

## **100.0 — REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

The following information is required to enroll a student in a Florida school. Please note that the student may not attend class until all documents are received.

- A certified birth certificate, which may be requested online at [doh.state.fl.us/planning\\_eval/vital\\_statistics/birth\\_death.htm](http://doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/birth_death.htm).
- A Florida Certificate of Immunization, Form 680 (blue card), completed by a Florida physician or by a Florida county health department.
- Florida Statute §1003.22 requires any child entering a Florida school for the first time to present documentation of a physical examination performed within one year prior to enrollment (registration date). This exam must include a review of all body systems (heart, skin, respiratory, etc.) performed by a licensed medical provider. The exam should indicate any condition which would warrant special considerations for the student at school. The physical exam form must be readable (health department personnel can only accept exams in English), signed, dated and stamped by the provider, practicing physician or the county public health department.
- Official documentation that the parent(s) or guardian(s) is a legal resident(s) of the school district attendance area.

## **100.1 — Immunizations Requirements for the Current School Year**

Florida Statutes §1003.22 and §402.305 and Sarasota County School Board Rule 7.104 require that prior to admittance to or attendance in a public or non-public school, each student shall present or have on file with the school a Florida Certificate of Immunization (DH 680 form) from a licensed practicing physician or the county public health department. Student must have all required shots for the entering grade level.

For a list of immunization requirements for school, please visit the following website

[www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/schoolhealth](http://www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/schoolhealth).

No-cost immunizations are available to eligible children through the federally-funded Vaccine for Children program at Sarasota County Health Department. Call 941-861-2900 in Sarasota or 941-861-3864 in North Port for locations and hours of operation. Please take your child's shot records when you go for immunizations.

## **100.2 — Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)**

Florida's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program has a separate set of enrollment and attendance requirements, which are not included under the authority of public K-12 compulsory school attendance laws. The law allows a parent to voluntarily enroll an eligible child (four years old by September 1 and residing in Florida) in a free VPK program.

Sarasota County Schools intends to hold VPK classes at select schools during the summer of 2016. The program will total 300 hours of instruction focused on the Florida Standards for Four-Year-Olds. The specific school sites and calendar are yet to be determined. (Please note: school bus transportation will not be provided.)

For additional information regarding VPK, including application procedures and dates to apply, please visit Florida's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program website through the Office of Early Learning at [www.floridaearlylearning.com](http://www.floridaearlylearning.com).

If you have questions regarding the Sarasota County Schools VPK program, please contact Elementary Education.

## **100.3 — ESE Pre-Kindergarten**

The Pre-Kindergarten Exceptional Student Education Program for children with disabilities is operated by the Sarasota County School District. In addition to therapy services and classrooms at selected elementary schools, the school district contracts with several community agencies. Eligible students transition from the Early Steps program to Pre-K ESE

programs upon their third birthday. Other potential students are referred through Child Find. These programs operate during regular school hours and follow the school calendar. Extended School Year (ESY) programs are available during the summer for students with more severe developmental delays. School bus transportation is provided to the assigned school. To learn more about the Pre-Kindergarten program for students with disabilities, call 941-927-9000, ext. 31271.

#### **100.4 — Kindergarten**

Florida law (§1003.2 1(1)(a)2 Fla. Stat.) specifies that children who have attained the age of five years on or before September 1 of the school year in question are eligible for admission to public kindergarten during that school year based on rules prescribed by the school board. Students are eligible for kindergarten attendance if they meet the age requirement.

Admission to a public kindergarten is not contingent upon what a child knows; if the child meets the age requirement, he or she is eligible for admission. The Florida Partnership for School Readiness has published “Performance Standards” for three-, four- and five-year-olds. Those standards reflect what children should know and be able to do. You may access that information and other resources from the Partnership’s website. In addition, the Florida Standards provide expectations for student achievement in Florida. More information on course standards and course descriptions is available at [www.cpalms.org](http://www.cpalms.org).

#### **100.5 — Educational Choices**

Most children are assigned to the school at their grade level that is closest to their home; however, student interests and needs may be accommodated through a variety of options and programs offered through School Choice. One choice might be attending a Charter or Magnet School program in the county. Some of these programs have specific entrance criteria. There is no cost to the student (or parent or guardian) for attending any charter, specialty or magnet program. For information about these programs, call the district office at 927-9000, ext. 32255, or log into the district’s website under School Choice.

##### **100.5a — Controlled Open Enrollment (School Choice)**

Students in Sarasota County Schools may request a school other than their assigned district school through the Controlled Open Enrollment (School Choice) program. The student must apply by completing a School Choice application, which is available each winter during a specific time period. Limited available spaces at each school open to Choice are awarded to students through a random lottery. Some schools are closed to choice if their enrollment is already at capacity. Parents must provide transportation for their children attending a school selected through the controlled open enrollment (School Choice) process. More information regarding the district’s *Controlled Open Enrollment (School Choice)* program including School Choice enrollment deadlines, is available on the district’s website or by calling (941) 927-9000, ext. 32255.

##### **100.5b — Charter Schools**

Charter schools are district sponsored public schools designed to provide a choice in education. These are public schools, so they charge no tuition or special fees. While these schools are dedicated to a specific purpose and focus, they meet the same standards as any other public school. Each district sponsored charter school has its own governing board to support with operating independently. Currently, the Sarasota County School District supports a number of charter schools offering a variety of programs, from military training to a focus on the arts and sciences. A directory of charter schools is provided in this guide. Contact the individual schools for information and application materials.

##### **100.5c — Home Education**

Parents also have the choice of enrolling their child in a home school program. Parents are held responsible for educating their child. Parents must maintain a portfolio of work and submit a student academic evaluation annually. For information on home schooling, call 941-927-9000, ext. 32258. The Florida Parent-Educators Association publishes a guide for home-schoolers in Florida. A copy is available by calling toll-free 877-275-3732 or at [fpea.com](http://fpea.com).

##### **100.5d — Magnet Programs**

Magnet programs are specialty programs housed within a district school. The programmatic specialties include visual and performing arts, the International Baccalaureate program and the Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education Program. Magnet programs are open to students who meet various eligibility requirements. Students apply directly to the school, not through the School Choice Program. For a complete listing of the available magnet programs, call the Office of School Choice, Virtual School and Charter Schools at 941-927-9000, ext. 32255.

#### 100.5e — McKay Scholarship

The district participates in the McKay Scholarship program that is offered through the Florida Department of Education. This program allows eligible students with an Individualized Education Plan IEP or a 504 Accommodation Plan the opportunity to select a placement in a private school or selected public schools, including charter schools. Parents may learn more about the options for their child by visiting the Florida Department of Education website at [www.fldoe.org](http://www.fldoe.org), the school district website at [www.SarasotaCountySchools.net](http://www.SarasotaCountySchools.net) or the district's Office of School Choice, Virtual School and Charter Schools at 941-927-9000, ext. 32258. Information about the McKay Scholarship Choice option is also given to parents when an IEP or a 504 Plan for their child is discussed. A district school selected by a parent under the McKay Scholarship Program must not only have available space but must also have the resources to fulfill the student's IEP or 504 Plan. McKay Scholarship applications MUST be received by the school district prior to July 1 for a child to be placed in a school in the upcoming academic year under the scholarship. Parents typically must provide transportation for their children attending a school selected through the McKay Scholarship program.

#### 100.5f — Sarasota Virtual School (SVS)

SVS is an interactive learning environment created through technology, in which the student and teacher are separated by time, space or both. Students access lessons and assignments and receive assessments via the Internet. The District contracts with three state and School Board approved outside virtual instruction providers (VIP): K12 Florida, Inc. (serves students in grades K-12), Ingenuity (serves students in grades 6-12) and Florida Virtual School (serves students in grades 9-12). SVS students have access to state- approved curriculum through each of the VIPs.

SVS offers one enrollment period annually for a minimum of 90 days prior to the beginning of the academic year the student is seeking to enroll. The enrollment period is announced a variety of ways including through district schools, news media and on the district web site. All students residing in Sarasota County have equitable access to SVS. Parents of ELL students must request an ELL Committee Meeting at their districted school prior to enrollment in SVS. Students with an IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan must request a meeting at their district school to review their existing plans prior to enrollment in SVS. Computers and internet service may be provided at no charge to eligible students who meet family income requirements. In order to enroll in SVS, student must meet the eligibility requirements set by state statute (F.S. 1002.455).

The following should be taken into account when considering enrollment in SVS:

- Students enrolled in SVS must meet all standards and graduation requirements of the state and district.
- Students enrolled in SVS are entitled to participate in extracurricular activities at their districted school.
- SVS is a public school, and all enrolled students must take the appropriate grade level state required assessments (FSA reading, math, science, and civics, EOC, SAT 10, Fair, etc.).
- After completion of all graduation requirements, a student will be awarded a diploma from Sarasota Virtual School. SVS is a nontraditional learning environment, and an enrolled student is not entitled to participate in the traditional promotion or graduation ceremony at his or her districted school.
- Parents of student(s) in grades K-8 must commit to spending at least 2-4 hours per day as a learning coach for their child.
- Parents must attend an orientation session and/or personal interview with the Supervisor of Sarasota Virtual School prior to enrollment.
- Regular attendance and satisfactory completion of coursework is required for continuation in the school.
- Parents of ELL students must request an ELL Committee Meeting at their districted school prior to enrollment in SVS.
- Parents of Students may remain in SVS for any or all of their education in the district as long as they meet appropriate attendance and course requirements.

To learn more about this educational option, interested parents should contact the Office of School Choice, Virtual School and Charter Schools at 941-927-9000, ext. 32289 or by visiting the district's web page at: [www.SarasotaCountySchool.net/departments/schoolchoice](http://www.SarasotaCountySchool.net/departments/schoolchoice).

#### **100.6 — Sarasota County Schools Virtual Options**

Sarasota Virtual School (full time program), Sarasota Virtual Academy (part time course offerings) are district-operated programs that offer students a variety of opportunities to access virtual instruction. These district operated programs have highly qualified certified teachers that use state approved curriculums and follow Sarasota County School Board policies, procedures and guidelines. Additional details about these programs are available at [www.SarasotaCountySchool.net/departments/schoolchoice](http://www.SarasotaCountySchool.net/departments/schoolchoice).

The district's K-12 students also have access to the part time or full time virtual programs offered by Florida Virtual School (FLVS). To learn more about FLVS's virtual options, you may speak with your school counselor or visit the FLVS web page at [www.flvs.net](http://www.flvs.net).

#### **100.7— Specialized School Programs**

The school district provides a variety of opportunities for students with special needs.

The Teen Parent Programs at Riverview High School and North Port High School were designed with the goal of preventing pregnant students and school-age parents from exiting school without earning a high school diploma or its equivalent. Other goals include improving students' academic performance in basic skills area, increasing their knowledge of health and child development related to pregnancy and parenting, and reducing the incidence of complications of pregnancy, and low-birth-weight babies. Students will continue to develop a strong connection between their academic achievement and their postsecondary education and career goals. This program will not only meet the immediate needs of the young parent and child, but will also enable them to become self-sustaining members of society.

Oak Park is a school designed to educate students with significant physical, emotional or cognitive disabilities. The decision for placement at Oak Park School is made by the Individual Education Plan team. The school is located at 7285 Proctor Road. Oak Park houses the district's Academy for Community Transition. This program is designed to provide individualized transition planning. The goal is to assist motivated students ages 18-21 in developing skills to be successful participants and active consumers in their community. For more information on the educational programs at Oak Park, contact the ESE Liaison at your child's school or the Exceptional Student Education department at 941-927-9000.

Intellectually gifted students may receive services in several different school settings, including Pine View School for students in grades 2-12. Your child's districted school can provide information about how to determine whether a child qualifies for Pine View or other full time gifted programs offered throughout the school district for intellectually gifted students.

#### **100.8 — Alternative Schools**

Alternative schools are designed for students who have had difficulty in the traditional school environment or have been in trouble with the law. These schools offer specialized programs designed to help students with behavior management while they earn school credit. More information is available in Section 701.6 of this publication or by calling the school district's Pupil Support Services – Alternative Programs at 941-927-9000.

#### **100.9 — Title I Education/Services**

Title I of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the "No Child Left Behind Act" of 2001, provides supplemental educational services for eligible public and private school students to assist those children in acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to meet challenging student performance standards. The law also requires the states to adopt a specific approach to testing and accountability, with the goal of higher achievement for all

children. Federal legislation provides guidelines for the selection of schools, for the selection of students for those schools, and for parental involvement.

#### 100.9a — Title I School Selection

Schools are ranked annually by using the percentage of students receiving free and reduced-cost meals as a measure of the percentage of students from low-income families. Schools with 75 percent or more students receiving free and reduced-cost meals are eligible for school-wide Title I status. This means that all students attending a school-wide status Title I school are eligible for services. Title I funds may then be used to upgrade the entire school's instructional program. A school's eligibility from one school year to the next may change as the income of the families of the student population change. Students attending a Title I school will receive services based on an assessment of the school's needs, which are summarized in the School Improvement Plan (SIP) created annually. The SIP is available at the school and can be found on the district website. Parents are invited to contact the school principal to provide input on the SIP.

#### 100.9b— Parental Involvement

All parents are encouraged to become involved in the education of their children. The role of a parent is vital to the success of his or her child's education. Research reveals that high student achievement, self-esteem, positive attitudes, better behavior and motivation to do well in school are closely related to positive parental involvement in education. As a result, students whose parents are involved and supportive tend to have higher grades and test scores, better attendance and more consistently completed homework. These students also have a higher graduation rate and a higher percentage of enrollment in post-secondary education. All Title I schools work with the school district to develop a Parent Involvement Plan (PIP) each year to identify ways parents can get involved and to lay out plans for improving the capacity of parents to assist their children. These plans are available at Title I schools and on the district and school websites. Each Title I school has materials available to provide information and support for parents.

#### **Parents' Right to Know**

Parents have the right to request information regarding the professional qualifications of classroom teachers and paraprofessionals who provide instruction and work with their child.

Requested information may include, but is not limited to:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which the state qualification or licensing criteria is waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

Requests for information regarding teacher and paraprofessional qualifications should be presented in writing to the school. The school will provide the requested information to the parent in a timely manner.

#### 100.9c — District Report Card

The state of Florida has rated Sarasota County an "A" district, one of only ten "A" districts out of 67 districts statewide. Seventy-eight percent of district schools received "A" or "B" grade for the school year 2013-2014. High school grades released in December 2014 showed that all eight high schools in Sarasota County School District received an "A" or "B" grade.

#### **School Year 2013 -2014**

District Grade: A

71% of Students Meet High Standards in Reading

71% of Students Meet High Standards in Math

68% of Students Meet High Standards in Writing

68% of Students Meet High Standards in Science

71% of Students Make Learning Gains in Reading

75% of Students Make Learning Gains in Math  
99% of Students Tested

The district report card for the 2014-2015 school year will be available on the district website when the information has been reported by the State.

#### **100.10 — Parent Portal Registration**

In the Parent Portal, get access to the class schedule, attendance, class assignments with grades, report card and teacher emails. For instructions on how to register and use the Parent + Student Portal [click here](#).

#### **101.0 — FAMILY AND STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The district publishes a Student and Family Handbook each year to provide families with important information about procedures, behavior, academics and health. The handbook is online in several languages at [SarasotaCountySchools.net](http://SarasotaCountySchools.net). Printed copies are available upon request from any school office. Please use this handbook to assist your student in becoming a productive member of his/her school community. As a parent it is your responsibility to read, understand and abide by this handbook, while supporting your student in doing the same.

The roles and the responsibilities of the **parents** are to:

- Read and understand the rights and responsibilities in this handbook.
- Maintain current home and work addresses and emergency telephone numbers in the student contact information files, including doctor and hospital preferences.
- Be involved in the education of their children and understand that parents/guardians can be held responsible for the actions of their children.
- Inform the school of pending legal matters that may affect their child.
- Maintain communication with school personnel concerning their child's progress and conduct.
- Ensure that their child is in daily attendance and promptly report an absence or tardiness in writing to school within three school days after absence.
- Provide their child with the resources needed to complete class work.
- Assist their child in being healthy, neat, and clean.
- Identify responsible adults who may pick up their child from school.
- Bring to the attention of school authorities any problem or condition which affects their child or other children at the school.
- Understand policies related to the dispensing of medicine to students and the prohibitions against student self-medicating and sharing medications with other students. Notify the school of anything that may affect the student's ability to learn, to attend school regularly, or to take part in school activities.
- Understand each school's guideline for student arrival on campus prior to the official start of the school day and student departure from campus at the end of the school day. Comply with transportation policies and understand that bus drivers may not allow students off the bus except at the designated stop, unless permission is granted by a school administrator and the Transportation Department.
- Understand the rights of school officials and law enforcement officers regarding search of student storage spaces and vehicles.
- Report knowledge of dangerous or harassing situations to school personnel.
- Discuss progress reports and work assignments with their child.
- Remember that silence hurts!
- Call the toll-free "BE BRAVE" Hotline for any safety issues at 1-877-723-2728, OR THE School District Security Department at 941-966-SAFE(7233).
- In case of an emergency, call 911.

In Sarasota County, teachers expect to meet and/or talk with parents about their child's progress. If the teacher is unable to help, a parent should then approach the next person in the "chain of support" — generally school counselors and school administrators. To assist you, please remember these tips for successful parent-school conferences:

- Have a plan. Write down your questions and/or concerns before you go.
- Listen carefully and ask questions. The more effective the communication between you and the teacher, the better you will understand each other.
- Ask for examples of your child's work.
- If a language barrier presents a problem, ask for a translator.
- Request grades, homework calendars, or other records of student progress.
- Before leaving, schedule a time with the teacher to follow up on your child's progress.

The roles and responsibilities of the **students** are to:

- Read and understand the rights and responsibilities in the Code of Student Conduct.
- Abide by the rules and regulations of the school and each classroom teacher.
- Attend all classes daily and be punctual in attendance.
- Be prepared for class with homework and appropriate work materials.
- Be respectful of all individuals and property.
- Use appropriate language rather than profane or inflammatory statements.
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- Be clean and neat and comply with the school dress code.
- Be responsible for his or her own work.
- Report knowledge of dangerous or harassing situations to school personnel. Remember: silence hurts!
- Report dangerous or harassing situations to "BE BRAVE" Hotline at 1-877-723-2728.
- In case of an emergency, call 911.

The roles and responsibilities of the **school** are to:

- Create a safe, orderly, and drug-free environment and maintain an atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning.
- Exhibit an attitude of respect for students, staff, parents and visitors.
- Administer discipline based upon fair and impartial treatment of all students. Plan a flexible curriculum to meet the needs of all students.
- Promote training for all staff in the areas of effective discipline and behavior management.
- Develop a good working relationship among staff and with students.
- Encourage frequent parent/guardian communication with the school.
- Encourage parent/guardian participation in school activities.
- Provide all written and oral communication between school personnel and parents of current or former English-Language Learners in the parents' primary language or other mode of communication commonly used by the parents unless clearly not feasible. Specific Authority 1001.02 FS. Law Implemented 1003.56 FS., as amended by Chapter 2002-387, Laws of Florida. History: New 10-30-90.

#### **Student Rights and Responsibilities:**

This section summarizes the broad principles of student rights. Each right has a corresponding responsibility in a free and democratic society. A primary responsibility for students is to understand the importance of reporting dangerous, potentially dangerous, or harassing behaviors to school personnel. The following rights and responsibilities are basic and reflect recent court decisions regarding student rights.

- Florida school laws grant principals, assistant principals, teachers, bus drivers, and other school staff the authority to control and discipline students. Students are expected and required to follow the requests and directives of all administrators, teachers, bus drivers, school staff members, coaches, school volunteers and chaperones when on School District property or at other places where they are under the supervision of School District personnel or designees.

- Students have a right to learn through equal educational opportunities that are appropriate to their needs and are provided in a safe, orderly, positive and drug-free environment.
- Students have the responsibility to:
  - ❖ Behave in a manner that does not interfere with the learning of other students.
  - ❖ Utilize the educational experiences made available to them.
  - ❖ Cooperate fully and exert every effort to achieve mastery of basic skills.
  - ❖ Behave in a manner consistent with school and district rules and policies.

### **101.1 — A Checklist of Parental Involvement**

The parent is the child's most important teacher. Schools recognize this and act as partners to provide parents with support and assistance in becoming involved with their child's education. Home-school partnerships help strengthen a child's academic performance. Parental involvement is critical to a child's success in school.

**To determine your level of involvement, please take the following self-assessment.**

\*1=Always; 2=Sometimes; 3=Want to do better

1. I stress the importance of education and expect my child to do his/her best in school.
2. I expect my child to show respect to the teacher and all classmates.
3. I discuss daily work assignments and appropriate classroom behaviors with my child.
4. I make sure my child is at school every day and arrives on time.
5. I make sure my child has all the materials needed to complete school and homework.
6. I communicate with the school and my child's teacher(s) about my child's progress.
7. I take an active part in school activities, such as parent/teacher conferences, Back-to-School Night, Parent/Teacher Organization meetings and workshops on helping my child at home.
8. I make sure my child stays healthy by eating well and getting adequate exercise and sleep.
9. I help my child develop a good self-image by providing care, discipline, support, interest and concern.
10. I help my child develop a positive attitude toward school and learning.

### **101.2 — Free Speech, Student Publications and Technology**

The Constitution of the United States guarantees us the right to express our ideas freely. A basic education should prepare us to do that in responsible ways. We need opportunities to learn how to listen to the views of others as well as how to express ourselves peacefully and harmoniously.

#### **Rights**

Students have a right to:

- Hear all sides of subjects about which people disagree;
- Give their opinions and points of view;
- Be free of censorship within a framework of mutual respect;
- Expect that pornographic and/or prejudicial materials will not be allowed in the schools;
- Use online telecommunications and networks to increase their access to information and resources;
- Use online telecommunications and networks to obtain information, create intellectual products, collaborate and communicate for educational purposes;
- Use online telecommunications and networks without the fear that their products will be violated, misrepresented, tampered with, destroyed or stolen;
- Be excused from reciting or standing for the Pledge of Allegiance; and
- Speak in their native language.

#### **Responsibilities**



Students have a responsibility to:

- Be informed about all sides of controversial issues;
- Listen politely to the viewpoints of others;
- Use good judgment in developing student publications;
- Use good judgment in the selection of sources of information;
- Understand the difference between appropriate and unacceptable uses of online telecommunications and networks;
- Recognize that the use of online telecommunications and networks is a privilege that can be withdrawn if they engage in unacceptable or illegal use of this resource; and
- Use online telecommunications and networks in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with their educational mission.

### **101.3 — Printed Materials**

Only materials produced by the schools or school district may be distributed in the schools or on school grounds unless permission has been granted by the principal or an authorized administrator. The following rules apply:

- Approval must be obtained from a school administrator prior to:
  - ❖ Handing out or posting non-school materials, including petitions and surveys;
  - ❖ Printing any school publications; collecting money or selling advertisements for school publications; and/or
  - ❖ Distributing any commercial, political or religious material on school grounds.
  - ❖ Notices of student non-curricular group meetings posted on general-purpose student bulletin boards do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the school district and/or the administration. The district is only offering physical space to such groups and does not promote, endorse or otherwise sponsor such materials. Students are encouraged to be sensitive to the viewpoints and beliefs of their fellow students when posting such notices. Students may not distribute petitions or surveys during class time, unless they are curriculum-based and authorized by the teacher.
- No items or publications shall be distributed or displayed in any school which can reasonably be interpreted by the principal or supervising administrators as being obscene, lewd, or pornographic in a school or setting; which are libelous or slanderous; which contain statements which invade the personal rights of privacy; which advertise items not permitted for use by minors; which can reasonably be expected to create a material and substantial disruption of normal school activity, or appropriate discipline in the operation of the school; or which advocate violence or illegal activity.
- Pornographic materials are not allowed on school grounds.
- Permission to use online telecommunications and/or networks requires that the student and parent/guardian sign and return the proper forms, indicating an understanding and acceptance of the user's rights and responsibilities.

### **101.4 — Student Activities and Assembly**

All of us need to learn how to be effective members of the communities in which we live. School activities give students a chance to interact in positive ways. Students can learn from each other how to work together harmoniously for common goals.

#### **Rights**

- Students have a right to participate in extracurricular activities, assemblies and school-approved organizations without regard to age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, linguistic differences, national origin, marital status, race, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic background.

- Students have a right to seek office in student government and/or school clubs without regard to age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, linguistic differences, national origin, marital status, race, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic background.
- Students have a right to consult with faculty sponsors of school curriculum-related clubs and groups.
- All students have a right to take part in electing officers for student government.

#### **Responsibilities**

- Students have a responsibility to keep their extracurricular activities from interfering with their academic work and to know and follow the rules for the activities they choose.
- Students who hold office have a responsibility to learn how to do their jobs, follow the rules, support the goals of the group and treat other members of the group fairly.
- Students have a responsibility to see that their actions as members of school clubs and groups meet the standards set by the school administration.

#### **101.5 - School Public Accountability Reports (SPAR)**

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) federal legislation requires that each school district provide parents with access to SPAR reports annually. These reports can be found at each school website and the district website.

#### **101.6—School Improvement Plan (SIP)**

School Improvement Plans are developed by each school annually in cooperation with each School Advisory Council (SAC), as required by the law to keep the school focused on achieving the identified needs of every student. Each school's individual School Improvement Plan can be found at each school website and the district website [SarasotaCountySchools.net/departments/schoolimprovement](http://SarasotaCountySchools.net/departments/schoolimprovement).

#### **102.0 — SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY**

The School Resource Officers Program is a nationally accepted program that places a law enforcement officer on the campus in schools. The Sarasota County Sheriff's Office has School Resource Deputies (SRD) who are assigned to high schools and middle schools in the unincorporated county. The North Port Police Department has School Resource Officers (SRO) assigned at the middle schools and high schools in North Port and the Venice Police Department has School Resource Officers assigned to Venice High School. The Sarasota Police Department provides School Resource Officers at the high schools and middle schools within the City of Sarasota.

These are several areas in which the SRO or SRD will be actively involved while working on the school campus:

- A visible, uniformed law enforcement figure on campus to deal with any law-enforcement-related issues.
- A classroom resource for instruction in the following areas: safety programs, educational programs in drug and violence prevention and several other topics.
- An extension of the school administration in dealing with a variety of situations.
- A resource for students enabling them to be associated with a law enforcement figure in the student's environment rather than in a traditional law-enforcement environment.
- A resource for teachers, parents, guardians and students for conferences related to individual problems or questions.
- A counseling resource for law-enforcement issues which affect the educational environment.

#### **102.1—Be Brave Hotline**

BE BRAVE stands for Better Education By Reporting All Violence Early and is a statewide effort to encourage students and others to use a toll-free hotline number. This number can be used for the purpose of anonymously reporting suspected serious incidents or other criminal activities that could affect the safety and wellbeing of students, faculty, and staff at schools.

The toll free number is 1-877-7BE-BRAVE or 1-877-723-2728. Trained personnel answer the number 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If it's an emergency, call 911. Callers may remain anonymous and will not be required to identify themselves in order to give information. All information received through the hotline will be forwarded to the appropriate school and law enforcement authorities who will investigate and take any necessary action.

## **102.2 — Visitors and Volunteers**

- Visitors to the campus must sign in with the main office and present a current state-issued form of identification (e.g. driver's license or state identification card). The identification is used to register the visitor on campus and process the visitor through a sexual offender/predator database. After a visitor who has legitimate business with the school has been cleared, the visitor will receive a self-adhesive name tag with his or her name and photo and the location he or she is visiting. The badge must be visibly worn at all times while the visitor is on the campus. Any individual considered a non-student must obtain administrative clearance through the visitor management system prior to entering the school. Persons without a pass are subject to a trespassing charge and may be arrested.
- Any authorized campus visitor wishing to serve as a volunteer (including mentors, tutors, field-trip chaperones, booster club members, etc.) must first apply to be approved as a volunteer through the school district's volunteer program. Applications may be submitted on computers dedicated to volunteer activities can be completed on a volunteer computer located at all Sarasota district schools, some charter schools, and the school district Volunteer and Partnership Office. This application prompts a Level 1 criminal history background check at no cost to the volunteer and which is required for all school volunteers in addition to normal visitor screening. The school-based volunteer coordinator must receive clearance notice from the Volunteer and Partnership Office before the volunteer is permitted to work in a school or at a school function. Please note that some volunteer interactions (such as one-on-one work with a student and overnight field-trip chaperoning) require a higher level background screening for a fee. Check with your school-based Volunteer Coordinator for your volunteer assignment requirements and contact the school district Safety and Security Department to make an appointment for fingerprinting, if necessary.
- Upon each visit to a school, after signing in at the office and producing identification for visitor access, approved volunteers must proceed to the school's volunteer computer and sign in for their volunteer session. This process allows volunteers to document volunteer hours and be covered by the school district's workers compensation insurance policy. All volunteers must sign out on the computer when leaving to end their session. When volunteering at a time when access to the computer is not possible (such as an evening activity or meeting), the school-based Volunteer Coordinator will provide an alternative method for signing in and out as a volunteer. Volunteers serve by permission of the school principal/administrator, who has final authority for allowing volunteers to serve at the school.
- Students who are enrolled in any Sarasota County public school shall not visit any other public school without the permission of the administrative personnel at the school being visited. Any student found in violation of this policy shall be subject to school disciplinary action. Students enrolled in Sarasota County public schools serving as volunteers at other public schools must be registered and approved through the school district volunteer system and must sign in and out on the volunteer computer documenting their volunteer hours on that campus.
- Visitors must receive approval from the principal in advance to observe in the classroom.
- Teachers cannot stop classroom activities to hold parent conferences.
- Students cannot invite their friends or relatives from other schools to visit the school without express permission in advance from the principal's office.

- Any individual found on the campus without clearance from a member of the administrative staff is subject to a trespassing charge and possible arrest.

### **102.3 — Jessica Lunsford Act**

The Jessica Lunsford Act (authorized by Florida Statute 1012.467) requires a Level II criminal history background check for contractors and vendors doing business on school grounds. This criminal history background check is done by obtaining and submitting the fingerprints of the contractor or vendor to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). Fingerprint clearance checks are performed by School Safety and Security Department. If the contractor/vendor is cleared through the results of the criminal history background check, he or she is issued a photo identification badge. For further information visit the Sarasota County Schools website and click on the link to the Jessica Lunsford Act.

### **102.4 — Media Releases**

Occasionally the school district, newspapers, and television stations interview, photograph and/or videotape our schools, teachers and students to visually explain our schools' programs and events. Those photographs and videos may be used in newspapers, on television stations and in Sarasota County School District publications and productions.

On the school registration forms, parents/guardians may either grant or deny permission for their child to participate in these types of media events. Parents/guardians who later wish to change their decision may do so at any time by completing the appropriate form available from the school's registrar.

### **102.5 — Student Identification Badges**

The Sarasota County School District has issued student identification badges at some schools. At schools where the program has been implemented, these badges are used to identify students, to facilitate bus transportation, and to check out materials from the media center. Each student must wear the badge while on the school campus and during field trips. If a student does not follow this procedure he or she may be disciplined according to the Code of Student Conduct.

### **102.6 — Critical Incidents at Schools**

During a critical incident parents should not go to the school until notified. The school will be secured by law enforcement and parents will not be able to get their student until the threat has been cleared. Parents should stay off their cell phones and tell their student(s) to stay off their cell phones. Updates and other important information will be provided through the Connect-ED telephone communications system. Parents need to make sure all of their emergency contact information is current and listed correctly at the school.

### **102.7 — Cell Phones during Critical Incidents**

During a critical incident at the school, cell phones are not to be used by students. If students use cell phones to attempt to contact a parent during an emergency, they could be putting themselves and their classmates in jeopardy. During certain emergencies talking is not allowed in the classroom. This rule is enforced so that the room will sound vacant; conversation by the students could jeopardize their safety. Parents are asked to explain to their children the importance of not using cell phones during the emergency.

## 103.0 — TRANSPORTATION

### 103.1 — Bus Service

Transportation is provided to students in grades K-12 if they live more than two miles from school. Transportation may or may not be provided for students who live outside the attendance boundaries of the school they attend.

Parents/guardians have responsibility for the control and direction of students at the bus stop. All students have responsibility for their behavior on the school bus and at the school bus stop. The Sarasota County Schools Transportation Department may be reached at 486-2141. The district's website, [SarasotaCountySchools.net](http://SarasotaCountySchools.net), includes information about all bus routes.

School bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. This privilege can be denied for unacceptable behavior on a bus.

Riding the bus is a privilege; students have a RESPONSIBILITY to:

- Obey the driver's instructions.
- Arrive at the assigned stop five minutes before pickup time, stand away from the road, board the bus when it has stopped and the doors have opened. The bus will not wait for students who are tardy.
- Cross the roadway in the proper manner.
- Ride the assigned bus and not board or depart the bus at any stop other than the assigned stop, unless authorized by the principal and the Transportation Department. Sit in the assigned seat; standing or trying to change seats while the bus is in motion is dangerous.
- Remain seated and facing forward at all times when the bus is moving. Keep all portions of the body inside the bus.
- Refrain from spraying and/or applying scented perfumes/sprays/lotions while on the bus or just before boarding the bus.
- Remain absolutely quiet at railroad crossings, for the safety of all on board.
- Abide by school bus policies while on the bus.
- Refrain from throwing any items from the windows of the bus.
- Realize that parents/guardians and students may be held responsible for any unacceptable behavior by a student on the bus.
- Know that littering or throwing objects inside or at the bus is not allowed and may be subject to criminal charges.
- Be aware that parents/guardians and students will be held responsible for all vandalism to the bus by students, and that restitution will be required.
- Refrain from obscene language or gestures on the bus.
- Refrain from bringing animals or anything in a glass container on the bus, or any articles disruptive to the safe operation of the school bus. This includes science specimens and experiments. Bulky or objectionable articles, including scooters, skateboards or large musical instruments that cannot be held in the student's lap will not be permitted on the bus.
- Refrain from blocking the aisles or emergency exits with objects.
- Refrain from displaying posters or signs from the bus windows.

The use of automobile or bicycle transportation is a privilege granted by school district authorities if parking space is available. A student with a valid driver's license may be permitted to drive his or her automobile to school if written consent from his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and a written agreement to comply with all the school district rules relating to student vehicles are filed with the principal or designee.

Any student violating this rule shall be denied permission to bring his or her vehicle to school until such time as the principal or designee restores the privilege. This privilege may be revoked at any time by school district officials. Reasons for said revocation include, but are not limited to, violations of federal, state or local laws and school board/district

individual school policies and rules. Any vehicle entering the school area is subject to search by school authorities and the law enforcement officers working with them. School officials may conduct the search based on “reasonable suspicion.” A search may be conducted without a warrant for any reasonable purpose. Search of the vehicle includes all compartments and components thereof. Once a search begins, the person who owns and/or drives the vehicle will not be permitted to remove it from the premises during the duration of the search.

### **103.2 — Vehicles on School Property**

The use of automobile or bicycle transportation is a privilege granted by school district authorities if parking space is available. A student with a valid driver’s license may be permitted to drive his or her automobile to school if written consent from his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and a written agreement to comply with all the school district rules relating to student vehicles are filed with the principal or designee.

Any student violating this rule shall be denied permission to bring his or her vehicle to school until such time as the principal or designee restores the privilege. This privilege may be revoked at any time by school district officials. Reasons for said revocation include, but are not limited to, violations of federal, state or local laws and school board/district individual school policies and rules. Any vehicle entering the school area is subject to search by school authorities and the law enforcement officers working with them. School officials may conduct the search based on “reasonable suspicion.” A search may be conducted without a warrant for any reasonable purpose. Search of the vehicle includes all compartments and components thereof. Once a search begins, the person who owns and/or drives the vehicle will not be permitted to remove it from the premises during the duration of the search.

### **103.3 — Bicycle Helmets**

Florida State Law §316.2065 requires a bicycle rider or passenger less than 16 years of age to wear a bicycle helmet that meets the standards of the American National Standards Institute. Bicycle helmets must be worn by anyone under the age of 16 riding a bicycle.

### **103.4 — Transportation in Private Vehicles**

Any private vehicles used to transport students shall be currently registered in the state of Florida, be insured for personal injury protection and property damage liability in at least the minimum amounts required by law, and be in good working order. A person wishing to transport students in a private vehicle will request approval by submitting his/her driver’s license, vehicle registration and insurance I.D. card to the principal in a reasonable amount of time before the planned travel. The principal will examine the driver’s license, vehicle registration and insurance card, and may, in his or her discretion, give approval for the transportation of students in the private vehicles as requested. A student who is transported to any activity in a private vehicle shall return from the activity in the same vehicle, unless the student is released to his or her parents. Student transportation in private vehicles may only be authorized for trips within the state of Florida. When transportation is authorized in a private vehicle, students may only be transported in designated seating positions and shall be required to use the occupant crash protection system provided by the vehicle manufacturer. See School Board Policy section 8.36 (available on the district website at [www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/policy.aspx](http://www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/policy.aspx)) for more details about student transportation in private vehicles for athletics and other extracurricular events.

A field trip/travel is a school-sponsored event if, and only if, parents/guardians are asked to sign an official district permission form that has also been signed by a student’s school administrator.

Students transported to and from any field trip destination in school district buses and/or chartered buses have the responsibility to act in the appropriate manner as described in section 103.1 of this booklet. Any inappropriate behavior will be reported by the bus driver to the appropriate administrator for action.

## 104.0 — FOOD & NUTRITION SERVICES

Sarasota County Schools Food and Nutrition Services Department operates National School Breakfast Programs (NSBP), National School Lunch Programs (NSLP); and at schools that qualify, the After School Snack Program (ASSP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and Summer Feeding Program. Meals comply with relevant national program guidelines. A monthly menu can be found linked on our website at [www.sarasotacountyschools.net](http://www.sarasotacountyschools.net) under the Food and Nutrition Services Department. Personal copies of the menu may also be sent home at your request. **nutrislice** is an “app” that is also available for download on a Smart Phone that will have breakfast and lunch menus, and nutritional information.

### Funding Meals:

Parents may pay into a child’s account by sending money with the child to school or through an online program called **mylunchmoney.com**. Money is collected daily at lunch by the Food and Nutrition Services cashier with pre-pay cash or a check. Please send money in a well-sealed envelope with your child’s FIRST AND LAST NAME, PIN #, and TOTAL AMOUNT included. Checks are to be made payable to the school the child attends. If a child attends a charter school, the check needs to be made out to the school that provides the meals. Please put the child’s name and PIN # in the memo area of the check as well. If more than one child attends a school, please designate how the money or check should be divided. Parents may also use **www.mylunchmoney.com** (see below) to make pre-payments for meals. Refunds may be issued upon parental request to the Food and Nutrition Services Department.

Parents may use the online payment system available at **mylunchmoney.com**. The school, grade, birth date, and district ID # (not their PIN#) is needed in order to create an account. The student’s lunch account can then be funded with a credit or debit card, (A convenience fee is charged for each transaction.) Features of this program include viewing an account balance online, viewing 7 days of meal purchase history, ability to enable “Smart Pay” feature which automatically adds money to a child’s account when a low balance is reached.

### Free and Reduced Meal Benefits:

Parents and/or guardians are responsible to apply for Free and Reduced meal benefits and are responsible for all charges until eligibility is determined. Parents will be notified when a child’s account is running low. Please make sure if they sign up for **mylunchmoney.com**, the child’s account is current. Food & Nutrition Services temporarily provides an alternate meal to children if they do not have sufficient funds to pay for their lunch unless they qualify for the Free and Reduced Meal program.

Free and Reduced meal benefits must be applied for annually. Parents and/or guardians may apply online at [www.sarasotacountyschools.net](http://www.sarasotacountyschools.net) under the Food and Nutrition Services Department section. Paper applications are also available in each school’s main office.

### Foods from outside Food & Nutrition Services:

Please note that, due to long-standing regulations established by the National School Lunch Program and the Sarasota County School District, the only food that may be purchased on school campuses by students or parents is food that is sold in school cafeterias or other authorized locations on campuses.

Students may bring food purchased elsewhere to school, for consumption during scheduled school meal times. Parents also may bring food purchased elsewhere to school for their children only, for consumption during scheduled school meal times. Students and parents also may bring food purchased elsewhere to schools for school-authorized events such as classroom celebrations, subject to school-specific rules and permissions.

However, financial transactions for the purchase of food, such as food delivery purchases, may not be made by students or parents on school campuses until at least 30 minutes after the end of the school day. This includes payment by credit card when any part of the transaction made by any method occurs on a school campus, including phone and Internet orders.

*Florida Administrative Code, Section 64E-11.003*

“Foods prepared in a private home shall not be used, sold, or offered to the public by a food service establishment or theater.”

“Food received or used in food service establishments shall be from sources approved or considered sanitary by the department (Health Department) and shall be clean, wholesome, free from spoilage, adulteration and misbranding and safe for human consumption. It shall have been prepared, processed, handled, packaged, transported and stored in a sanitary manner so as to be protected from contamination and spoilage.”

Please refer to Sarasota County Schools’ Food and Nutritional Services at <http://www.sarasotacountyschools.net/departments/fns> for more information.

## **200.0 — ATTENDANCE AND ENROLLMENT POLICIES**

School attendance is the responsibility of the parent and the student. There is a strong relationship between attendance and academic performance. Students who will be 6 years old by February 1 of any school year, or who are older than 6 but have not attained the age of 16, are expected to attend school every school day of the 180-day school year. A student who attains the age of 16 during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the student files a formal Declaration of Intent to Terminate School Enrollment. The declaration must be signed by the student and his or her guardian. An exit interview and a survey completed by the student is a part of the withdrawal process. **Without the formal Declaration of Intent, students continue to be subject to compulsory school attendance until they are eighteen or graduate from high school.**

Florida Statute §1003.24 states that the parent/legal guardian of a child of compulsory age is responsible for the child's daily school attendance. School staff, parents, students and state agencies are expected to work together to ensure that all applicable school attendance laws are obeyed, including but not limited to referral to the state-designated agency for possible court action for truancy.

All absences are considered unexcused until the school receives written explanation from the parent/guardian within three days of the absence. The principal or designee has the authority to determine whether or not an absence is excused. Excessive excused absences for illness may result in the student being required to provide a doctor's note or other substantiating medical evidence.

*Attendance is reported by period at the middle and high school levels. In order to be considered present for the day, a student must be in attendance minimally for:*

### **High School**

Equivalent of four periods in a traditional seven period day (200 minutes) or three block periods (270 minutes)

### **Middle School**

Four periods of the day (200 minutes)

### **Elementary School**

Half of the school day (200 minutes)

### **Students have a RIGHT to:**

- Information defining rules for absences, tardiness, withdrawal and make-up assignments.
- Transportation within the student's school zone, but outside the two-mile limit from school.
- Appeal a decision about an absence.
- Make up all work missed during an out-of-school suspension or an unexcused absence, including tests and quizzes. In the case of unexcused absence, a teacher may deduct up to 30 percent from the earned grade for the work made up.

### **Students have a RESPONSIBILITY to:**

- Attend classes daily and be on time.
- Provide notification from a parent/guardian when absent.
- Abide by school bus rules and regulations.
- Request make-up assignments from teachers upon their return to school after an absence and to complete this work within a reasonable length of time, as specified in school and district attendance procedures and the Student Progression Plan.

## **200.1 — Excused Absences**

- Student illness (if documented by parent/guardian or medical doctor)
- Observance of a religious holiday or service that is recognized as such by members of the student's faith
- Medical appointment with documentation
- Death in the family
- Subpoena by law enforcement agency or mandatory court appearance
- Other individual student absences beyond the control of the parent or student, as determined and approved by the principal or principal's designee

## **200.2 — Absence Reports**

- Absences should be reported in accordance with school policy and documented by a written note.



- The report must come from a parent/guardian or a physician and give the date(s) of the absence and the reason for it.
- These absence reports must be submitted within three days following the absences, although school principals may make exceptions in cases of need.
- **Parents may be asked to provide written medical documentation when excused absences for illness are excessive. Over nine absences for illness per semester or eighteen for illness in a school year is considered excessive.**

## **201.0 -- EXCUSED ABSENCES RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Students will be afforded the opportunity to make up work for an absence, as outlined in the school district student progression plan and in district attendance procedures.
- Students have the responsibility to turn in work on time that was assigned while on field trips or school-sponsored activities, unless they have made prior arrangements with the teacher.

### **201.1 — Unexcused Absences**

- A student who has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days is a habitual truant under state law. The student may be dealt with as a child in need of services under Chapter 984, Florida Statutes. In addition, the parent/guardian may be subject to criminal prosecution under §1003.24, Fla. Stat.
- Students will be afforded an opportunity to make up work for an unexcused absence. There may be some academic penalty in accordance with attendance policies and procedures.
- When students are late to school or leave school early without an adequate excuse the tardy or early dismissal will be unexcused.

### **201.2 — Family Vacations**

**Family vacations are not automatically excused absences and are at the discretion of the principal or designee. Parents are encouraged to contact the school prior to family vacations.**

### **201.3 — Arrival and Departure**

Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment and has a negative impact on student achievement. Tardiness and early departures without a reasonable excuse will be documented in the attendance record.

For student safety, parents should ensure that their children do not arrive at school until appropriate supervision is available on campus.

Unless involved in a supervised activity, students must leave school grounds immediately upon dismissal.

Check with the school office to see if before-school or after-school child care is available.

### **201.4 - Driver's License Law**

Students ages 14 to 18 who drop out of school prior to graduation or who have 15 unexcused absences in a 90-day period will be reported to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV). Monitoring of attendance for driving privileges is done by class periods. Students who hold a Florida driver's license may have their license suspended if they accumulate excessive periods of unexcused absence. Students who have not yet received their driver's license may be unable to obtain a license. Application for reinstatement of the driving privilege can be made after the student has attended school for 30 days with no unexcused absences. There is a hardship appeal process; parents/guardians should check with school administration for information regarding appeals.

## **202.0 -- WITHDRAWALS**

If a student moves or must withdraw from school during the year, parents/guardians should notify the office at least one week prior to the student's last day. The school will provide a withdrawal form for the student. When the completed form is returned to the office, and all fees or fines are satisfied, the office will complete the withdrawal process.

### **202.1 — Moving Out of District**

If a student has moved out of his or her school attendance area and wishes to remain at his or her current school, a parent must complete a student reassignment form. Students are permitted to stay at least until the end of the current school year. Reassignments are permitted only if space is available.

### **202.2 — Change of Address**

It is the responsibility of the student and his or her parent/guardian to notify the office of any changes of address, phone number, or child-custody status to ensure that the district has accurate and up-to-date information. Parents/guardians must provide the school with a phone number where they can be reached during the school day.

## **203.0 -- EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **203.1 — Athletic Eligibility**

Athletic participation is a privilege granted by the school district and the state to a student. It allows that student to participate in interscholastic activities. Participation is not a student's right by law. Precedent-setting legal cases have determined that athletic eligibility is a privilege to be granted only if the student meets all standards adopted by the school and district.

In order for a student to be eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities, he/she must meet all of the requirements established by the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) and maintain satisfactory conduct, as defined by the District Code of Student Conduct.

In all circumstances, a student is allowed to participate in extracurricular activities only at their districted school unless assigned to a different school through the district's choice program. Students from charter schools, special schools and home-schooled students may be eligible to participate only at their residentially-assigned districted school.

If a student is arrested and charged with a misdemeanor or felony, he or she will immediately be suspended from extracurricular activities while the matter is investigated. In substantiated cases, the student may be suspended from participating in all extracurricular activities, including practices/meetings, for an entire school year (from the beginning date of his or her suspension). If a student is convicted of an on- or off-campus felony or delinquent act, the student's participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities will be suspended for the balance of the school year. (§1001.41 and §1001.42Fls. Stat.)

### **203.2 — Field Trips**

Students sometimes have the opportunity to participate in curricular and/or extracurricular field trips and travel.

Although the school district recognizes the importance of learning opportunities associated with field trips, the district values student safety above all other considerations.

**IMPORTANT:** Before a parent/guardian authorizes a student to participate in a field trip or travel, please consider the following:

- The current world situation has placed parents/guardians in a position of increased responsibility. It is important that parents/guardians analyze each situation before granting permission for a student trip.
- Parents/guardians volunteering as field trip chaperones (as well as all other volunteers) must be registered and approved as a school district volunteer at the required level (Level 1 or Level 2). (See section 102.2 for details).
- For all overnight field trips, chaperones must be 25 years of age or older. For day trips, elementary chaperones must be 21 years of age or older and middle and high school chaperones must be 25 years of age or older.

- The school district cannot assume financial liability in the event that a trip is cancelled. The student's family must assume financial responsibility for any monetary loss and may want to investigate the feasibility of purchasing cancellation/interruption insurance to cover advance payments.
- When parents/guardians consider a student's participation in a field trip, it is important to review carefully the parental consent forms, including transportation to and from the specific field trip destination, to ensure a clear understanding of the school district's role and each family's responsibility.

*Throughout the year, there are a number of trips organized by private individuals or groups. Many of these trips are not sponsored, reviewed or evaluated by the school district itself. High school senior trips are an example of independently organized trips. The Sarasota County School District is not responsible for these trips.*

### **300.0 — CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

#### **300.1 - Dress Code**

The Sarasota County School District has established procedural guidelines for student dress, in accordance with School Board Policy 5.37. The principal's decision on the appropriateness of dress will be final. Refusal to comply with the school's dress code policy is an infraction under this code.

#### **Students have a RIGHT to:**

- Wear **appropriate** clothes or the school uniform, as long as those clothes or the way the clothes are worn are appropriate for the school, adhere to the school dress code, are not dangerous to health or safety, and do not disrupt the learning environment.
- Learn without being offended or distracted by the way other students are dressed.

#### **Students have a RESPONSIBILITY to:**

- Comply with the school dress code.
- Come to school fully clothed and wear clothes which are not dangerous to health or safety, do not disrupt the learning process, and stay within the school dress code.
- Dress in a way not offensive to others at school or at school-sponsored events, including, but not limited to:
  - no exposed underwear
  - no saggy/baggy/ripped pants
  - no pajamas or slippers
  - no clothing of an ethnic or racially offensive nature
- Not wear items or markings which are offensive, suggestive, indecent, or associated with gangs; as identified by the Florida Gang Intent Act of 1990.
- Not wear items which encourage the use of drugs, tobacco, alcohol, violence, weapons, or support discrimination on the basis of color, disability, national origin, marital status, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

### **300.2 — Electronic Devices**

- A student may possess an electronic device at school such as a tablet, smart phone, laptop or other device that receives, sends or stores digital data, provided that the student is using the device for educational purposes and has permission from a staff member at the school. The student who possesses an electronic device is responsible for its care. The school board is not responsible for preventing theft, loss, damage or vandalism to electronic devices brought on to its property. The student who possesses an electronic device is responsible for its care. The school board is not responsible for preventing theft, loss, damage or vandalism to electronic devices brought on to its property. Refer to Sarasota County School Board Policy 5.38.
- Students may not use electronic devices on school property or at a school-sponsored activity to access and/or view websites that are otherwise blocked to students at school. In special circumstances with permission from a supervising school district employee, a student may use an electronic device for communication.

- Students may not possess any electronic device during testing even if the device is turned off or the student does not use it. Violation of this rule will result in the student's test being invalidated.
- If an electronic device disrupts a class by ringing or vibrating, the student possessing the device will be subject to disciplinary action. Any student who uses an electronic device to threaten or intimidate another student or district staff member through email, social network posting or other electronic message also will be subject to disciplinary action as determined by school administration.
- Electronic devices used in violation of school rules will be confiscated and returned to the student's parent or guardian.

### **300.3 — Technology Use**

Technology is an integral part of a student's educational experience and must be used in a way that is consistent with the goals of Sarasota County Schools. Technology includes, but is not limited to, computers, smart phone, other electronic devices, software, e-mail, the internet, other network resources, cell phones and cameras. Student use of technology is a privilege; students are responsible for using technology appropriately. This includes the use of school district equipment away from school grounds.

#### **The following are inappropriate and/or illegal uses of technology:**

- Photographing or using photographs of individuals without their knowledge or consent.
- Accessing or distributing offensive, inflammatory pornographic or obscene images, language or materials, including screen savers, backdrops, and/or pictures on school district-owned technology or on any other electronic device brought to school.
- Transmission of any material in violation of federal, state, or local law, or School Board policy, regulation, or Code of Student Conduct. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted material; threatening, obscene, or pornographic material; vandalizing data, test questions and/or answers; student work products; trade secrets; and computer viruses, "worms" or "trojans".
- Utilizing technology for commercial activities unless explicitly permitted by the School Board.
- Downloading and/or printing music, games, videos or inappropriate files during school hours.
- Modifying the school district's original pre-set software or hardware, including, but not limited to: loading software applications not authorized by the school district; changing the computer name; changing or removing operating system and extensions; altering security/filtering software; altering the pre-loaded operating system or application; or taking apart the computer for access to internal parts, accessing or altering password.
- Using e-mail, instant messaging, web pages, or other technology operations to threaten, disrupt, or interfere with the safety and welfare of the school community.
- Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to the district's network, computer servers, or data files.
- Gaining or attempting to gain unauthorized access to non-district networks, computer servers, or data files utilizing district equipment.
- Using profanity, obscenity, other language which may be offensive to another user, or reposting and copying personal communications without the author's prior consent, when using computer network access.
- Attempting to log on to the district's network using another person's identity.
- Bypassing or attempting to bypass the district's filtering software.
- Using computers, networks, and online telecommunication systems unrelated to students' educational systems. This includes the prohibition of plagiarism, reproduction of state- or teacher-made tests, textbooks, teaching materials, non-authored text, cheating and theft of ideas.
- Accessing or distributing offensive, obscene, inflammatory, or pornographic material.
- Using network access to destroy information that belongs to others.
- Copying personal communication to others without the original author's permission.
- Copying software or other copyright-protected materials in violation of copyright laws.
- Using the network for any illegal activity or private business purposes or accessing inappropriate Internet sites.
- "Hacking" into the school's computer systems or unauthorized modification of computer settings. These acts will be considered vandalism and disruption of a school function and will be treated as such.
- Using technology to threaten, harass or bully other students or staff.
- Using a computer, video, camera or program in any manner other than for appropriate educational purposes.

***Violations will result in serious disciplinary actions, which may include an arrest if any criminal law is broken.***

***Examples of such***

### **300.4 — Student Search and Seizure: F.S. §1006.09 (9)**

**School personnel may search** students reasonably suspected of being in possession of contraband or other prohibited items while on school district property or wherever students are under the official supervision of district employees, such as on field trips, at extracurricular activities, or while being transported to and from such places either by school bus, by approved drivers, or by other means of conveyance.

- **School personnel may conduct** a search of a student, a student's possessions, a student's locker, or any other storage area on school property without a warrant when school personnel have reasonable suspicion that illegal, prohibited or harmful items or substances, or stolen property, may be concealed on a student's person or in a storage area.
- **School personnel are encouraged** to attempt to obtain consent from a student to search for illegal, prohibited, harmful items or substances, or stolen property, but may proceed with a search without a student's consent, upon reasonable suspicion of a prohibited or illegally-possessed substance or object.
- **School personnel have the authority** to search a student's backpack, purse, or wallet, upon reasonable suspicion, if the student refuses to reveal the contents inside.
- **School lockers are the property** of the district and are subject to periodic searches without prior notice and without reasonable suspicion of a violation of the law.
- **Parking a vehicle on school district property** is a privilege which may be extended to students. All students desiring to park a vehicle on school district property shall be required to sign a consent form allowing the vehicle, upon reasonable suspicion, to be searched by the principal or his or her designee. Refusal of a student to cooperate in the request to search his or her vehicle shall result in the revocation of the student's parking permit for two (2) years from the date of refusal.

### **300.5 — Pledge of Allegiance**

Florida Statute §1003.44 requires that the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag be recited at the beginning of the day in every Florida public elementary, middle and high school. Each student has the right not to participate in reciting or standing for the pledge. If the student does not stand or recite the pledge without the school's receipt in writing of a parental opt-out request, the educator should counsel with the student privately and not single the student out in front of the class to verify a First Amendment basis for the student's position (such as religious or political).

If the student is not being materially disruptive during the recitation, the student will be allowed to quietly remain seated or decline to recite the pledge. However, if the student is being materially disruptive, discipline can be enforced for this disruptive behavior; but it should be made clear that the discipline is based on the materially disruptive actions and not for refusal to stand for the pledge.

### **300.6 — Bullying**

NOTE: Any reference to "bullying" in this handbook includes cyberbullying (via computer, tablet, smart phone or any other electronic device), whether or not specifically stated.

It is the policy of the Sarasota County School District 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. Bullying means systematically and chronically 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 teasing; social exclusion; threat; intimidation; stalking; physical violence; theft; sexual, religious, or racial harassment; public humiliation; or destruction of property. 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 places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying and harassment also encompass 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 made in good faith is considered retaliation. 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 incitement or coercion; 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; or acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

Cyberstalking as defined in §784.048(1)(d) Fla. Stat., 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.

Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited. The District upholds that bullying or harassment of any student or school employee is prohibited as follows:

- during any education program or activity conducted by a public K-12 educational institution;
- during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
- on a school bus of a public K-12 educational institution; or
- through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of a public K-12 education institution.

Incidents of bullying or harassment shall be reported to the school's administration. The principal or designee will investigate all reports of bullying that have been deemed a violation of the policy pursuant to the steps outlined in School Board Policy 2.70.

A-maximum of ten (10) school days shall be the limit for the initial filing of incidents and completion of the investigative procedural steps. The highest level of confidentiality possible will be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of bullying and/or harassment and the investigative procedures that follow. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the *Code of Student Conduct*. The Sarasota School District Bullying and Harassment Policy 2.70 will be publicized at the beginning of each school year for staff, parents and students.

### **300.7 — Gangs**

It is essential that schools be safe and orderly to provide environments that foster learning and high academic achievement. In order to promote an orderly learning environment in our schools while preparing students for later success in the world of work, the School Board of Sarasota County has taken a proactive approach and has established procedural guidelines concerning youth gang activity. These guidelines are to address problems associated with youth gangs through proactive education and disciplinary action, when necessary. Sarasota County Schools' policy 5.371 addresses the definition of gang members as well as these disciplinary actions. Any student who is associated with a gang and/or participates in gang activity as outlined by this policy is subject to immediate disciplinary action. This includes, but is not limited to, gang dress, gang symbols/signs and gang tattoos. If a parent is concerned about a student's possible involvement in gang activity, he or she should contact a school counselor, school administrator or School Resource Officer or Deputy.

### **300.8 — Discrimination**

#### **Students have a RIGHT to:**

- Attend school in an environment where all students and adults are treated equally, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation.
- Attend school in an environment free from discrimination, bullying and/or sexual harassment.

#### **Students have a RESPONSIBILITY to:**

- Treat others fairly and with respect.

- Conduct themselves and their activities in such a manner that they treat others equally with regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation.
- Report occurrences of discrimination, as described above, to appropriate school personnel.

### **300.9 - Discipline Policies and Procedures**

Violations of the Code of Student Conduct occur in varying degrees of severity. These behaviors are aligned with the district's discipline policy, from least severe (Level 1) to most severe (Level 4). The range of consequences for offenses appears in the chart following this section.

#### **LEVEL ONE**

##### **Attendance Incidents**

Tardiness, habitual  
 Truancy/unexplained absence  
 Leaving school grounds without permission

##### **Rules Violations Incidents**

Dress code violation  
 Public display of affection  
 Cheating  
 Failure to comply with class/school rules  
 Disobeying rules on the school bus

##### **Disruptive Incidents**

Disruptive play  
 Disruptive behavior  
 Disrespectful language  
 Bullying/harassment  
 Confrontation  
 Lying/misrepresentation  
 Articles disruptive to school  
 Prohibited items, non-criminal, and unauthorized use of medication  
 Unauthorized sale/distribution of materials  
 Inappropriate activity

#### **LEVEL TWO**

##### **Disruptive/Physical/Verbal Incidents**

Bus disruption  
 Disobedience/insubordination  
 Profane/obscene language  
 Non-criminal threat  
 Physical aggression (not involving law enforcement)  
 Repetitive disruptive behaviors  
 Repetitive disobedience/open defiance  
 Insubordination  
 Repetitive bullying, harassing, intimidating  
 Threatening behaviors  
 Hazing

##### **Property Incidents**

Abuse of school property/minor vandalism

Petty theft (under \$300)

### **Rules Violations and Other Serious Incidents**

Unserved detention (regular)

Unserved detention (extended/multiple)

Unserved detention (Saturday)

Firecracker/poppers

Forgery of a document or signature

Gambling

Sexual Harassment

Severe/repetitive inappropriate activity

Menacing statements, non-criminal

Public nudity

*Local law enforcement authorities shall be notified when any crime or delinquent act is committed on school property or school-sponsored transportation, or during a school-sponsored activity.*

### **LEVEL THREE**

All Level Three offenses will result in out-of-school suspension and possible recommendation for expulsion.

### **Attendance Incidents**

Fighting

Verbal assault on a student/person

Verbal assault on school district employee

Physical battery on a student/person (non-school district employee)

Attempting criminal act against a person

Extortion/blackmail/coercion

Robbery

Physical aggression (involving law enforcement)

Intentional false accusations against staff members

### **Property Incidents**

Stealing more than \$300

Vandalism more than \$1,000 (includes materials/labor)

Breaking and entering/burglary

Computer misuse

Reckless vehicle use

Motor vehicle theft

Counterfeit/misrepresented documents

### **Drug Incidents**

Possession/use of tobacco products/electronic cigarettes

Unauthorized possession or use of prescription medications

Use of intoxicants

Possession, use, storage of drugs or imitation drugs represented as drugs

### **Disorderly Conduct/Weapons Incidents**

Disruption of a school/disorderly conduct

Trespassing

False fire alarm/911 call

Bomb threat

Inappropriate, lewd, or obscene act

Sex misconduct



Sex offenses  
Possession of a knife  
Possession of a potentially dangerous item  
Felony suspension act

#### **LEVEL FOUR**

Minimum mandatory punishment for Level Four offenses: out-of-school suspension and recommendation for expulsion.

#### **Criminal incidents**

Making a threat by conveying, depicting or symbolizing an act of violence via a verbal, written or drawn message, or by electronic transmission  
Making a threat or false report involving a school or a school's personal property or school transportation, involving a school-sponsored activity  
Possession, use, or sale of any firearm, weapon or other prohibited articles  
Possession, use, sale, storage or distribution of an explosive device  
Possession, use, sale, intent to sell, or distribution of drugs, imitation drugs represented as drugs, or prescription medications  
Possession, use, manufacture, sale, storage, or distribution of alcohol or intoxicating beverages  
Aggravated battery  
Arson  
Armed robbery  
Battery or aggravated battery on a school district employee  
Kidnapping or abduction  
Homicide

**\*There is a mandatory minimum punishment of one (1) full year (365 days) of a disciplinary consequence for zero-tolerance offenses.**

#### **300.10 — Zero Tolerance**

Florida Statute §1006.13 mandates that, "Each school district shall adopt a policy of zero tolerance that defines criteria for reporting to a law enforcement agency any act that occurs whenever or wherever students are within the jurisdiction of the district school board; defines acts that pose a serious threat to school safety; defines petty acts of misconduct; minimizes the victimization of students, staff, or volunteers, including taking all steps necessary to protect the victim of any violent crime from further victimization; establishes a procedure that provides each student with the opportunity for a review of the disciplinary action imposed pursuant to s. 1006.07."

In complying with the law, the School Board of Sarasota County has enacted School Board Policy 5.32. Please review this policy carefully for a list of offenses that, in the absence of mitigating circumstances, will cause the student to be brought before the Board for expulsion.

*All students are expected to follow the rules of this Handbook and Code of Student Conduct on their way to and from school. The principal or designee may take administrative action if students' misconduct in route to or from school has a harmful effect on the health, safety or welfare of themselves, other students and/or the school.*

#### **300.11 — Behaviors and Consequences Chart**

All possible behaviors/actions have not been included on this chart, and the omission of any behavior or action from this chart does not preclude the school administration from taking appropriate action to resolve any situation. A school administrator may develop additional consequences for a particular behavior as long as these consequences do not violate school board policies or state statutes. See Behavior and Consequences Chart on previous page.

#### **300.12 — Prohibition of Weapons**

No student, while on school property, school transportation, or in attendance at a school-sponsored function, shall be in the possession of any article prohibited by law or rules of the district/school, or any article which could reasonably be considered as a weapon. Any student who brings a weapon will be expelled from the regular school for not less than one year and referred to law enforcement for criminal prosecution.

Violations include any weapon as defined by Florida Statutes, the possession, sale, distribution, display, transfer or use of any firearm or explosive device, whether operable or inoperable, loaded or unloaded. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: guns, BB pistols, firecrackers, bullets, facsimile guns, smoke bombs or shock devices. Violations also include the possession of any object or material deliberately used to damage property, intended for use or that may be used to inflict harm or intimidate any person. This includes the possession of a knife of any size or length, a box cutter or any other sharp object, mace, pepper spray or any aerosol chemical propellant.

### **300.13 — Prohibition of Drugs**

No student, while on school property or school transportation, or in attendance at a school-sponsored function, shall possess, use, store, sell, distribute or be under the influence of any substance defined as a controlled substance under Florida Statutes. These include, but are not limited to, marijuana, hallucinogens, inhalants, or any substance which requires a physician's prescription, **or any substance, synthetic or otherwise, designed to create a sense of euphoria or intoxication**, or any substance represented by an illegal substance, such as "designer drugs." No student, while on school property, school transportation, or in attendance at a school-sponsored function, shall possess, use, store, sell or distribute any equipment or device for the purpose of preparing or using drugs. These include, but are not limited to, items listed in Florida Statutes, and items which may be determined to be drug paraphernalia or electronic cigarettes under the criteria set out in Florida Statutes and/or school/school board policies.

### **300.14 —Disciplinary Actions**

In order to maintain safe and effective learning conditions, it may be necessary to impose disciplinary consequences for behaviors which disrupt the learning environment or pose a danger to students or school personnel. The following briefly describes the disciplinary actions recognized by the school district and the school board.

### **300.15 — Student Detention, Search, and Seizure**

A school staff member is authorized to temporarily detain a student when there is reasonable suspicion that the student has violated a school board policy. This authority permits appropriate search procedures by administrative staff or designees, including searches of vehicles parked on school campuses, and supervised canine searches of student lockers, vehicles, purses, shoes, socks, pockets, backpacks, or other storage areas, the use of metal detectors and the seizure of suspect items [§1006.09(9)Fla.Stat.].

### **300.16 — Removal from Class**

If a student causes a disruption to the educational environment, the student may be removed from the classroom.

### **300.17 — In-School Restriction**

This program provides for on-campus restriction in lieu of out-of-school suspension at the discretion of the administrator. However, due to problems of supervision or lack of facilities at some schools, in-school restriction may not be offered at all schools. Appropriate behavior and attention to schoolwork are essential for this option to be available.

### **300.18— Restriction of Privileges**

Any student involved in a violation of the Code of Student Conduct may have his or her privileges restricted. The student may be denied participation in extracurricular activities. The student may be assigned to report frequently to a specified staff member who will assist in monitoring the adjustment to specific situations pertaining to the school and the student during this probationary period.

### **300.19 — School Bus Suspension**

The privilege of riding the bus may be denied. In such cases, transportation shall be provided by the parent or guardian.

### **300.20 — Due Process for Suspension and Expulsion**

When disciplinary actions reach the level of suspension or expulsion of a student, the following procedural steps are implemented to protect the interests of the student. The principal or designee will use and follow the steps in the Due Process Checklist, including identifying whether a student is receiving Exceptional Student Education, 504, or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services. Prior to suspension, recommendation for expulsion or administrative assignment to an alternative school program, the student shall be provided due process and have the right to:

- Be advised of the charges/accusations.
- Be provided an opportunity to respond to the charges.
- Be provided an opportunity to submit to the administrator a list of names of other individuals who might have witnessed the incident.
- Be advised why they are being suspended or recommended for expulsion.

#### **300.20a — Suspension**

When suspension from school is being considered for a student, certain procedures are required by law. A school principal or designee may suspend a student from school for up to 10 (ten) school days per incident for persistent disobedience and/or gross misconduct. The principal or designee takes this action when he or she has exhausted other disciplinary strategies or when alternatives have at least been considered, but have been rejected as inappropriate in a given situation. Conferences to resolve the problem are scheduled with the parent/guardian, student and appropriate administrator.

When a suspension is implemented, the parent/guardian will be informed, through written notification, that he or she has a right to a hearing with the principal. The principal's decision to suspend a student is final. Any student may appeal an alleged failure to provide due process to the superintendent or designee. Students will be remanded to the custody of their parent/guardian with specific coursework assignments to be completed. This disciplinary action excludes a student from entering or remaining on any school campus for any purpose, and he or she is restricted from participation in school-related functions. This includes all athletic and extracurricular activities on any Sarasota County School District campus.

For students with a 504 plan/IEP, federal law requires that Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 plan teams conduct a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) when a student's accumulated suspensions reach 10 (ten) days within a school year. At the MDR, the IEP/504 plan team must determine whether the student's misconduct was caused by his or her disabilities.

#### **300.20b — Expulsion**

A school principal may request that the superintendent recommend to the school board that a student be expelled. This is the most serious disciplinary step available. It denies the student attendance in any and all programs of Sarasota County Schools. An expulsion may be recommended for the remainder of the academic year, the summer session and one additional academic year.

For students with a 504 plan/IEP, federal law requires that Individual Education Plan (IEP)/504 plan teams conduct a Manifestation Determination Review for all students who have committed expellable offenses. At the MDR, the IEP/504 plan team must determine whether the student's misconduct was caused by his or her disabilities. If it is determined that the misconduct was caused by the student's disabilities, the student would return to his or her current placement.

For ESE students only, an IEP/Re-evaluation Review Team would convene to determine any possible changes for the student, including a possible placement change. If it is determined that the conduct was not caused by the student's disabilities, the student could be considered for a recommendation for expulsion.

If grounds for expulsion exist, the superintendent or designee will notify the student and parents in writing of the charges against the student in a language the student and parents can understand. On the day a student with a disability (IEP/504) is recommended for expulsion, the administrator must contact and provide to parent Notice of Procedural Safeguards. The notification will include the following information:

- Notice of the extended suspension period
- Notice of the student's right to a hearing pursuant to §120.569 and §120.57(2) Fla. Stat.
- A brief statement of the accusation against the student
- Grounds for the expulsion
- The student's and parent's/legal guardian's procedural rights in connection with the hearing, including the right to counsel or other representation should they request a hearing
- Period of expulsion
- Notice of the consequences of failure to request or attend the hearing, which constitutes a waiver of further rights in the matter

The notification may also include a proposed settlement agreement.

#### 300.20c — Settlement and Deferred Expulsion Agreement

The principal or designee should offer to meet with the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to discuss a possible deferred expulsion agreement or settlement agreement prior to proceeding through the formal hearing.

A Deferred Expulsion is an agreement that may be offered to students who have committed an expellable offense pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct (School Board Policy 5.34). The Deferred Expulsion allows the student to remain on the regular school campus with specific requirements that must be completed. Administrators may consider one or more of the following factors in granting a Deferred Expulsion:

- The act committed was not premeditated nor was there malicious intent
- The student has no previous similar referrals
- The student does not have a significant history of insubordination/misbehavior
- Academically the student has a 2.0 grade point average or better
- The student has good attendance; no more than three unexcused absences

A Settlement Agreement is an agreement that may be offered to students who have committed an expellable offense pursuant to the Code of Student Conduct (School Board Policy 5.34). The Settlement Agreement allows the student to attend an alternative school to continue their education in lieu of being expelled from the Sarasota County School District upon the student's agreement to comply with strict behavioral, attendance, and other conditions enumerated in the Settlement Agreement.

#### 300.20d — Formal Expulsion Hearing

The hearing will be held before a hearing officer appointed by the district. The hearing will be held as soon as possible after written notification of charges to the parent. The parent/legal guardian and principal will be notified of the time and date of the hearing.

- Expulsion hearings are governed by §120.569 Fla. Stat. Although the school district is exempt from §286.011 Fla. Stat., which requires reasonable notice of a hearing, the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must be given notice of the provisions of §286.011 Fla. Stat. and may elect to have the hearing held in compliance with that statute. Testimony will be presented under oath. Hearsay is admissible, although it may not be the sole basis for the recommendation.
- The student may be represented by counsel and will be afforded the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses supporting the charge, to call witnesses on the student's behalf and to introduce evidence.
- A sufficient record of the proceedings will be kept so a transcript can be prepared in the event either party requests one.
- The hearing officer will issue a recommended order within seven (7) days following the hearing. The Sarasota County School Board will consider the recommendation and exemptions, if any, at its next regularly scheduled meeting and will approve or disapprove of the recommendation.
- The hearing officer will make factual findings about the allegations of misconduct against the student. If the findings are substantiated, the hearing officer may recommend an additional year of expulsion. A hearing officer does not decide whether a student is entitled to attend an alternative school.
- The district must offer educational services to ESE students during the period of expulsion. Expulsion of students with disabilities is defined as removal from one program to another, not exclusion from public education. Services may not be provided through a regular school assignment.

### 300.21 — Disruptive Students – Staff Intervention

The use of reasonable physical force must be consistent with federal, state and laws, school district rules and school board policy. A teacher shall have the authority, while on duty, to come into physical contact with a student or students to the degree necessary for the purpose of establishing or maintaining control of students, including to reasonably protect himself/herself, other people or property. Such physical contact shall not be construed to be corporal punishment.

### **300.22 — Reporting of Crimes and/or Disruptive Behavior**

It is important that all students and parents/guardians understand that certain criminal and/or disruptive behavior must, by school board policy, be reported to appropriate law enforcement authorities. The following types of incidents will be reported: alcohol use, arson, battery, bullying, breaking/entering, drugs, kidnapping, larceny/theft, possession or use of weapons or explosive devices, property damage, vandalism, robbery, sex offenses, sexual battery, sexual harassment or any other serious incident or disruption of school operation.

Any student formally charged with a felony by the proper prosecuting authority shall be subject to suspension in accordance with Florida Statutes for a period of time which may exceed 10 (ten) days, as determined by the superintendent.

If the student is adjudicated delinquent or guilty of a felony, the school board has the authority to expel the student.

### **300.23 — Procedures for Off-Campus Felony Cases**

Florida Statutes §1006.09(2) allows the superintendent to suspend a student from school for a period longer than 10 (ten) days, when a student has been formally charged with a felony committed on property other than public school property. In order for districts to utilize this section of the statutes, a student must have been formally charged by a prosecuting attorney, and in an administrative hearing, the school/district must show that the incident will have an adverse effect on the educational program, discipline or welfare of the school in which the student is enrolled. If the student is adjudicated guilty or delinquent, the school board may expel the student.

## **400.0 — ACADEMIC AND CURRICULUM INFORMATION**

### **400.1 — Honor Code**

The School Board of Sarasota County and the Sarasota County School District strongly believe that academic honesty must be practiced by all students. Cheating is defined by the school board and the district as “The inappropriate and deliberate distribution or use of information, notes, materials, or the work of another person, or the unauthorized use of technology devices in the completion of an academic assessment or assignment.”

Students are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity at all times. Each student is expected to do his or her own work, except where collaboration is permitted by the teacher. This includes test-taking, homework, class assignments and the original creation of essays, compositions, term papers and research. There is no distinction between giving and receiving unauthorized help; one who helps another to cheat is as guilty as one who benefits from cheating. All work submitted by the student should be a true reflection of that student’s own effort and ability.

Violation of this policy may result in academic and/or disciplinary consequences, loss of eligibility for local scholarships, and loss of honors, awards and membership in extracurricular activities.

### **400.2 — Grading Policy**

Kindergarten students will receive a report card at the end of each grading period indicating their progress on the end of the year standards, referred to as Performance Standards Grade, as well as an Effort Grade. Responsibilities of the Learner indicates the student’s work habits and are given quarterly.

Grade 1 students will receive a report card at the end of each grading period indicating their progress on end of the year standards, referred to as Performance Standard Grade. Students will also be given an Effort Grade each quarter. Academic Grades will be only be given in quarters 2, 4, and the Final for all content areas. Responsibilities of the Learner indicates the student’s work habits and are given quarterly.

Elementary school students (grades 1-5) will receive achievement grades for all academic subjects as well as work habits grades and effort grades that are separate from academic achievement grades. Middle school students (grades 6-8) receive grades in all academic areas, as well as work habits grades and effort grades that are separate from academic achievement grades. High school students (grades

9-12) are assigned achievement grades in all subjects. Also, for each course taken by high school students, 20 percent of the grade will be based on employability skills, such as attitude, organization and appropriate dress for class.

#### **400.3 — Report Card**

Classroom instruction in every subject is based on the district curriculum, which includes the Florida Standards. A teacher's recorded grade of a child's progress is based on progress made toward mastery of these standards. Issued every quarter during the school year, the report card explains the grading system adopted by Sarasota County Schools. Attendance and conduct information are also recorded. Report cards are distributed four times per year, after the end of each grading period. These dates will be posted on the district website.

#### **400.4 — Promotion**

The district and the state of Florida establish promotion requirements and guidelines for Student Progression Plans (SPP). These guidelines are then used to set student performance standards and promotional and graduation requirements for Grades K–12.

A more detailed outline of these plans can be found on the Curriculum and Instruction page on the district's website, **SarasotaCountySchools.net**.

State promotion guidelines, curriculum standards and the Florida Standards allow every child, in every public school in Florida, to have the same learning opportunities in the same grades, regardless of the location. Parents may review course information at CPALMS, <http://www.cpalms.org/Public/>, to obtain the State approved course descriptions or they may ask their child's teacher for a copy of the course syllabus or course of study for a grading period. In addition, parents are able to examine their child's textbook and coursework to make sure a child is on the right educational track.

#### **Promotion and Graduation Requirements**

##### **Elementary School (grades K–5)**

*Promotion to the next grade level is based on the following factors:*

- Adequate progress in reading, writing, mathematics, and science as demonstrated by the mastery of local curriculum objectives
- The Florida Standards Assessment (FSA)
- Achievement above the 19<sup>th</sup> percentile on the Third Grade Florida Standards Assessment- English Language Arts (Third Grade only; standard set for 2015 assessment). Good Cause Exemption from Mandatory Retention may be considered for particular students based on State Statute.
- District assessments
- Physical, emotional and social development

##### **Middle School (grades 6–8)**

*Promotion to the next grade level is outlined in the Student Progression Plan and is based on:*

- Successful completion of required courses in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

##### **High School (grades 9–12)**

*To graduate from high school with a standard diploma, students must:*

- Earn at least 26 credits if attending a traditionally scheduled high school.\*
- Earn 28 credits if attending a block-scheduled high school.
- Achieve a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- Pass the appropriate state assessments required for graduation.

\*If attending Pine View School, students must earn 26 credits. For students attending Oak Park School, 24 credits are required for a standard diploma. The district also offers a General Educational Development (GED) exit option and the Performance-Based Diploma (PBD) program for eligible students (more information follows in this section). The Enhanced New Needed Opportunity for Better Life and Education for Students with Disabilities (ENNOBLES) Act provides for the waiver of the FSA/EOC requirement for graduation with a standard diploma for certain students with an IEP who have met all other requirements for graduation with a standard diploma, except a passing score on the FSA. Additional information regarding FSA/EOC waiver can be obtained from the school's ESE Liaison.

#### **400.5 — Exceptional Student Education (ESE)**

Not every child will have the same pathway to a diploma. Some children may need an accelerated curriculum (gifted services), while others may have a disability that interferes with their ability to benefit from the regular curriculum. Exceptional Student Education includes students who are intellectually gifted as well as students with disabilities.

Before a child is considered for ESE program eligibility, a parent will meet with that child's teacher and school support staff to discuss the specific educational needs of the child. Appropriate interventions are put into place and monitored on a daily or weekly basis, as determined by the support team.

Children with disabilities who do not respond to these academic and/or behavioral interventions are then referred to the school-based Children At Risk in Education (CARE) Team. The CARE Team further reviews the child's progress and determines if more intense interventions are needed. The CARE team also may make a referral for formal evaluation. This evaluation is one of the required steps in determining if a child is eligible for special educational services provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Under the IDEA, a parent has the right to be involved in the eligibility/placement process and the development of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) that is used to meet his or her child's special needs. A complete summary of parental and school district rights under the IDEA is contained in a document titled *Summary of Procedural Safeguards*. You may obtain a copy of the document from the ESE liaison at your school or directly from the Pupil Support Services Office, 927-9000.

If a child has high grades or test scores, he or she may benefit from attending a program for the intellectually gifted. First, the child will need to be referred for evaluation and must meet regulations set by the state. If a child qualifies for the program, an Educational Plan (EP) addressing the child's needs will be written. Intellectually gifted children in Sarasota County have several alternatives. They may remain at their neighborhood school and participate in the programs offered there. If they meet the criteria for a full-time gifted program, they may attend one of the programs for gifted students at either a north or south county site, or they may attend Pine View School. Each school in the district has at least one school counselor and one ESE liaison. In addition, each school is assigned a school psychologist and social worker whom parents may contact. Each psychologist and social worker serves more than one school. These staff members help parents with any concerns regarding the interventions, testing or Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs and services their child may need. In addition, parents may contact an ESE Program Specialist at the ESE district office by calling 927-9000, or they may contact their child's school counselor or the school's ESE liaison for more information.

#### **400.6 — Classroom Accommodations/Modifications**

Once a child is determined to be eligible for special services, an Individual Educational Plan is developed. The plan involves a parent, the teachers and other school staff in determining which special services will be provided to a child. The IEP may include accommodations, modifications or both.

Accommodations are changes in how a child is taught or tested in the regular-education classroom setting. They may include changes in the areas of instructional methods and materials, assignments and assessments, time demands and scheduling, the learning environment and/or special communication systems. The IEP must include a statement about any accommodations that will be made for a child when taking state or district assessment tests such as the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA). The identification of appropriate accommodations is unique to each student and should be reevaluated at least on an annual basis. Modifications are changes in what a child is expected to learn, such as working in below-grade-level books or using an alternative curriculum.

#### **400.7 — Section 504 Plan under the Americans with Disabilities Act**

A Section 504 Plan is a legal document under the provisions of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students who are served with a 504 Plan have been identified with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

#### **400.8 — FSA and End-of-Course Accommodations**

The Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, publishes a booklet listing descriptions of Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) and End-of-Course (EOC) accommodations. Parents may also contact the district's Research, Assessment and Evaluation office or the Exceptional Student Educational Services department at (941)927-9000, their child's school counselor, ESE liaison or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) liaison for this information.

FSA and End-of-Course-accommodations may include large print, one item per page, Braille or oral presentations; extended time for tests; different settings for testing such as small-group; or special equipment provided to assist the student (i.e., talking calculators or enhanced seeing and hearing devices). Other accommodations may be approved, as long as they have been regularly used by the student for classroom instruction and included on the IEP or 504 Plan. No accommodations may alter the content of the test. (No FSA accommodation may be provided to a student unless it is an approved accommodation, as stated in the FSA Administration Manual.)

#### **400.9 —FSA and End-of-Course Accommodations for English Language Learners (ELLs)**

FSA and End-of-Course accommodations for ELLs may include some or all of the following: flexible setting, flexible scheduling, extended timing, assistance in heritage language, and an approved dictionary. Districts are required to offer accommodations to English Language Learners/Limited English Proficient students who are currently receiving services in a program operated in accordance with an approved district ELL plan. The test may be administered with any of these modifications or a combination of accommodations determined to be appropriate for the particular needs of the ELL student.

#### **400.10 — ESOL & Migrant Programs**

The Sarasota County School District recognizes the linguistic and cultural diversity of its students, and encourages all students to preserve their native cultures while developing an awareness of U.S. culture. The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program in Sarasota County is designed to provide academic, social, and cultural and support services to students who are English Language Learners (ELLs).

The district's goal is to provide English Language Learners (ELLs) students opportunities to achieve the Florida Standards for all academic subject areas, and obtain a high school diploma or a GED.

##### **400.10a — Initial Identification**

Each student shall be surveyed upon initial enrollment in a district school. Adults registering students will complete, with assistance in their language, where feasible, the Home Language Survey (HLS) containing three questions required by Rule 6A-6.0902.

1. Is a language other than English used in the home?
2. Did the student have a first language other than English?
3. Does the student most frequently speak a language other-than English?

If there is an affirmative response to any of the three questions on the HLS, a language proficiency evaluation/assessment will take place to determine if the student is Limited English Proficient (LEP).

Any student who scores within the Limited English Proficient range shall be determined to be an English Language Learner (ELL) student and shall be provided appropriate instruction, services and funding as specified in Florida Statute §1003.56, as amended by Chapter 2002-387, Laws of Florida.

Each school will offer instruction for ELL students that complies with the 1990 LULAC/ META Consent Decree and the District ELL (approved by the Sarasota County District School Board and the Florida DOE).

##### **400.10b — Programmatic Assessments**

According to DOE Florida Administrative Code rule, "parents have the right to have their child immediately removed from a language instruction educational program and to decline to enroll the student in such a program or choose other instructional options, if available." For purposes of this subparagraph, a "language instruction educational program" means an instruction course in which an



ELL is placed for the purpose of developing and attaining English proficiency and which may make instructional use of both English and a child's heritage language. Nothing herein shall alter the duty of the district to provide highly qualified, duly certified or endorsed ESOL instructors in accordance with rule 6A-1.09441, F.A.C., and the Course Code Directory and Instructional Personnel Assignments that are reference in the rule. If any parent or guardian of an ELL communicates a refusal to have his or her child enrolled in an ELL program, the district shall have the student's principal or another representative of the school meet with the parent to:

1. Describe the range of programs and services that the child could receive if the parent does not refuse, including the methodology the district plans to employ to address the student's educational needs and the training and qualifications of teachers and any others who would be employed in teaching the student;
2. Discuss the benefits their child is likely to gain by being enrolled in an ELL program and receiving ELL services;
3. Explain that, notwithstanding any past practice, the district shall not require students to be assigned to programs specifically designated for ELLs, or schools containing such programs, in order to receive ELL services. FS 6A-6.0902(3,d)

#### 400.10c —Appropriate Programming

English Language Learners students shall have equal access to appropriate programs, which shall include state-funded ESOL instruction and instruction in basic subject areas which are comprehensible to English Language Learner students and that are equal and comparable in amount, scope, sequence and quality to that provided to English-proficient students. Such programs shall seek to develop English language proficiency and academic potential.

English Language Learners with special needs disabilities shall be provided equal and comparable services to those provided to English proficient students on a timely basis and appropriate to the level of English-proficiency.

English Language Learners who, by the end of grade 12, fail to meet the 10th-grade statewide assessment, shall be provided appropriate programming as specified in Rule 6A-6.0909, of the Florida Administrative Code.

English Language Learners shall be given credit toward fulfilling graduation requirements in English for each basic ESOL course completed satisfactorily. Credit shall be given toward fulfilling graduation requirements for each basic subject area course completed satisfactorily.

#### **Sarasota County uses a variety of ESOL program models to meet diverse student needs.**

The Mainstream/Immersion Model places English Language Learners/Limited English Proficient students into monolingual English classrooms with special support and assistance from a teacher trained in ESOL strategies.

The Sheltered Academic Instruction Model is offered at middle and high schools, these courses focus on English language arts and language development and are designed to make them comprehensible to English Language Learners. Techniques include simplified speech, computer assisted instruction and hands-on activities.

#### 400.10d —Grading Policy and Promotion of English Language Learners (ELLs)

Evaluation of achievement will include progress toward mastery of Florida Standards. The academic grade represents the progress made on a student's instructional level; it does not necessarily reflect achievement on grade level.

English Language Learners may not receive a failing grade if instructional strategies, materials and assessment have not been modified in order to meet their instructional needs. In addition, these modifications and strategies must be documented in teacher lesson plans. School administrators in charge of teacher evaluation are responsible for ensuring that teachers are modifying instructions and assessment in order to provide comprehensible instruction to English Language Learners.

The grade placement shall be age-appropriate for ELLs. No student will be retained solely due to his/her level of English language proficiency. Promotion or retention decision may not be made for any ELL student based solely on a score of a single assessment instrument, including FSA/FCAT.

For information on Grade 3 Mandatory Retention and Good Cause Exemptions refer to the Student Progression Plan.

For additional information refer to Section 400.2 - Grading Policy, Section 400.4 - Promotion Policy. You may also refer to the Student Progression Plan.

**The ESOL Program, through a Title III grant, provides parents of ELL students with the service of a Parent Outreach Facilitator. The objective of the Parent Facilitator is to assist parents in becoming actively involved at home and school in the education of their children with educational and socioeconomic needs. For additional information visit [www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/departments/esol/](http://www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/departments/esol/).**

### **How to get involved**

Be a Volunteer! Your volunteer participation at school is always welcomed. A variety of parent organizations are available at the school and district level; such as:

- Volunteer and Partnership Programs
- Volunteer in the classroom
- Attend open house orientations
- Attend parent-teacher conferences
- Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)
- School Advisory Council (SAC)
- School Parent Leadership Councils (PLC)
- District Parent Leadership Council (PLC)
- Migrant Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

The Parent Leadership Committee PLC and Migrant Parent Advisory Council (PAC) are district-wide entities with representatives from the district ESOL Program, parents of ELL students, and migrant students representing county schools, and who meet biannually to share information, ideas and concerns of issues affecting families of ELL and Migrant students.

We need to hear your voice in these parent organizations! Please participate. Refer to Sections 100.9b and 101.0 - 101.6 for additional parent involvement information.

### **400.11 — Parent and ESOL Placement**

The Migrant Education Program (MEP) is an educational program designed to cover the academic needs and provide support services to migrant children and youth between the ages of 3 and 21.

The program strives to ensure that the educational needs of all eligible migrant children are identified and addressed. Children with parents working in agriculture or youth working in agriculture who move from state to state or county to county within the same state may qualify for services. Families who have worked in agriculture will be visited by the Identification and Recruiting agent to evaluate families who may qualify. You may qualify for the Migrant Educational Program if you have moved to seek work in: agriculture, dairy, livestock, fishing, and packing. Some of the services offered are: academic services for the needs of migrant students, free school lunch, free vision screening for student K-3, school materials in Spanish and English, orientation and referrals for health, education, and social services available for your family, and translation/ interpretation services at schools.

For ESOL and Migrant eligibility information please call 941-927- 9000, ext. 34364. Additional information is available at: [www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/departments/esol](http://www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/departments/esol).

### **400.12 — Adult Education**

The Sarasota County Schools Adult and Community Enrichment Program offers a variety of programs for adult enrichment. A schedule of courses is available online at [www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/schools/ace/](http://www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/schools/ace/).

Suncoast Technical College (STC) offers a wide variety of educational options for adult students, including Adult ESOL courses for non-English speakers; Adults with Disabilities; Adult High School; GED preparation; and a variety of Career and Technical Training programs leading to licensure or certification.

#### **400.13— Teacher Qualifications**

The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 allows parents to request information regarding the teaching qualifications of their child's teacher. A parent has a legal right to ask about his or her child's teacher's certification type, subject area and grade-level coverage. A parent may also ask what degree(s) a teacher has earned and his or her major area of study. If a child is receiving services from one or more instructional aides, a parent may also request information regarding the aides' qualifications.

The state of Florida requires Sarasota County Schools to notify parents if their child's teacher is teaching "out of field" or is not yet certified in the area he or she is assigned to teach.

Parents may request this information by contacting the Human Resources Department of the Sarasota County Schools at 927-9000.

#### **400.14 — Post-Secondary Planning Services**

Through the district's Student Services department, the following publications are produced:

- **Sarasota County Scholarship Scene:** Posted online, this one-stop approach to local scholarship opportunities in Sarasota County also offers tips on qualifying for the state's merit scholarship program, Florida Bright Futures. The website address is [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf).
- **Pathways:** This is Sarasota County Schools' annually revised student guidance handbook. This publication can be accessed by visiting the Student Services Department's page on the district website: **SarasotaCountySchools.net**. Topics include such areas as high school graduation requirements, eligibility requirements for interscholastic athletics, Florida Bright Futures Scholarship information, a listing of postsecondary institutions in Florida, and much more. This is an invaluable school resource, and students and their parents are strongly encouraged to take time to carefully read through this publication.

More information about these publications is available online at [www.SarasotaCountySchools.net](http://www.SarasotaCountySchools.net).

#### **Additional Planning Services**

Pupil Support Services also provides secondary students and parents with access to educational opportunities beyond high school with its Fall College Night. Representatives from more than 135 colleges and universities throughout the U.S. attend this fall event. A similar event is held at Venice High School in February to assist juniors in getting a jump start on their senior year and post-secondary planning. In addition, representatives from Suncoast Technical College (STC) are present at both evening events to give information to students who are interested in exploring careers while still in high school or when they graduate from high school. Recruiting representatives and liaison officers of the military academies are also present for those students exploring a military career.

Financial aid seminars are offered at various public high schools in Sarasota County. These seminars are announced by the district, schools and the local media. Students and parents are invited to attend any of the seminars that fit their schedules. The seminars are designed to be question-and-answer sessions for students and parents seeking financial aid options. Detailed information is provided about federal financial aid and the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

The Rotary Futures Program is located at Venice High School. This program is open to all students in Sarasota County Schools and provides assistance with scholarship searches, financial aid and secondary planning. More information is available by calling Venice High School.

The Florida Department of Education provides additional postsecondary planning options through several websites and brochures distributed to guidance departments in Sarasota County Schools. Detailed information about state scholarships and grant programs is available at [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD).

Florida Virtual Campus, [www.FLVC.org](http://www.FLVC.org), is a website that provides high school and postsecondary information to students, parents, teachers and counselors. This site also provides CHOICES, a career exploration program and an unofficial transcript of a student's high school academic work.

FloridaNEXT, a free magazine published by the Department of Education, provides career and college planning information. It is distributed to secondary students through their guidance department. This information may also be accessed at [www.FloridaNEXT.com](http://www.FloridaNEXT.com).

#### **400.15 — Vocational/Career Education and Transition Services for Students with Disabilities**

Sarasota County Schools, in partnership with community agencies, offers programs designed to help adults with disabilities lead a more fulfilling life. Based on standards set by the Florida State Department of Education, programs are offered at various sites in instruction and practice in self-care skills, work habits and employability skills. Public transportation is used when possible. Programs and contact information in Sarasota County are:

- ACT (Academy for Community Transition): 941-361-6428
- Community Haven for Adults and Children with Disabilities: 941-355-8808
- Easter Seals Southwest Florida: 941-355-7637
- Loveland Center: 941-493-0016
- Manasota ARC: 941-755-1004
- Mental Health Community Center (MHCC): 941-953-3477
- Suncoast Technical College: 941-924-1365
- Suncoast Center for Independent Living (SCIL): 941-351-9545
- United Cerebral Palsy: 941-251-4956

#### **400.16 — Performance-Based Exit Option**

The Performance-Based Exit Option is an alternative graduation option for students at risk of not graduating with their class. Students who pass the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) and the General Educational Development Test are eligible to earn the General Equivalency Diploma.

#### **400.17 — Early Admission/Dual Enrollment**

Early admission to college allows a student to enter college following completion of grade 11, provided the student has an unweighted grade-point average of 3.0 or above, has been enrolled for six semester in high school, has earned at least 18 credits and the required test scores and has the approval of the high school principal, the high school counselor, the college registrar and his/her parents/guardians. In all cases, a student must still meet state and district grade-point average and course requirements for high school graduation. Students must enroll in courses that meet the requirements for an Associate of Arts Degree as well as the courses that will fulfill high school graduation requirements. Students also must meet the state and district graduation requirements for passing the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) and EOC tests.

Dual Enrollment is allowed at grade 11 for eligible high school students to enroll in post-secondary courses while in high school. Eligible students may receive either college credit or career-technical certification, depending on the program they choose. For a listing of dual enrollment classes for college or Career and Technical Education (CTE) credit at your child's school, contact the guidance department. Students are not charged tuition fees for these programs. For additional information regarding CTE programs and credit, contact the Career and Technical Education staff at 927-9000.

#### **400.18 — Honors Classes**

Advanced-level courses are available in all high schools. Designed for academically motivated students, these courses offer a faster pace of instruction and additional, more challenging content. Advanced-level Honor classes award students with a .5 bonus quality point applied toward their Grade-Point Average (GPA). Please note that a number of Level 3 Career and Technical education classes also provide honors credit, even though they are not specifically labeled "Honors." School counselors can provide a list of all advanced-level courses available at each high school. Students are selected to participate in honors classes based on academic performance and recommendation.

#### **400.19 — Advanced Placement (AP)**

The College Board's nationwide Advanced Placement (AP) Program allows eligible high school students to have the opportunity to take college level course-work and earn college credit when they earn a qualifying grade on an AP exam. It is recommended that students or their parents contact the specific postsecondary institutions of interest to the students to learn more about the policies awarding college credit for AP courses taken in high school.

AP courses are taken during regular school hours at area high schools or through a virtual program. A parent may find out which AP courses are offered at his or her child's school by contacting the school's guidance department. One additional quality point is applied toward the GPA.

#### **400.20 — Accelerated Graduation**

Accelerated graduation is permissible when students meet or exceed high school graduation requirements or successfully complete the 18-credit accelerated graduation option or the 24-credit early option. Students and parents must work with a school guidance counselor to select this diploma option. Contact the school's guidance department to obtain more information about this opportunity.

#### **400.21 — International Baccalaureate Programs**

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end, the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. The IBO program is currently offered at Riverview High School, Venice High School, Brookside Middle School and Phillippi Shores Elementary School. If you would like to learn more about this rigorous program, please contact the Guidance Department at any of the listed schools. Successful completion of an IB course adds 1 quality point to the GPA.

#### **400.22 — Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE)**

The Cambridge AICE Diploma Program offered at Booker High, Sarasota and North Port high schools is an international pre-university and examination system, which emphasizes the value of broad and balanced study for academically able students. Its strengths lie in the flexibility and structure of the curriculum, encouraging in-depth working knowledge of each subject, and in essay-based examinations as assessment of that knowledge. AICE courses are equivalent to those offered at university freshmen level or beyond. Routes to the AICE Diploma are flexible and offer students the opportunity to tailor their studies to their individual interests, abilities and future plans within an international curriculum framework. If you would like to learn more about this rigorous program, please contact the Guidance Department at any of the listed schools. Successful completion of an AICE course adds 1 quality point to the GPA.

#### **400.23 — Career and Technical Education (CTE)**

The goal of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department of Sarasota County Schools is to provide all students with the knowledge, skills and experiences necessary to make informed and appropriate educational and career decisions. Career and Technical Education provides a variety of opportunities for students at all grade levels:

- Elementary activities allow students to become aware of career areas and make connections between school, careers, and their community.
- Middle school courses enable students to explore career pathways, determine career interests and aptitudes and develop basic technical skills in a variety of career areas.
- High school Career and Technical Education programs offer students industry certification, post-secondary credit, Ready to Work credentials and scholarship opportunities.
- Postsecondary career training programs align to local and regional economic needs.
- The learning environment is up-to-date and representative of the world of work.
- Project-based learning experiences are designed to have clear, concise connections with course content and employer expectations.
- Curriculum is based on rigorous, standards-based academics, and is integrated with workforce and industry standards.
- Opportunities are provided for students to receive Gold Seal Scholarships, dual enrollment in postsecondary programs, community service and work-based learning experiences.

- Internships and on-the-job training experiences are available for students to apply their technical skills in meaningful ways.
- Programs provide opportunities for student certification or licensure in their chosen career pathway.
- Career and Technical programs will increase the number of high school graduates who are both college- and career-ready; increase relevance between academic experiences and real-world opportunities; increase academic rigor through technical content and prepare students for success in the 21st century workplace.
- Agreements with various post-secondary institutions provide students with the opportunity to earn articulated college credit as they complete many career and technical education courses.

#### **400.24 — Homework Policy**

Homework is a regular part of the instruction process. Teachers, under the directions of a principal, are responsible for assigning homework that is appropriate for the subject being taught and the maturity level and needs of individual students. To meet the guidelines set by the district, homework must:

- Meet the needs of the individual student.
- Be thoroughly explained to the student.
- Result in learning and not be busywork or a repetition of what the student already knows.
- Be assigned with sufficient time for a student to obtain any resource that is needed or required.
- Not be assigned as a punishment or disciplinary measure.
- Be able to be completed within a reasonable length of time in order to meet the deadline for the assignment.
- Not be assigned or be due on the day of a religious holiday. Students or parents may request an alternative deadline.

#### **400.25 — Understanding Assessments**

Throughout each child's education, he or she will take many standardized assessment tests, including the Florida Standards Assessment Test (FSA) in grades 3-10. Results from these tests show whether students are meeting grade-level expectations and help teachers plan instruction and measure students' progress. Schools use testing results to develop school-wide plans for improving academic performance.

- **Florida Kindergarten Readiness** - This screening is given to Kindergarten students during the first month of school to determine readiness to start school.
- **CELLA Test** - The Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment is taken by English Language Learners (ELLs) to see how well they are learning skills in English.
- **FSA English Language Arts & Mathematics** - These tests in reading and math measure how well students have met the Florida Standards.
  - ELA Grades 3-10
  - Mathematics Grades 3-8
- **FSA Science** - Students are tested on the Florida Standards in science. Grades 5 and 8.
- **End-of-Course Examinations (EOC)** - Students enrolled in Algebra, Algebra II, Geometry, Biology and US History and Civics are required to take state End-of-Course assessments targeting Florida Standards.
- **Alternative Assessment** - Alternate Assessment - Florida Alternate Assessment is designed for students whose participation in the general statewide assessment FSA is not appropriate, even with accommodations. It is expected that only students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will participate in the Florida Alternate Assessment.
- **Advanced Placement (AP) Tests** - National tests for Advanced Placement subjects are given in grades 10-12 and may be used for college credit.
- **PSAT** - Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) is given to students in grades 10 and 11. Only 11th-grade students with qualifying scores are considered for National Merit Scholarship selection.
- **SAT** - Scholastic Aptitude Test: (SAT) is a college placement test.
- **ACT** - The American College Test (ACT) is a college placement test.
- **PERT** - The Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT) is used to assess college readiness.
- **Industry Certification Testing** - Industry certification tests are based on national standards established by industry and measure skill proficiency recognized by the labor market and industry trends.

**All testing results are available to parents. School counselors can provide more information.**

#### **400.26 — FSA (Florida Standard Assessments)**

Much has been written about the FSA and its importance to a child's academic career, but standardized tests alone do not determine a child's academic potential. Parents may request test results and explanations; the more they know, the more they can help their child. Parents should know that a state law requires that third-grade students must receive a passing score on the FSA ELA reading assessment in order to be promoted to the fourth-grade. Cut scores will be determined in the fall of 2015. Students are required to pass the tenth-grade FSA. ELA and the Algebra I EOC tests at some point during high school to graduate with a traditional high school diploma. They will be offered several opportunities to take the FSA and EOC tests in 10th, 11th and 12th grades.

#### **400.27 — What do the FSA results mean?**

Different types of scores are reported for the FSA. Each child's FSA report will explain to parents the types of scores and what they mean. A brief explanation of some of the scores follows in the next two sections below.

##### **400.27a — FSA**

In these ELA, Math and Science tests, students' scores are assigned one of five levels:

- **Level 5** is the highest. A student at this level can handle the most challenging material on his or her grade level.
- **Level 4** shows performance above grade level.
- **Level 3** shows that a student is learning on grade level and meets the state standard for proficiency.
- **Level 2** is a yellow flag, meaning a student needs additional skills and should receive extra help at home and school.
- **Level 1** is a red flag. The student is performing below the standards set for his or her grade level.

#### **400.28 — End-of-Course Assessments**

In the spring of 2010, the Florida Department of Education passed new legislation governing the implementation of End of Course (EOC) Assessments which will affect course credits and graduation. For more details see Student Progression Plans.

#### **400.29 — Family Literacy Services**

The School Board of Sarasota County has made reading proficiency a priority for Sarasota County Schools. The life skill of reading is important to the student, parent and community. Family literacy is addressed in several ways. The Suncoast Technical College, 941-924-1365, offers free adult literacy classes in Adult Basic Education, GED preparation, and English as a Second Language (ESOL) classes. ESOL classes also help many migrant families adjust to life in a new country by offering citizenship classes and eliminating or minimizing language barriers.

#### **401.0 — EDUCATIONAL RECORDS**

Under Federal Law contained in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 99), either parent has access to all educational records, unless the district has been provided with a copy of a court order specifically revoking such rights. Therefore, **no parent/guardian can restrict the other parent's/guardian's access to their child's educational records, including directory information, without a court order.**

##### **Parents/guardians and adult students have the following rights to student records:**

- Right of access to inspect and review all records maintained about the student by the district.
- Right of privacy with respect to data contained in personally identifiable records.
- Right to challenge and request amendment of any record thought to be inaccurate or misleading, and to a hearing if necessary.
- Right to copies of such records.

Parents/guardians and adult students requesting to review, and to receive copies of, educational records, may do so in person or in writing at the student's school. The school shall comply within thirty 30 days. Fees for copies of educational records shall not exceed the actual cost of reproduction and shall not exceed 15 cents (\$0.15) per one-sided, letter-size page or 20 cents (\$0.20) per two-sided page. The fee for a certified copy shall not exceed one dollar (\$1.00).

#### **401.1 — Directory Information**

Directory information is information about students that is defined by Florida law as public information. It includes the student's name, address, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height (if an athletic team member), the name of the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended, dates of attendance at schools in the district, grade level, and diplomas and certifications received.

Directory information other than the student's address may be published by the school district in conjunction with news about academic awards, performances, honor rolls, athletic events and other school-related activities. All directory information also may be released to individuals or organizations in response to public records requests.

Parents, guardians and adult students may block public access to directory information pertaining to their children or themselves by withholding permission when they enroll in the district or by notifying their school in writing at any later time. The district is required to notify parents, guardians and adult students annually of their right to withhold permission to release directory information.

#### **401.2 — Military Access to Records**

Federal law requires that school districts provide military recruiters the name, address and telephone number of high school students upon request. However, a provision of the law allows parents or guardians to withhold the release of this information. If parents do not wish to release this information to military recruiters they may check the appropriate box on the student registration form or contact the school registrar.

#### **401.3 — Florida Department of Law Enforcement Records**

A Florida law, effective July 1, 1996, requires the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to maintain an updated list of Registered Sexual Predators/Offenders in this state after a court has made a written finding designating them as a Sexual Predator/Offender, as that term is defined by Florida Statute.

Florida's public is advised of potential predators/offenders via FDLE; therefore, predators and offenders are more closely monitored and controlled. Ultimately this information makes the state's citizens — especially its children — much safer.

#### **401.4 — Further Assistance**

After seeking assistance from a school's staff, parents/guardians and others who have questions regarding access to student records, custody issues, or contents of a student record may call Student Services at 927-9000.

#### **401.5 — Media Releases**

Occasionally the school district, newspapers, and television stations interview, photograph, and/or videotape our schools, teachers, and students to visually explain our schools' programs and events. Those photographs and videos may be used in newspapers, on television stations, and in Sarasota County Schools publications and productions.

On the school registration forms, parents/guardians may either give or deny permission for their child to participate in these types of media events. Parents/guardians who later wish to change their decision may do so at any time by completing the appropriate form available from the school's registrar.

#### **401.6 — Anonymous Surveys**

The district participates in various state and local surveys as requested by the Florida Department of Education, the Florida Department of Health and the Florida Department of Children and Families. School and district results are used by staff, school advisory councils, and community agencies as they seek funding and provide services for youth.

- The **Florida Youth Tobacco Survey** results provide information for evaluating the impact of Florida's innovative program to prevent and reduce tobacco use.



- The **Youth Risk Behavior Survey** results provide information on the behaviors that put youth at risk for premature death, including such factors as drug use, sexual activity and suicide attempts.
- The **Youth Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey** results provide information on the attitudes, knowledge and behavior of youth regarding physical activity and nutrition.
- The student **School Climate Survey** results provide information about students' perceptions and satisfaction with their school's learning environment.

*Students in grades 6-12 may be asked to complete one of these anonymous surveys. All surveys are completely confidential and voluntary. Individual students and classrooms are never identified.*

At the time of a student's initial entry into grades six and nine, parents/guardians either give or deny permission for their child to participate in such surveys. Parents who later wish to change their decision may do so at any time by completing the appropriate form.

#### **401.7 — Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights regarding the district's conducting of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These rights include:

1. The right of parents to indicate consent before students are required to participate in a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected-information survey") that request or involve information regarding:
  - a. Programs funded in whole or part by the U.S. Department of Education
  - b. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent
  - c. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family
  - d. Sexual behavior or attitudes
  - e. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior
  - f. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships
  - g. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as those with lawyers, doctors or ministers
  - h. Religious practices, affiliations or beliefs of the student or parents
  - i. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility
2. The right of parents to receive notice and an opportunity for their child to opt out of:
  - a. Any other protected-information survey, regardless of funding,
  - b. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam 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 exam or screening permitted or required under state law.
  - 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. The right of parents to inspect, upon request and before administration or use:
  - a. Protected-information surveys of students. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales or other distribution purposes
  - b. 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 Sarasota County and the Sarasota County School District have 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 district will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The school district will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or e-mail, 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 these specific activities or surveys. The school district will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the

school year, if the district has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be given reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys and will be provided with an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be given an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys.

The specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement are:

- The collection, disclosure or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- The administration of any protected-information survey not funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening, as described in section 2b 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 Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

#### **401.8 — The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants parents (defined as including legal guardians) and students who are 18 years of age or older certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are as follows:

**1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the student's school receives a request for access.**

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school registrar or other authorized school official a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected or will provide copies as requested.

**2. The right to request the amendment of a student's education records that a parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.**

Parents or eligible students who wish to amend a record should write their school principal or other authorized school official, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school official decides not to amend the record as requested, the school official will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. The notification will include additional information regarding the hearing procedures.

**3. The right to provide written consent before a school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent as delineated below.**

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records without consent of the parent or eligible student if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, disclosures to a party with written consent from the parent or eligible student, and disclosures directly to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have the right to inspect and review the records of such disclosures.

**4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by a Sarasota School District school to comply with the requirements of FERPA.**

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are as follows:

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

#### **Permissible disclosures without the consent of a parent or eligible student found in 99.31 of FERPA regulations:**

School officials may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student to the following recipients:

- School officials with legitimate educational interests:
  - A **school official** is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for

which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer 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. In general, legitimate educational interest refers to the right of certain school officials to access student information and records for the purpose of: (a) serving the student; (b) protecting the health, safety, and learning of this student and others; (c) maintaining the operations of the school district; (d) obtaining payment for educational programs and services; and (e) other purposes as specified federal and state law.
- Other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- Officials of another school, school system, or institution of post-secondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- Authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, the Florida Department of Education or the School Board of Sarasota County, subject to the requirements of §99.35. (§99.31(a)(3)).
- Entities engaged in audits or evaluations of federal- or state-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- Financial aid providers to which the student has applied or from which the student has received aid, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a state statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- Organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- Accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- Parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- Officers of courts presenting a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- Appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Requesters of information the School Board has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11)) Directory information that may be released by the Sarasota County Schools includes the following as defined in School Board Policy 5.71:
  - A. Name;
  - B. Address;
  - C. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
  - D. Weight and height, if an athletic team member;
  - E. Name of the most recent previous school or program attended;
  - F. Dates of attendance at schools in the District;
  - G. Grade level;
  - H. Diplomas and certifications received.
- Parent to the student who is not an eligible student or to the student (§99.31(a)(12))
- A victim of an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or a non-forcible sex offense, subject to the requirements of §99.39 (§99.31(a)(13))

#### **401.9 — Statement on the Collection, Use or Release of Social Security Numbers of Students and/or Parents\***

Pursuant to Section 119.071(5), Fla. Stat., the School Board of Sarasota County, Florida collects, uses, and/or releases Social Security Numbers (SSN) as mandated or authorized by law or when it is imperative for the performance of the School Board's duties. The School Board collects, uses, and/or releases SSN's of students and/or parents for the following reasons:

1. **Student registration and student identification numbers.** Required to request by §1008.386 Fla. Stat. notes as an exception: **"However, a student is not required to provide his or her social security number as a condition for enrollment or graduation."**
2. **Registration in an adult education program.** Required by Fla. Admin. Code R. 6A-10.0381.
3. **Tracking of adult students enrolled in a postsecondary program.** Required by Fla. Admin. Code R. 6A-1.0955(5).

4. **Criminal history. Level 1 and level 2 background checks / Identifiers for processing fingerprints by Department of Law Enforcement/Registration information regarding sexual predators and sexual offenders.** Authorized by §943.04351, Fla. Stat., and §119.071(5)(a) 2 + 6, Fla. Stat.
5. **Reports on students required to be submitted to Florida DOE.** Authorized by §119.071(5)(a) 2 + 6, Fla. Stat.
6. **Tort claims and tort notices of claim against the School Board.** Required by §768.28 (6), Fla. Stat.
7. **Use of motor vehicle information from the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles for the district to carry out its functions and to verify the accuracy of information submitted by agent or employee to District, including to prevent fraud, in connection with insurance investigations, and to verify a commercial driver's license.** Authorized by federal law 18 U.S.C. §2721et seq.
8. **Information received from DOE to locate missing Florida School Children.** Required by Fla. Admin. Code R. 6A-6.083.
9. **National School Lunch Act application verification process/Eligibility for Free and Reduced Price Meals.** Required of the adult, if the person has a number, by federal law 42 U.S.C. §1751 and federal regulations 7 C.F.R. §245.2, §245.3, and §245.6a.
10. **Reports from DHSMV of each student whose driver's license is suspended for excessive unexcused absences and reports to DHSMV of non-enrollment or non-attendance upon the part of a student who is required to attend school.** Required by §322.091(5) and §1003.27, Fla. Stat.
11. **Written verification from employer for vocational education, student follow up.** Required by Fla. Admin. Code R. 6A-10.0341.
12. **Child abuse report to Department of Children and Families of student victim and subjects of report.** Required by Fla. Admin. Code R. 65C-29.002.
13. **Identification of blood donors.** Authorized by federal law 42 U.S.C. §405(c)(2)(D)(i).
14. **The disclosure of the Social Security number is expressly required by federal or state law or a court order.** Authorized by §19.071(5)(a)2+6, Fla. Stat.
15. **Collection and/ or disclosure are imperative or necessary for the performance of the district's duties and responsibilities as prescribed by law, including but not limited for password identification to the district's network.** Authorized by §19.071(5)(a)2, Fla. Stat.
16. **The individual expressly consents in writing to the disclosure of his or her social security number.** Authorized by §19.071(5)(a)6c, Fla. Stat.
17. **The disclosure of the SSN is made to prevent and combat terrorism.** Authorized by the federal Patriot Act of 2001, Public Law 107-56 and Presidential Executive Order 13224.
18. **The disclosure of the SSN is made to a commercial entity for the permissible uses set forth in the following statutes and rules:** Federal Driver's Privacy Protection Act of 1994, federal law 18 U.S.C. §2721et seq; the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. §1681et seq; or the Financial Services Modernization Act of 1999, 15 U.S.C. §6801et seq, (provided that the authorized commercial entity complies with the requirements of paragraph 5 in §119.071, Fla. Stat.).
19. **Income for Medicaid eligibility, determine the amount of medical assistance payments, process Medicaid billing, and provide program follow-up.** Required by federal regulation 42 C.F.R. §435.910, unless student applicant for Medicaid refuses to obtain an SSN, based on well-established religious objections.

\*Note: Separate statements set forth the reasons for collecting, using or releasing the Social Security numbers of employees and volunteers.

## **500.0 — SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES**

School health services programs are established by §381.0056 Fla. Stat. The mission of Florida's school health services program is to appraise, protect and promote the health of students. Preventive and emergency school-based health services are provided to public school children. Services are provided in accordance with a local School Health Services Plan jointly developed by the county health department, school district, and School Health Advisory Committee. School-based health services are an important component of the public health system and help to assure that Florida's students are healthy, in the classroom and ready to learn. **For a complete guide to school health services, procedures, and health forms visit [SarasotaCountySchools.net/schoolhealth/](http://SarasotaCountySchools.net/schoolhealth/)**

### **500.1 — School Health Staff**

Care for students on a daily basis is provided by a health room aide under the guidance and direction of the school registered nurse (RN) who may or may not be on campus full-time. The school RN has the knowledge, education, experience and authority to manage and

provide the full range of health services in the education system. The ultimate goal of school nursing practice is to support students' optimal state of health to promote the capacity for successful learning. School RN services may include interpretation of medical records, assessment of students' symptoms, health appraisals, health education, case management, direct care, counseling, advocacy and health screenings. You can reach the school RN by calling your child's school or the School Health Office at 927-9000, ext. 32101.

### **500.2 — Health Insurance for Children**

Through Florida KidCare, the state of Florida offers health insurance for children from birth through age 18, even if one or both parents are working. It consists of four different programs. When you apply for the insurance, Florida KidCare will check which program your child may be eligible for, based on age and family income:

- **MediKids:** uninsured children ages 1 through 4
- **Healthy Kids:** uninsured children ages 5 through 18
- **Children's Medical Services Network:** uninsured children birth through 18 who have special health care needs or ongoing medical conditions.
- **Medicaid:** children birth through 18. A child who has other health insurance may still qualify for Medicaid.

Visit [floridakidcare.org](http://floridakidcare.org) or phone (888)540-5437 for more information.

### **500.3 — Dental Insurance**

If a student does not have a dental provider and requires dental services, contact the nurse assigned to the school and ask for assistance.

### **500.4 — Parent Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the school of any health condition of their student(s) which may require medication, treatment or monitoring at school or on school-sponsored trips or activities.

### **500.5 — Medications in School**

**Whenever possible, give medications at home.**

- School personnel will administer approved medications to students during the school day when it is necessary to help the child stay in school.
- Only FDA-approved prescription and over-the-counter medications are allowed to be administered by school personnel.
- A Medication/Treatment Authorization Form (M/TAF), **signed by a physician and parent**, must be provided, and medication must be stored and administered in the manner described below. See the forms section of the School Health Services Manual for a current Medication/Treatment Authorization Form at [www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/schoolhealth](http://www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/schoolhealth).
- An M/TAF is needed for EACH prescription.
- The M/TAF is valid for the current school year only.
- The parent needs to pick up medication at the end of the school year or if the medicine is discontinued. Medication that is not picked up will be discarded.
- Medication must be in the original prescription or unopened over-the-counter container labeled with the child's name, medication name, dosage, and times to be administered.
- A parent must deliver the signed M/TAF and medications **directly to the school health room or assigned school employee** so that medications can be accepted and counted.
- In middle and high school a few specific over-the-counter medications may be given with written approval from a parent or guardian (physician authorization is not required). Please see the school nurse for details.
- Homeopathic remedies are not FDA-approved and will not be administered by school personnel.
- Dietary supplements are not approved by the FDA for use as drugs and will not be administered by school personnel. Controlled narcotic medications for severe *pain management* are not administered in the school setting. Because these medications are known to cause decreased coordination and decreased levels of consciousness, they present learning and safety issues that can be dangerous to students.

Treatment equipment such as nebulizers and glucometers must be supplied by the parent. An M/TAF signed by a licensed health care provider and the parent must be on file along with a signed notarized affidavit. Both forms are only valid for the current school year.

When wheelchair, crutches or other temporary assistive devices are needed, they must be supplied by the parent. The school will need an Orthopedic Injury Assistive Device Authorization Form signed by the licensed health care provider and parent. This form is only valid for the current school year. See the Forms Chapter of the School Health Services Manual for the form

[www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/schoolhealth](http://www.sarasota.k12.fl.us/schoolhealth).

#### **500.6 — Screening Services**

Screening for vision, hearing, scoliosis, height and weight are mandated by Florida Administrative Code 64F-6003 for specific groups of students, according to grade level. **By signing the Health Emergency Information Card, parents/guardians give permission for noninvasive screening.**

Screenings do not diagnose but are designed to identify students who have results outside the normal limits. When necessary, the school RN refers students to other health care professionals for evaluation. Early identification and treatment of physical problems is paramount to academic achievement. **Parents must inform the school in writing if they do not wish their student to participate in any portion of this program.**

- Kg – Color, Far Vision, Hearing, Muscle Balance
- 1 – Hearing, Height/Weight, Far Vision, Muscle Balance
- 3 – Far Vision, Height/Weight
- 6 – Far Vision, Hearing, Height/Weight, Scoliosis
- 9 - Height/Weight
- New to the State Grade 2 – Far Vision, Hearing, Muscle Balance
- New to State Grade 4 & 5 – Far Vision, Hearing

#### **500.7 — Health Issues and Use of the Health Room**

Students too ill to remain in class must request permission from their course teacher to report to the health room for evaluation. A parent may be contacted to determine whether the student will go home or return to class.

**Students may not remain in school with these conditions:**

- temperature above 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- vomiting
- unknown rash
- diarrhea
- active head lice (see Head Lice, section 500.8)

**Please be sure the school has up-to-date contact information.**

**Student must be fever-free without the aid of medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.**

Children identified with health-related issues will be referred to the school RN for follow-up. The school RN may contact the parent for assistance in developing an individual health care plan for the student.

The *Sarasota School Health Services Manual* is a reference for all health related topics in Sarasota County Schools. It can be found at [www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/schoolhealth](http://www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/schoolhealth).

#### **500.8 — Food Allergies**

Food and Nutrition Services will work with parents, students and nurses to make appropriate and reasonable accommodations to students, and will assist them in navigating the school environment according to the procedures developed for food allergies in schools.

Food and Nutrition Services will follow Food Allergy Guidelines developed by the Sarasota County Health Department School Health Team, the Department of Education Nurses, Food and Nutrition Services and the Sarasota County School Health Advisory Board. Approved Menu Modification Medical Statement request forms are required for all students with dietary restriction, food intolerances, and food allergies who participate in the National School Breakfast and National School Lunch Program, and Supper Program. If a student does not purchase foods or beverages from the school cafeteria, the MMMS form is not required. These forms are available on the Food and Nutrition Services website and require a physician's signature to be valid.

## **600.0 — VOLUNTEERING AND PARTNERSHIPS**

### **601.0 — Volunteer and Partnership Office**

The school district Volunteer and Partnership Office is charged with facilitating partnerships among the schools and those community members seeking to support the schools. To enhance education opportunities for students through comprehensive and collaborative community involvement in the schools, this program recruits, trains, and recognizes volunteers and business partners.

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer must first apply to be a school district volunteer by registering on a volunteer computer available at each school and the district administration complex. The school-based Volunteer Coordinator must receive clearance from the Volunteer and Partnership Office before the volunteer is permitted to work in a school or at a school function. Please note that some volunteer interactions (such as one to one work with a student and unstructured, unsupervised, overnight field-trip chaperoning) require a higher level criminal background screening and that school district approved volunteers serve by permission of the school principal/administrator (See section 102.2 for details).

A website, [www.TeamUpSCS.org](http://www.TeamUpSCS.org), provides an easy way for individuals and businesses to partner with schools in a variety of ways.

### **602.0 — Mentoring Services**

A listing with descriptions of arranged in-school mentoring programs through interagency agreements between the school district and various organizations can be found at [SarasotaCountySchools.net/departments/vpo](http://SarasotaCountySchools.net/departments/vpo).

### **603.0 — 2-1-1 INFO LINE**

By calling 2-1-1 or 941-308-4357, families can access community information and referral services every hour and day of the week.

The 2-1-1 Network Centers maintain a comprehensive, up-to-date database of local human-service resources 2-1-1 helpline counselors use to assist people in finding the services they need. In addition, there is a free searchable online directory. For this area, the directory can be found at [uw211manasota.net](http://uw211manasota.net).

### **604.0 – Community Food Resources**

Select schools may have backpack programs; and there are mobile food pantry sites throughout the community to assist with additional food resources. These programs may change location from year to year. Please contact All Faiths Food Bank for further details on current programs and locations: <http://www.allfaithsfoodbank.org/need-food>.

Food & Nutrition Services also operates a Summer Food Service Program to summer school sites and to eligible community sites. Free breakfast and lunch is provided to students 18 years and younger during the summer months so that they may continue to grow and develop while school is not in session. For current information on summer meal sites, go to: <http://www.summerfoodflorida.org/>.