES FOR BUS RIDERS**

For the safety of all, bus riders are expected to adhere to the established behavior guidelines when riding the bus. When each bus rider behaves, then the driver will safely complete their responsibility. If inappropriate behavior occurs, the driver could be distracted and then all riders would be unsafe. The bus rules are all important and will be enforced.

- Remember, the bus is an extension of the classroom.
- Always follow the driver's instructions the first time.
- Remain seated while on the bus. When available, seat belt use is required for all students.
- Keep noise to a minimum. Use "indoor voices" and do not yell.
- The use of profanity, name-calling and disrespectful gestures is not permitted.
- For your safety, keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus. This includes candy and gum.

- Treat the school bus with respect. Put litter in the trash can. Any damage to the bus will be billed to the parent or guardian.
- Do not fight, horseplay, push, or throw things on or around the bus.
- Students may only ride the bus they are assigned to.
- The bus driver reserves the right to confiscate any electronic device that causes a distraction or a disruption on the bus. The item will be returned at a later time.
- Items that are deemed dangerous or distracting (including cell phones) will be given to the driver upon request and returned after route to the student or administrator.

### **BUS SURVEILLANCE**

In an effort to increase the safety of transporting students to and from school, the district employs a system of 'bus-cams' to record student behavior on buses. This may be done in a random manner, and parents and students are advised this may be employed on all buses throughout the school year. All video will be handled as any other student records, according to the Privacy Act and viewing of these video is limited to individuals having a legitimate educational purpose. A log will be kept of those individuals viewing the video.

### **BUS ROUTE PLANNING**

Bus drivers operate on a timed schedule, although in some occasions they may deviate from this schedule because of road conditions or weather. Students need to be ready, watching and waiting for the bus five minutes early. The bus will NOT wait for students. The bus stop is completed once the bus stops and opens the door, there is no wait time. To help buses stay on schedule, call the transportation office if a student will not be riding.

Students may only ride the bus to the stop they are assigned to. There are no bus passes which allow students to ride another bus or with friends.

Parents are reminded that they are responsible for the appropriate behavior of their children at the bus stop. Homeowners near a bus stop have a right to expect that their property will be free of damage.

### **FEE-BASED TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Fee-based transportation service is available to students who reside within the 2-mile distance from K- 8 school buildings and within the 3-mile distance from the 9-12 school building. Students who reside within these limits and wish transportation services will be charged an annual fee of \$200.00 per student or two payments of \$100.00 per semester. No multiple transportation fees will be charged.

- Students who are picked up or dropped off at more than one stop will be charged an annual fee.
- Any student who lives less than 10 blocks from school and has access to sidewalks will not be provided service.
- Multiple address, open enrolled, and parent-waivered students will be assessed a fee to ride the bus.
- Any student who has signed up for busing and not paid the transportation fee will be turned over for collection of their payment.
- If a student uses a daycare, the transportation fee may still be charged, if the residence meets the first requirement.

Further information may be obtained by calling the Director of Transportation, 967-3793.

## **DISTRICT NOTICES**

### **ABUSE OF STUDENTS BY EMPLOYEES**

Legislation has specific guidelines pertaining to what will be considered acts of physical or sexual abuse by school employees, including inappropriate as well as intentional sexual behavior towards students. All such activities are clearly in violation of the policies of the Southeast Polk Community School District.

To ensure compliance, the associate superintendent, 515-967-4294, has been appointed as the district's Level I investigator, with a designated Level II as his alternate. If the complaint is found to be without grounds, the Level I investigator can cause the complaint to be dropped. If legal action is required, or the incident comes under the auspices of the Department of Human Services, then the appropriate agency is notified. The investigator may also refer the case to the Level II investigator, as can another person if they disagree with the Level I findings.

### **CHILD ABUSE**

Neglect, sexual molestation, emotional abuse and any non-accidental physical injury suffered by a person under 18 years of age as a result of acts or omissions by parents, guardians or persons legally responsible for the child, is child abuse. School personnel, including nurses, teachers, counselors, and principals, are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse must contact the Department of Human Services.

### **DISTRICT FEES**

Textbook Fee \$60

Student Activity Ticket (optional K-8) \$40

Student Activity Ticket (optional 9-12) \$50

In some instances, fees may be reduced or waived based on family income. To apply, see information in the School Nutrition Program section of this handbook.

A complete listing of fees can be found on the district website. Families who qualify for free or reduced meals may also qualify for free or reduced school fees. To be considered the required forms should be submitted within 30 days from the first day of school. If you are unable to pay fees, please contact the district business office. Unpaid fees are subject to collection.

### **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

Under the U.S. Constitution, all individuals have the right of freedom of expression. Students will be allowed freedom of expression of their viewpoints and opinions as long as the expression is responsibly done. Student expression shall not, in the judgment of the administration, encourage the breaking of laws, cause defamation of persons, contain obscenity or indecency, or promote racial intolerance or hatred.

The administration has the right to determine the time, place and manner in which the expression is to be allowed so as to not disrupt the educational program of the district. Students who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary measures.

### **HOMELESS STUDENTS**

If you or your family lives in any of these situations: in a shelter, motel, vehicle or campground; on the street; in an abandoned building, trailer or other inadequate housing; doubled up with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing, school-aged children have certain rights or protections under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act of 2001.

You or your children have the right to:

- Go to school, no matter where you live or how long you have lived there.
- Continue in the school attended before you became homeless OR the school they last attended, if that is your choice and it is workable for your family. If a school sends your child to a building other than the one you request, the school must provide you with a written explanation and offer you the right to appeal that decision.
- Receive transportation to the school attended before your family became homeless OR the school they last attended, if you requested such transportation.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residence that prevents or delays school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of your choice even while the school and you try to resolve a dispute over enrolling your children.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if



needed, as provided to all other children served in these programs.

- Receive transportation to school and to school programs.
- Whenever you move, you should contact the school for help enrolling your child in the new school or arranging for your child to continue at the former school. For assistance, please contact any building principal, guidance counselor, school nurse, or the Homeless Liaison, at 967- 4294.

### **HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT**

Iowa law requires all Iowa school districts to provide instruction in human growth and development. The law requires the topics of personal development, human sexuality, sex stereotypes and abuse and sexually transmitted diseases be addressed in some appropriate manner. Human Growth and Development curriculum overview can be reviewed on the district website or by your child's school office. If, after review, you decide you do not want your child to participate in the Human Growth and Development instruction, complete the **Pupil Excused from Instruction Form** and return it to the building principal.

### **PARENTAL RIGHTS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records and gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to

release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law. Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. Permission is included in the annual school registration process.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327).  
Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

### **OPEN ENROLLMENT**

Parents requesting open enrollment in and out of the school district for their student (1st through 12th grade) will notify the receiving and resident school districts no later than March 1 in the year preceding the first year desired for open enrollment. The notice will be made on forms provided by the Department of Education, available on the district website – Parents | Enrollment & Registration | Open Enrollment.

Parents of children who will begin kindergarten will file in the same manner set forth above by September 1. Parents who have good cause, as defined by the state of Iowa, for failing to meet the March 1 deadline may make an open enrollment request with supporting documentation in the same manner set forth above.

The board will take action on each open enrollment request.

The superintendent will notify the parents by mail within three days of the board's action to approve or

deny the open enrollment request. Approved open enrollment requests will be transmitted by the superintendent to the resident and receiving district chosen by the parents within five days after the board's action on the open enrollment request. For further details, contact the Central Education Office, 515-957-3406.

### **SCHOOL PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS**

The normal procedure for registering a complaint relating to a school matter or individual is to go directly to the person involved, i.e. the staff member or principal. State the problem and the concern in a discreet, courteous manner. If a staff issue is not resolved, any justified concerns should then be taken to the building principal and then, if not resolved, to the superintendent of schools. Complaints of a general nature such as disapproval of a textbook or library book should be written, dated and signed, and sent to the Southeast Polk district office.

### **TOBACCO-FREE AND DRUG-FREE**

In an effort to provide a healthy, safe and productive environment, all district buildings, vehicles, and grounds are tobacco and drug free.

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT, RESTRAINT, AND PHYSICAL CONFINEMENT AND DETENTION**

State law forbids school employees from using corporal punishment against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment.

Additionally, school employees may use "reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain" to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons or property.

State law also places limits on school employees' abilities to restrain or confine and detain any student. The law limits why, how, where, and for how long a school employee may restrain or confine and detain a child. If a child is restrained or confined and detained, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child's parent.

The Board of Education has the following related policy that can be reviewed at the district website: 503.5 - Corporal Punishment

If you have any questions about this state law, please contact your school. The complete text of the law and additional information is available on the Iowa Department of Education's website [www.educateiowa.gov](http://www.educateiowa.gov)

### **SECTION 504**

#### **Programs for Students with Disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

#### **and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibit discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504 defines a person with a disability as anyone who

has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, sleeping, standing, lifting, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, helping, eating, bending, or operation of a bodily function. The school district has the responsibility to provide accommodations and services to eligible individuals with disabilities. The district acknowledges its responsibility under Section 504 to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability shall knowingly be permitted in any program or practice in the school.

If there are questions, please feel free to contact the Director of Special Education, Section 504 Coordinator for the Southeast Polk Community School District, at (515) 957-3428.

### **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

Enrolled children in the school district community shall have equal opportunity for a quality public education. It is the policy of the Southeast Polk Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact;

Joseph M. Horton, Associate Superintendent, Affirmative Action Coordinator, Equity Coordinator and Title IX Coordinator,  
Southeast Polk District Office  
8379 NE University Ave., Pleasant Hill, IA 50327,  
[\(515\) 967-4294](tel:5159674294), [joseph.horton@southeastpolk.org](mailto:joseph.horton@southeastpolk.org).

Inquiries or grievances may also be directed to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Des Moines, IA, 50319-0201, [\(515\) 281-4121](tel:5152814121); or the U.S. Department of Education, Region VII Office of Civil Rights, 500 West Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661.

The Board requires all persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district to subscribe to all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules and regulations pertaining to contract compliance and equal opportunity.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

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It is the policy of the Southeast Polk Community School District not to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), genetic information (for employment), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices.

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Affirmative Action Coordinator, Equity  
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8379 NE University Ave.,  
Pleasant Hill, IA 50327,  
[\(515\) 967-4294](tel:5159674294), [joseph.horton@southeastpolk.org](mailto:joseph.horton@southeastpolk.org).

Inquiries or grievances may also be directed to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Des Moines, IA, 50319-0201, [\(515\) 281-4121](tel:5152814121); or the U.S.

Department of Education, Region VII Office of Civil Rights, 500 West Madison Street, Suite 1475, Chicago, IL 60661.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

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Students, parents of students, employees, and applicants for employment in the school district have the right to file a formal complaint alleging discrimination. The district has policies and procedures in place to identify and investigate complaints alleging discrimination. If appropriate, the district will take steps to prevent the recurrence of discrimination and to correct its discriminatory effects on the Complainant and others.

A Complainant may attempt to resolve the problem informally by discussing the matter with a building principal or a direct supervisor. However, the Complainant has the right to end the informal process at any time and pursue the formal grievance

procedures outlined below. Use of the informal or formal grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies. Please note that informal processes and procedures are not to be used in certain circumstances (e.g., sexual harassment and sexual assault).

### **Filing a Complaint**

A Complainant who wishes to avail himself/herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with the equity coordinator(s). An alternate will be designated in the event it is claimed that the equity coordinator or superintendent committed the alleged discrimination or some other conflict of interest exists. Complaints shall be filed within 180 days of the event giving rise to the complaint or from the date the Complainant could reasonably become aware of such occurrence. The Complainant will state the nature of the complaint and the remedy requested. The equity coordinator(s) shall assist the Complainant as needed.

### **Investigation**

Within 15 working days, the equity coordinator will begin the investigation of the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation (hereinafter "equity coordinator"). If the Complainant is under 18 years of age, the equity coordinator shall notify his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) that they may attend investigatory meetings in which the Complainant is involved. The complaint and identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or witnesses will only be disclosed as reasonably necessary in connection with the investigation or as required by law or policy. The investigation may include, but is not limited to the following:

- A request for the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint;
- A request for the individual named in the complaint to provide a written statement;
- A request for witnesses identified during the course of the investigation to provide a written statement;
- Interviews of the Complainant, Respondent, or witnesses;
- An opportunity to present witnesses or other relevant information; and
- Review and collection of documentation or information deemed relevant to the investigation.

Within 60 working days, the equity coordinator shall complete the investigation and issue a report with respect to the findings. The equity coordinator shall

notify the Complainant and Respondent of the decision within 5 working days of completing the written report. Notification shall be by U.S. mail, first class.

### **Decision and Appeal**

The complaint is closed after the equity coordinator has issued the report, unless within 10 working days after receiving the decision, either party appeals the decision to the superintendent by making a written request detailing why he/she believes the decision should be reconsidered. The equity coordinator shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the superintendent. Within 30 working days, the superintendent shall affirm, reverse, amend the decision, or direct the equity coordinator to gather additional information. The superintendent shall notify the Complainant, Respondent, and the equity coordinator of the decision within 5 working days of the decision. Notification shall be by U.S. mail, first class.

The decision of the superintendent shall be final.

The decision of the superintendent in no way prejudices a party from seeking redress through state or federal agencies as provided by in law.

This policy and procedures are to be used for complaints of discrimination, in lieu of any other general complaint policies or procedures that may be available.

If any of the stated timeframes cannot be met by the district, the district will notify the parties and pursue completion as promptly as possible.

Retaliation against any person, because the person has filed a complaint or assisted or participated in an investigation, is prohibited. Persons found to have engaged in retaliation shall be subject to discipline by appropriate measures.