



# **Student Handbook 2025-2026**

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# Start Elementary School

## **Start Small, Dream Big, Soar Together**

### **Mission Statement:**

At Start School, our mission is to ensure that every student grows every day academically, socially, and emotionally through high-quality, rigorous instruction, strong relationships, and a nurturing environment where students start small, dream big, and are equipped with the knowledge, character, and skills to soar together toward excellence.

### **Vision Statement:**

At Start School, our vision is to create a nurturing, rigorous, and empowering learning environment where every student is known, valued, and challenged to grow. Guided by the belief that all children can succeed, we help our students Start Small and Dream Big, equipping them with the academic skills, emotional intelligence, and character needed to thrive in school and in life.

Our “Owls” soar through high-quality instruction, strong relationships, and meaningful learning experiences that ignite curiosity, build resilience, and promote collaboration. We are committed to developing confident, compassionate learners who think critically, lead with empathy, and contribute positively to their communities.

With a collaborative spirit, we foster a sense of belonging, inspiring each individual to achieve greatness. We aim to build strong partnerships with families and the wider community, recognizing that a collective effort is essential to the success of our young learners. Together, as a united community, we envision our Start Owls leaving a lasting impact, becoming confident, compassionate, and curious leaders, making a positive difference in their lives and their community. Start Small, Dream Big, Soar Together.

# **Start Owls Always Rise**

## A Message from the Principal

Welcome to a new school year at Start Elementary School! As your principal, it is my greatest honor to lead a school where every child is seen, known, and believed in. Whether you are just beginning your journey with us in Pre-K or preparing for the transition to high school, you are an essential part of our school family.

At Start School we strive to ensure every student grows, achieves, and thrives every day academically, emotionally, and socially. We believe all children can achieve excellence, and we are committed to creating the conditions that make that possible. Our vision is not just about improving test scores or raising data points, though we are doing that too, but about developing curious minds, resilient spirits, and compassionate hearts.

This year, you'll see continued efforts to refine our instructional practices, strengthen our support systems, and build a culture where high expectations are matched by high support. We are aligning our work with [Louisiana's Education Priorities](#) to ensure excellent teaching happens in every classroom, every day. But more importantly, we are striving to be a school where students feel safe enough to take risks, supported enough to ask for help, and inspired enough to dream big.

To our families: You are not just welcome here—you are vital to our success. We believe in partnership and open communication. We want you on our campus, at the “table,” and part of the conversation.

To our students: You are the reason we're here. Every decision we make is guided by what's best for you. You matter deeply, your potential is limitless, and we're here to help you unlock it.

This handbook is just one piece of the foundation. It outlines the shared commitments and expectations that help our school run smoothly. But beyond the rules and routines, know this: you are cared for here. And we will keep showing up, for you and with you, every single day.

I am looking forward to another year of growth, joy, and possibility.

Beverly Smart  
Principal

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## **Daily Decorum at Start Elementary School**

It is our desire that a child's experience at Start Elementary School be one that will be looked at in the future, having been a pleasant experience. Therefore, the students' and teachers' safety at Start Elementary School shall preempt any and all things.

In our daily activities at Start Elementary School, there are a few things we must pay particular attention to so as to assure that everyone is safe, secure, and growing. If students obey the following instructions, they will be able to get to school, stay at school, and return home safely after school on a daily basis. Those who fail to obey these instructions and follow our protocols and procedures will be addressed according to the Parish/School discipline policy and procedures.

### **Arrival at Start Elementary School**

School begins at 7:35. For those students who ride carload, we ask that they arrive at school no earlier than 7:15. Duty teachers will be at their stations at 7:15. Students are not to be on campus before 7:10. Students not adhering to this will be subject to consequences as in loss of privileges or detention. Students will go to eat breakfast when the 7:15 bell rings. Students not eating breakfast will move to their classrooms. The only excused tardy is a medical note. Students, accompanied by a parent or guardian, must report to the office when arriving after 7:35am. Students must attend 60,120 minutes per school year per Louisiana State Law. When students are habitually tardy those minutes deduct from their instructional time and will be taken as absences as they accrue over time.

### **Dismissal at Start Elementary School**

School will dismiss at 3:00. Students who are to be picked up in cars will wait in rear of the Jr. High building (by the gym). All other students are to board their buses as soon as possible. Students are not to loiter in the bus area. No student should be on the school campus after dismissal unless under the direct supervision of a faculty member or coach. Bus load changes are not made unless it is a permanent change. Transportation changes are made by parent note and not by phone calls to the office.

#### **a. Bus Riders**

It is understood that riding the bus to school is a privilege, not a right. Students are required to obey the bus driver and follow all rules that she/he has for safely riding the bus. Failure to obey the bus driver, or her/his substitute, will result in disciplinary actions and could result in losing bus riding privileges on a temporary basis or permanently. When the driver dismisses students from the bus, students are to immediately report either to the cafeteria for breakfast or the Soaring Owl Center. Upon completing breakfast in the cafeteria students must report immediately to the Soaring Owl Center. Students are not allowed to wander around the grounds. In the afternoon, students will leave the building through the designated areas.

Students who ride the bus home will be dismissed in an appropriate manner in accordance with grade level and teacher procedures. Students must walk straight to their bus and immediately enter, finding their assigned seat. Students are not allowed to loiter in the bus loading area. Failure to obey safety rules and regulations at the bus loading/unloading area will result in disciplinary actions.

### **b. Walkers**

Students who live within one mile of the school are expected to walk, or provide their own transportation to and from school. Students who walk should leave home properly dressed in time to make it to school so as not to be tardy.

For dismissal, walking students will gather at the end of the breezeway leading from the main entrance and wait for the designated teacher to walk them through the parking lot and across the street. Students should never walk through the parking lot or across the street without the designated teacher leading them. Once students leave campus they should not return to campus unless returning for practice at a time that does not allow them to simply stay after school. If they are staying for practice immediately following regular school hours they should remain on campus. Students who do not cross the parking lot in the correct place will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **c. Car Riders**

Students who ride in cars will be dropped off and picked up in the rear of the Jr. High building (by the new gym). The line to drop off and pick up students in the morning and afternoon should extend down Owl Loop to avoid backing cars up on Highway 80 or Charleston Drive. Parents in cars should enter Owl Loop from Highway 80 (by the water tower) to form the line for pick up. Parents should not enter from Charleston Drive and cut in front of other parents that have been waiting in line. Drivers may be ticketed for entering Owl Loop from Charleston Drive during the designated, and posted, one-way times. No parents are allowed to park in the church parking lot, pull in the front (bus) parking lot, or let children out on the road or in teacher parking lots.

For the safety of all students and staff, vehicles should not enter the parking lot in the afternoon prior to 2:50. Remember that school does not dismiss until 3:00. No student is excused from school before this time without a doctor's excuse. We strongly discourage any checkouts at the end of the school day. Students will enter the cafeteria and be seated and assigned tables to wait for their ride. In order to facilitate the car pickup and ensure the safety of the large numbers we have in the car pickup line, we will have NO talking so that students can actively listen for their names to be called. No children will be allowed to walk through parking lots to get to cars.

## **Closed Campus**

Once a student arrives on campus, they are not to leave campus unless they are checked out by the appropriate person. Unless students are supervised by a teacher/administrator, they are not to enter the Start School campus at any time, before, during, or after school.

Parents or guardians who visit campus to check out their child or to visit their child's classroom for scheduled conferences or events, must check-in at the front office to receive a visitor's pass. Visitors are not allowed to enter any building without first checking in. Parents and guardians are welcome to eat lunch in the cafeteria with their student on any day, but they must check-in to receive a visitor's pass prior to entering the cafeteria.

## **Early Dismissal at Start Elementary School**

When possible, medical or dental appointments should be made after school. The parent, or authorized person, must report to the office and sign the student out. Students will not be

allowed to wait for their parents by the parking lot. Someone must come in the building to sign students out and in. The child will be summoned to the office via the intercom. **Please do not go directly to the classrooms.** This is disruptive to the learning environment. Please avoid early checkout except in the case of an emergency. Check-outs are highly discouraged after 2:30 p.m.

## Student Absences and Tardies

Student attendance is closely monitored through a state-managed system that tracks full-day absences, check-ins, check-outs, and tardies. All forms of missed instructional time are included in the student's attendance record. Absences should be limited to serious illness or the death of an immediate family member.

- Only doctor's notes and funeral documentation (e.g., program or obituary) are considered legally excused.
- Per the Local Education Agency (LEA) attendance policy, we are permitted to accept up to five (5) handwritten parent excuses per semester, for a total of ten (10) excuses for the entire school year.
- Excessive absences or tardiness may result in a referral to the FINS (Families In Need of Services) program.
- School notification letters are issued at 3, 5, 7, and 10 absences.
- Students are tardy if they arrive after 7:35 a.m. Habitual tardiness accumulates into absences over time.

## Student Visits to the Office

Visits to the office are discouraged during academic time. Only in the case of an emergency will students be allowed to come to the office during class time, and only with an approved hall pass. Students in the office without a valid hall pass will be subject to disciplinary actions. The use of the phone in the office by students will be for emergencies only. No student will use the phone without a valid hall pass stating the reason for office visit or phone use. Students are expected to bring required materials to school every day. Students will not be allowed to use the office phone for materials left at home such as homework, shoes, uniforms, signed papers, etc. Students will be held accountable for remembering to bring their belongings each day.

Students who use the office phone on a frequent basis for minor ailments will be asked to complete a medical packet and obtain doctor's orders.

## Administration of Medication

It is the policy of the Richland Parish School Board that the administration of medication to students at school shall meet the following conditions and limitations. As used in this policy, the term *medication* shall include all prescription and non-prescription drugs.

### WRITTEN ORDERS, APPROPRIATE CONTAINERS, LABELS, AND INFORMATION

- A. Medication shall not be administered to any student without a completed [Medication Order](#) from a physician or dentist licensed to practice medicine in Louisiana or an adjacent state, or any other authorized prescriber authorized in the state of Louisiana to prescribe medication or devices, **and** a letter of request and authorization from the student's parent or guardian.

- B. Medication shall be provided to the school by the parent/legal guardian in the container that meets acceptable pharmaceutical standards.

#### **PRINCIPAL**

The principal shall designate at least two (2) employees to receive training and administer medications in each school.

#### **TEACHER**

The classroom teacher who is not otherwise previously contractually required shall not be assigned to administer medications to students.

#### **STUDENT SELF-MEDICATION**

Only those medical conditions which require immediate access to medications to prevent a life threatening or potentially debilitating situation shall be considered for self-administration of medication. Compliance with the school policy for a drug-free zone shall also be met if possible.

## **Student Birthdays and Special Deliveries**

To ensure a smooth and respectful celebration of student birthdays, we ask that parents communicate with the child's teacher at least two days prior to arrange an appropriate day for sending in birthday treats. Parents should not bring cupcakes or treats directly to the classroom nor stay to distribute them. Parents should drop off the cupcakes or treats at the office, and the teacher will retrieve and distribute them at a time they deem convenient. Parents are not permitted to stay and visit the classroom during this time. Please note that only store-bought items are allowed; homemade items will not be distributed. Additionally, parents must adhere to any rules concerning student allergies. Students may receive deliveries for birthdays or Valentine's Day except for balloons, oversized items, large stuffed animals, or glass items. As a general rule, items delivered for special occasions must be able to fit inside the students' backpack.

## **Student Money Collection Policy**

All money, whether for field trips, fundraisers, t-shirts, or other school events, shall be sent with the student to give directly to their homeroom teacher. We will not accept any money at the front office. Bringing money to the office, especially on the day it is due, often leads to confusion, misplaced funds, and an overwhelming increase in office traffic.

## **Fundraising Policy**

To maintain a focused learning environment and ensure fairness, outside fundraisers (such as church, club, or non-school sales) are not permitted at school. Students may not sell or distribute items, including candy, snacks, or other goods, for non-school organizations while on campus. All school-sponsored fundraisers must be pre-approved by the principal before any sales, promotions, or distributions begin. Unauthorized fundraising can create distractions, safety concerns, and equity issues, and will be addressed accordingly.



# **Start Elementary School Master Plan for Discipline**

## **Positive Behavior Support**

In order to assure classroom management using positive behavioral supports and effective disciplinary tools, Start Elementary School will identify data-driven academic, career and technical, discipline/behavioral performance results in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Start Elementary School will establish and use a school-based leadership team to meet on a regularly scheduled basis to review data and guide the positive behavior process. This leadership team shall, to the extent possible, include representatives of the school administration, both regular and special education teachers, parents, guidance counselors, and school bus operators. (It may also include other groups, e.g., food services workers).

The leadership team will use a decision-making process utilizing a data-management system that allows graphical representation of discipline issues. Said data system will permit regular and efficient monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation of a school-wide system of discipline. School data collection shall include, but not be limited to, average referrals per day per month, referrals by problem behavior, referrals by location, referrals by time, referrals by student, referrals by staff, individual student report by month and by year, and referrals by grade level. Environmental changes may be made as indicated by data. For instance, increased monitoring, schedule changes, or changes in recess structure may help to alleviate congestion or overcrowding at certain times during the day.

The team will uniformly use the two BESE-approved forms, i.e., "School Behavior Report Form" and "School Bus Behavior Report Form," to report incidents of alleged discipline violations. The referral system will be utilized consistently and appropriately.

The leadership team will review and revise any Zero Tolerance Policy of Start Elementary School to ensure that the policy is in compliance with R. S. 17:416 (H) which prohibits disciplinary action against any pupil reasonably acting in self-defense; and that inappropriate referrals are not made to agencies serving children.

The leadership team will review and revise its policies and procedures for handling suspensions and expulsions at Start Elementary School to ensure that suspension/expulsion policies are consistent with R. S. 17:416; suspension/expulsion policies are consistently and fairly executed; and alternative interventions, consistent with best theory and practice, to suspensions/expulsions are used including, but not be limited to counseling, conflict resolution, social and family responsibility, peer mediation, and stress and/or anger management.

The leadership team will make referrals, as appropriate, to Alternative Education Programs that are designed to offer variations of traditional instructional programs, as well as strategies for the purpose of increasing the likelihood that students who are unmotivated or unsuccessful in traditional programs, or are disruptive in the traditional school environment, remain in and be successful in school.

The leadership team will review the current Code of Student Conduct of Start Elementary School to assure that it is in compliance with R.S. 17:416.12, R.S. 17:416.13 and ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act).

They will refine consequences to create a reward/incentives program for positive student and teacher behavior and ensure the delivery of consistent reinforcement. The team will define consequences for rule violations that are clear, reasonable, and consistently enforced and which support maximum time in instruction.

The leadership team will monitor, evaluate and modify the school master plan, as needed, through the school year.

Start Elementary School adopts the following clearly defined behavioral expectations in these four basic expectations.

**O**nly positive attitudes allowed

**W**ork and move quietly and safely

**L**et us keep hands, feet, and objects to ourselves

**S**how respect for others at **ALL** times

These expectations shall be posted in prominent places around the school site, e.g., hallways, cafeterias, gymnasiums, and classrooms. These expectations shall be provided to parents and shall be known by all students and school staff.

Each teacher at Start Elementary School shall develop lesson plans and teach expectations across each school setting by providing direct instruction on expected behaviors at the beginning of the school year and reinforced throughout the year for all students.

Start Elementary School implements several positive behavioral supports school-wide, as well as individual teachers in the classroom. Some classroom supports include, but are not limited to, free homework passes, treasure boxes, field trips/parties, etc. for those students who demonstrate positive behavior expectations. Some school-wide supports include, but are not limited to, honor roll breakfast each six weeks, Start Student), the Owl Store for students to redeem PBIS points earned for the PBIS OWLS expectations. A school-wide “fun day” will be held once a semester for those students with no office referrals or corporal punishment. Students will also redeem their earned PBIS points for attending this event.

Start Elementary School shall design programs for students with special needs so that the students are challenged and engaged in school curriculum, and are appropriately placed so they remain in school rather than being suspended/expelled or becoming drop-outs.

The principal of Start Elementary School shall submit annual reports to the district’s Discipline Policy Review Committee.

## **School-Wide Discipline**

Every student at Start Elementary is entitled to a safe school environment in which to grow and learn. We believe all students can behave appropriately while at school. We will allow no student to stop a teacher from teaching or prevent other students from learning. Each classroom establishes rules, rewards, and consequences. There are also guidelines for out of class conduct, in the halls, restrooms, cafeteria, and playground. The choice of behavior is the student's. Students who display inappropriate behavior will be subject to disciplinary action, and could eventually lead to suspension or expulsion from school.

### **School-Wide Master Plan Rules**

1. Only Positive Attitudes Allowed.
2. Work and Move Quietly.
3. Let Us Keep Hands, Feet, and Objects to Ourselves.
4. Show Respect for Others at All Times.

### **General School-Wide Guidelines**

1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself at all times.
3. Walk at all times while in the buildings, classrooms, or on the sidewalks.
4. No fighting, karate, wrestling, or horseplaying.
5. No throwing or shooting objects.
6. No chewing gum while on campus.
7. No use of or possession of any tobacco products.
8. No tackle football.
9. Students should not bring any form of ball (Basketball, football, baseball) on campus. The school will provide playground equipment for recess.
10. No student is to attempt to retrieve any item from the top of a building or from the street without permission from a staff member.
11. No firearms are to be carried within fifty feet of or on any school campus.
12. No mean-spirited teasing, bullying, name calling, or ethnic jokes.
13. Classroom changes for Jr. High students will be made quickly and quietly.
14. Students going to PE classes will be in the gym and seated in their assigned seat before class begins.
15. Students will be considered tardy to class unless they are seated and working on the bell ringer assignment prior to class beginning.
16. Students who do not follow the general guidelines will be corrected by the observing staff member. Students are expected to respond with respect and are not to be corrected repeatedly for the same offense.
17. Students should not bring any personal toys, trinkets, games, electronic devices, headphones, etc. to campus. The school will provide all electronic needs to the student.

## **Cafeteria Behaviors**

Students who enter into the cafeteria must maintain proper behavior or they will be required to eat lunch in the office, away from peers. Discipline will be handled by the teachers/administrators on duty in the cafeteria. Each class/grade level will be assigned a table. Teachers will actively monitor students at all times. Students will form a single file line as they wait to enter the food serving area. Students who break line will be required to go to the end of the lunch line and will be served last. Students who continue to break in the lunch line will be subject to disciplinary action. Although talking is permitted in the cafeteria, loud noises are not allowed and will not be tolerated. Misbehavior in the lunch room will not be tolerated and may result in after school detention, ISS, OSS, or separation from peers.

## **Book Bags and Jackets**

As of the 24-25 school year, students are not required to use clear or mesh book bags. However, backpacks nor large bags of any kind will be allowed in the classrooms. Students will be required to leave these items on a hook outside the classroom or in a locker. Students are permitted to bring small bags in the classroom, such as purses, wristlets, or wallets, but they must remain visible to the teacher and out of the walkways.

Jackets are to be worn only when weather dictates such. Students caught wearing hoods on their heads will be given a verbal warning for the first incident. Upon the second offense students will be required to remove the hoods and it will be kept in the office for the remainder of the day. Subsequent infractions will result in detention, ISS, and even OSS for continued disregard of the rules.

## **Electronic Devices**

In accordance with Richland Parish Policy JCDAE, "No student shall possess on his/her person, an electronic telecommunication device throughout the instructional day." In an effort to maximize student engagement and minimize distractions, SES will enforce the following daily protocol:

As students enter the building, they will turn their electronic devices (including cell phones, smart watches, and bluetooth headphones) off or on silent and place them in a box labeled with their class section and name.

All devices will be placed in a locked room until the end of the school day, when they will be returned to their owners.

Students who check in late or check out early will drop off and pick up their devices in the front office.

Nothing will prohibit the use and operation of electronic devices in the event of an emergency. Emergency shall mean an actual or imminent threat to public health or safety which may result in loss of life, injury, or property damage.

A violation of these provisions may be grounds for disciplinary action including but not limited to, suspension from school and/or recommendation for expulsion.

## **Chromebook/school-provided headphone appropriate use**

We believe that technology plays an essential role in modern education, and to enhance your learning experience, we provide Chromebooks and headphones to all our students to use at school. To ensure their appropriate use, we expect all students to treat these resources with respect and responsibility. When using the school-provided Chromebook, students shall refrain from visiting inappropriate websites, downloading unauthorized software, or engaging in any form of cyberbullying. Remember, these devices are meant for educational purposes, and using them responsibly will help maintain a safe and productive digital environment for everyone. If student misuse causes damages to any school-provided technological device, parents/guardians will be responsible for paying to either replace or repair item damaged.

## **Field Trips, Dances, and other School-Sponsored Events**

Start School students will have the opportunity to participate in various approved field trips, dances, and other events throughout the year. Participation in each of these activities is a privilege not a right. To be selected to attend any of these events, students will have to meet or exceed the requirements set forth by the activity sponsor. These requirements can include, but are not limited to: (1) attendance, (2) infractions/referrals, (3) grades, (4) school/classroom goals, (5) good financial standing with the school (no monies owed), (6) exemplary behavior on prior trips, (7) regular exemplary behavior on school buses, etc. Students who meet or exceed the requirements of an event may be selected.

For all field trips, students will be offered two options for lunch: (1) a school or venue-provided lunch or (2) the option to bring lunch from home. These are the only meal options permitted. Due to logistical, safety, and equity concerns, special meal requests, restaurant deliveries, or concession stand purchases will not be allowed. Teachers and staff are not authorized to make individual food purchases for students, even at a parent's request. Please ensure your child is sent with a lunch they will eat if declining the school option. This policy is in place to ensure fairness, reduce confusion, and keep the focus on learning and fun.

## **Homecoming**

Purpose:

Homecoming at Start School is a tradition that promotes school spirit, student involvement, and community pride. It includes themed dress-up days, a pep rally and the Homecoming Court presentation.

Eligibility & Participation:

- All students are encouraged to participate in spirit week activities.
- Homecoming Court members are selected based on grade-level voting procedures outlined by the Student Council.
- To be eligible for Homecoming Court, students must:
  - Maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA.
  - Have no major disciplinary infractions in the current school year.
  - Demonstrate positive behavior and regular attendance.

Dress-Up Days:

- Each day of Spirit Week will have a specific theme (e.g., Twin Day, Decade Day, School Colors Day).
- Outfits must comply with the school dress code.
- Face paint and props may be permitted, but cannot be disruptive to learning or cover the entire face.

Pep Rally and Parade:

- The pep rally and parade will be held on the Thursday of Homecoming Week during the last class period.
- Students are expected to sit with their grade level and follow all behavioral expectations, maintaining safety for themselves and those around them.

Homecoming Court Presentation:

- Court members will be recognized during the pep rally and again during halftime of the Homecoming game.
- Dress attire must be formal and school-appropriate.
- Escorts and attire must be approved in advance by the administration.

## Participation in Athletics

To participate in athletics is a privilege and we want our students to have this opportunity. Further athletes are ambassadors for our school and as such their behavior both in school, out of school, and while participating in athletic events are very important

- Any student who fails ANY SUBJECT on either their progress report or report card will be placed on academic probation. Academic probation means the student will not be able to participate in any extracurricular activities until their overall GPA is higher than 2.0. In this situation it is advisable that students spend the extra time on studies until such academic deficiencies are corrected and documentation is provided.
- Players must follow all behavioral expectations of Start School. Any infractions during any given grading period will result in a consequence at the discretion of the coach and/or principal. Consequences may include but are not limited to, running, game suspensions, or being suspended from the team. **Any student who instigates, incites, or participates in fighting on campus or off campus will be suspended from the team.**
- Promoting good sportsmanship is required at all times. During athletic competitions, it is common to experience anger or frustration; however, all players must practice self-control and not cause harm to a teammate nor opponent. Players also must never use profanity nor slander other players while at practice or at a game.
- Practices are mandatory. If a player is to miss practice or a game, the coach is to be informed ahead of time by the parent or the player.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to provide/arrange transportation from practices. Start will provide bus transportation to the games. Players must ride with the team to the game. Picking up your child from away games will be permitted, but the coach must be informed. Otherwise, the player will be bussed back to Start awaiting to be picked up.
- Players will be assigned jerseys and they are responsible for washing them. It is the responsibility of the player to purchase required athletic shoes and apparel not purchased using team funds.
- No student shall be permitted to practice or participate in any interscholastic athletic program in any public school of the Richland Parish School Board until such student shall have furnished to the principal of the school documentation that he/she has met the following requirements:
  1. Evidence of having had a physical examination by a licensed physician who shall have completed documentation
  2. A copy of all completed and signed medical examination and participation/release of information forms must be on file at the school for every student before he/she practices or participates in interscholastic athletics during that school year.
  3. An agreement signed by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to hold the School Board and its members, employees, agents, assigns and insurers harmless from and against any liability for any accidents involving the student while participating in such athletic activities and any injuries suffered by the student during, or as a result of, such participation. The agreement shall also authorize team physicians to treat the student in the event of an injury requiring emergency treatment.
  4. Students shall sign a form consenting to random drug screening and must obtain the written consent of their parent(s) or guardian(s) for said tests in order to be eligible to participate in any athletic activity.

## SES Plan of Action for Office Referrals

Students at Start School will be held to a high standard of personal conduct, while at school or during school sponsored functions. It is the purpose of the administration to supply a safe and well-disciplined learning environment for all students at SES. Consequently, disruptions of the learning process will not be tolerated. The administration of SES supports the discipline policies of the Richland Parish School Board and will operate within the guidelines of the policy and procedure manual of the Richland Parish School Board. Such actions of correction, and discipline will be administered, to offenders of the learning process, as prescribed by the Louisiana Department of Education, Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), Richland Parish School Board (RPSB), and at the discretion of the administration of Start Elementary School (SES). Students instigating or participating in fights while under school supervision is grounds for suspension; however, a student reasonably concluded to be acting in self-defense may not be disciplined.

1st office referral – Administrator contacts parents/JPAMS referral – Conference and behavior intervention lesson assigned to be completed during lunch or after school detention

2nd office referral – In school detention (1-3 days) and Insights to Behavior Plan

3rd office referral – Suspension (1 or 2 days) and a readmittance conference with student, parent, and principal

4th office referral – Suspension (3 days) student, parents, and principal will develop and sign a behavior agreement (After any second suspension of a student during the same school year, the principal or his/her designee and the school social worker shall consult on whether the student's behavior could be attributable to behavioral or emotional challenges.)

5th office referral – Suspension (5 days) a student in grades **six through twelve** who is suspended a third time within the same school year for any offense, excluding those related to dress codes or tardiness, shall be recommended for expulsion. A student in grades **Kindergarten through fifth** who is suspended a fourth time within the same school year for any offense, excluding those related to dress code or tardiness, shall be recommended for expulsion.

*The actual number of days on the first three suspensions will be left to the discretion of the administration and the severity of the offense committed.*

### Detention

- Detention shall be used as a means to remediate infractions of the discipline policy. Behavior intervention lessons shall be completed in order for the student to learn what the correct behavior is and how to correct the behavior moving forward. The number of days per infraction that a student is placed in detention will be left to the discretion of the SES administration. The purpose of detention is to remediate behavior so as not to have to administer a more severe punishment, such as suspension.
- Depending on the infraction and frequency of misbehaviors, students will either receive lunch detention or after school detention.
- Lunch detention will be held each day during the lunch/recess period. Students will get a to-go lunch from the cafeteria to eat in the designated detention room supervised by the designated detention teacher or administrator.
- After school detention will be held at the day and time designated by the administration, and parents will be notified at least one day prior in order to make arrangements for pick-up. Students having a valid excuse can make up missed detention. The school will not provide transportation home for students who receive after school detention. Arrangements must be made for car pick-up at 4:20 p.m.
- Students who do not complete their assigned detention within the limited time ascribed may receive In-School-Detention or Out-of-School Suspension for the number of days that were not attended in detention.

## **Suspension/Expulsion**

Any student suspended shall not participate in events sponsored by the school during their suspension. Students who receive a suspension shall not be considered for any role in the Homecoming Court, field trips, semester fun days or positive behavior events. On a student's third (grades 6-8) suspension, in accordance with the Board's policy and state law, the student shall be recommended for expulsion. Students who bring weapons such as knives, guns, or other items that are normally associated as weapons will be recommended for expulsion on the first offense. Students in possession of drugs or drug related materials will be recommended for expulsion on the first offense. Students expelled from SES will not attend any event at the school for the remainder of the year.

## **Minor Infractions**

Parents will receive notice of minor infractions through a letter that should be signed and returned and through a Jcall. Students are allowed 3 minor infraction reports before a JPAMs behavior referral is written upon the 4<sup>th</sup> minor infraction report. Consequences are, but not limited to, counseling by an administrator, loss of privilege, time-out or reflection period, restitution (cleaning up mess), written reflection or apology, parent contact and/or teacher-student conference to discuss behavior, and/or completion of a behavior intervention lesson during lunch or after school detention. The following list of behaviors could be considered as minor depending on the frequency of the occurrence and whether or not they interfere with instruction.

- Not following classroom rules
- Tardiness
- Talking out of turn, calling out in class or interrupting
- Minor or repeated disruptive behavior
- Not prepared for class or wasting time in class
- Chewing gum
- Dress code violation
- Leaving class without permission
- Disruptive behavior in the hallway, cafeteria, or restroom
- Sleeping in class
- Repeatedly opting out of class instruction
- Being uncooperative
- Minor safety issues
- Not getting along with others

## **Major Infractions**

The following list of behaviors could be considered as moderate, depending on the circumstances and the frequency of the occurrence. Consequences are, but not limited to, after-school/lunch detention, in-school suspension (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS), or recommendation for expulsion (depending on the circumstances and age of the child). Parent notification should be mandatory to inform them of the action taken.

The following list of behaviors should be considered as major offenses.

- willful disobedience
- treating with intentional disrespect any school personnel
- making an unfounded charge against any school personnel
- using profane language
- immoral or vicious practices or of conduct injurious to associates
- using tobacco, tobacco products, or who possess or use alcoholic beverages or drugs



- disturbing the school and/or habitually violating any rule
- cutting, defacing, or injuring any part of public school buildings, any property belonging to the buildings or any school buses
- writing profane or obscene language or drawing obscene pictures on school property
- throwing objects liable to injure others
- instigating or participating in fights while under school supervision
- Leaving the classroom during class hours, the line walking to and from various places on campus, or detention without permission
- Leaving the school grounds without permission
- Habitual tardiness
- Violating school policies on grooming and dress code
- Theft
- Attending a school function intoxicated
- Possessing electronic telecommunication devices
- Committing any other serious offense

**Automatic recommendation for expulsion from school will occur after the following:**

1. The fourth out-of-school suspension
2. Possession of a weapon, such as a knife or gun
3. Possession of or with intent to distribute drugs

**Bus Rules and Regulations**

**DO**

- Cooperate with the driver—your safety depends on it.
- Be on time—the bus will not wait.
- Cross the road cautiously when waiting for and leaving the bus.
- Follow the driver's instructions when loading.
- Remain quiet enough not to distract the driver.
- Have written permission and be authorized by the principal to get off at a stop other than your own.
- Be courteous, be safety-conscious, protect.

**DO NOT**

- Stand when a seat is available and the bus is not in motion.
- Extend arms, head, or objects out of windows or doors.
- Throw objects in the bus or out of the windows or doors.
- Use the emergency door except for EMERGENCIES.
- Eat or drink on the bus.
- Damage the bus in any way.
- Use/possess the following items on the bus:
  - Alcohol, or other drugs,
  - Pets,
  - Glass objects,
  - Weapons
  - Large objects, (can't be held in hand, lap or under seat)
  - Tobacco,
  - Matches,
  - Cigarette lighters, and
  - Obscene materials.
- Use vulgar language (cursing) on bus.

Failure to comply with the rules **and regulations will result in the following actions:**

FIRST INFRACTION:

Written discipline reports by the bus driver are submitted to the principal of the school. The principal shall summon the student to the office for a warning and shall notify the parent or guardian of the incident. (Bus drivers should also attempt to contact the parent). The principal shall make documentation of action taken and contact the parent. The principal shall also send a copy of the discipline report to the bus driver and the Transportation Department. \*\*At any time, if the severity of the behavior warrants, the student may be suspended from the school bus for no more than three (3) days or suspended from school on the first infraction.

SECOND INFRACTION

The student shall be suspended from the bus riding privileges for a minimum of three (3) days NO EXCEPTIONS.

### THIRD INFRACTION

The student shall be suspended from bus riding privileges for a minimum of ONE (1) WEEK. Principal may hold conference with parent.

### FOURTH INFRACTION

The student shall be suspended from bus riding privileges for the remainder of the school term or a minimum of six weeks whichever is greater. \*\*At any time, if the severity of the behavior warrants, the student may be suspended from the school bus for no more than three (days) or from school on the first infraction. The following actions will be considered severe behavior and will be addressed accordingly by the principal:

- Fighting
- Possession of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Smoking
- Possession of any kind of weapon
- Assault
- Destruction of school board property
- Intentional disrespect (Ex: Cursing the driver)

As indicated above, school bus transportation is a privilege that may be withdrawn for inappropriate behavior. A student is to ride the bus to which he/she is assigned. Any emergency request to ride a bus or a different bus must be requested in writing by the parent/guardian and submitted to the office for the principal's signature. Students will be allowed off the bus only at school, home, and locations requested in writing by parents. No students may ride two different buses (one in the morning and a different one in the evening.) The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and its occupants at all times. Students riding the bus MUST comply with the request of the driver.

## **Dress Code Policy**

### **SCHOOL GUIDANCE FOR COMPLIANCE WITH STUDENT DRESS CODE POLICY**

Due to the changing nature of trends in fashion and grooming, guidance given below is not inclusive of all possible violations. Building level administration is authorized to make the final determination as to student compliance pertaining to dress and grooming guidance listed below.

#### **ALL STUDENTS**

1. Shorts, shirts, and dresses may be worn in all grades and must be no more than four inches from the top of the knee (front and back) when worn at the proper waistline.
2. Overalls shall be worn with all straps fastened over the shoulder and buttoned completely on all sides. Some type of shirt will be worn under overalls.
3. All shirts and pants shall fit at the normal waistline. Oversize clothing shall not be permitted; neither shall extremely tight clothing be permitted, as determined by the principal of his/her designee.
4. Pants legs shall not be rolled above the ankle, or cut or frayed above the ankle, and both pants legs shall be worn the same length.
5. Sunglasses, hats, bandanas or caps shall not be allowed at school. Caps may be brought to school as part of a school team uniform. These caps shall not be worn during the school day.
6. Clothing with holes, rips, or tears may be worn if skin is not exposed.
7. All buckles and laces shall be fastened or tied. Laces shall be worn in shoes with eyelets.
8. Students shall not wear clothing (including buttons, patches, and badges) advertising alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or drugs and/or containing inappropriate language or messages or inferences which create disturbances and substantially interfere with the work of the school or impinge on the rights of other students.
9. Hair must be neat, clean and well groomed. Rollers, pins, nets, bandanas or other similar head apparel shall not be worn on the head. Numbers, symbols, words, patterns, or phrases shall not be worn (cut) in students' hair if deemed offensive, obscene, gang-related, or cause a disruption of the learning environment by the administration.
10. Students are not allowed to wear, carry, or possess bullet-resistant backpacks on school property or a school bus.
11. No pajama pants may be worn to school.
12. Footwear shall be part of the regular attire. Shoes shall be without metal tips or cleats. Shoes with wheels shall not be worn.
13. The neck opening of a shirt shall not exceed the equivalent of the second button of a dress shirt. See-through shirts, or tank tops shall not be worn. Midriff shall not be exposed.
14. Neatly trimmed facial hair may be worn as determined by the administration.
15. Leggings, jeggings, sliders, or similar fitted apparel may only be worn with a top that extends at least to the tips of the wearer's fingers when their arms are relaxed at their sides.
16. Strapless dresses, blouses, tank tops, tube tops, off-the-shoulder garments, or halters shall not be worn. Clothing which reveals cleavage shall not be worn. Dress and shirt straps shall be at least 2 inches wide.
17. Pierced jewelry shall not be worn other than in the ear.

## **Safe School Planning**

Start Elementary School has established and shall maintain grade-appropriate programs of alcohol, drug and substance prevention, education, information and counseling as provided in R.S. 17:404.

Start Elementary School has established a plan, in accordance with Sec. 4114, of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, for keeping the school safe and drug-free that includes appropriate and effective school discipline policies that prohibit disorderly conduct, the illegal possession of weapons, and the illegal use, possession, distribution, and sale of tobacco, alcohol, and/or other drugs; has established security procedures at school and while students are on the way to and from school; has established prevention activities that are designed to create and maintain safe, disciplined, and drug-free environments; has established a crisis management plan for responding to violent or traumatic incidents on school grounds; and has established a Code of Student Conduct (and as also required by R.S. 17:416.12 and R.S. 17:416.13) for all students that clearly states the responsibilities of students, teachers, and administrators in maintaining a classroom environment that allows a teacher to communicate effectively with all students in the class; allows all students in the class to learn; allows all students and school employees to be treated respectfully; has consequences that are fair and developmentally appropriate; considers the student and the circumstances of the situation; and, is enforced accordingly.

## **Other Guidelines**

### **Inter-Agency Cooperation**

Start Elementary School shall seek to improve communication, coordination and collaboration between schools and agencies serving children; shall foster cooperation regarding the sharing of data about children, youth and families involved agencies serving children; and shall work in cooperation with other schools/districts/communities/regional planning boards to facilitate the successful re-entry and transition of youth formerly in state custody into their diverse school/community settings in order to encourage the continuation of education and their access to other needed services in order to prevent recidivism.

### **Student Records**

Start Elementary School shall provide for the transfer of student education records upon written request of any authorized person on behalf of an education facility operated within any correctional or health facility or, for children in the custody of the state, an education facility operated within any other state approved facility, whether within or outside the state of Louisiana, where such student has become enrolled or is seeking enrollment. The transfer of such records, whether by mail or otherwise, shall occur not later than 10 business days from the date of receipt of the written request. If the student has been expelled, the transferred records shall include the dates of the expulsion and the reason(s) for which the student was expelled.

No education record of any student may be withheld as the result of lack of payment of any fine, debit, or other outstanding obligation.

A student or his or her parent(s) may inspect the education record of that in accordance with the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Any student seeking admission to Start Elementary School who has been suspended or expelled from any public or nonpublic school within or outside the

state of Louisiana shall provide information on the dates of any suspensions or expulsions and the reason or reasons for which the student was suspended or expelled.

## **Visiting Teacher/Child Welfare and Attendance Supervisor/ Families in Need of Services (FINS) Officer**

It is the duty of all staff at Start Elementary School to cooperate fully with the visiting teachers, or supervisors of child welfare and attendance. Start Elementary School shall make available to visiting teachers, or supervisors of child welfare and attendance, FINS officers, and Truancy Assessment and Service Centers such information as will assist them in promoting the regular attendance and school adjustment of these children.

[For school/programs housing children in state custody: It is the duty of the principals, superintendents, or heads of the training and correctional schools to notify the visiting teachers, or supervisors of child welfare and attendance, and FINS officer (if applicable) when a child is to be released and/or returned to a parish.]

Visiting teachers, or supervisors of child welfare and attendance (pursuant to R.S. 17:235), and FINS officers, shall cooperate fully with the state departments of social services, labor, and health and hospitals, and with other state and local agencies, including, interchange of confidential and privileged information; cooperate fully with juvenile and family court authorities, training and correctional schools, law enforcement officers; and make such referrals and conduct such investigations as seem necessary for the enforcement of school attendance laws, including interchange of confidential and privileged information.

## **Parent Information**

### **Guidelines for Parent Communication with School Employees**

- Request meetings in advance and respect the school employee's time by adhering to scheduled appointments. Refrain from unannounced visits to classrooms during and after school hours.
- The administrators and teachers are available for conferences by scheduled appointments only. Prior to scheduling a meeting with administration, parents should first discuss the issue with the teacher. If the issue is still not resolved or further action is needed, then parents should request a scheduled conference with the principal or assistant principal.
- Teachers cannot hold conferences or accept parent visits that interrupt instructional time or general school duties (carload pickup, recess, morning assembly, etc.) . Appointments may be scheduled through the school secretary by contacting the front office, or by contacting the teacher through email or the school app.
- Use appropriate channels for communication (e.g., email, school communication app, school phone) and avoid contacting teachers outside of school hours unless previous arrangements have been made.
- Allow a reasonable amount of time for teachers to respond to communications, keeping in mind that they have responsibilities beyond individual correspondence. As a general rule, staff members are not obligated to respond to correspondence from parents outside of school hours.
- Approach conversations with the intention of working collaboratively to support your child's education. Provide constructive feedback and express concerns in a calm and respectful manner. Understand that teachers are working in the best interest of all students.
- Participate actively in your child's education by staying informed and involved.
- Support and adhere to the school's policies and procedures.
- Recognize that education is a team effort and be willing to collaborate with teachers and school staff.

## **Parent /Guardian Code of Conduct for Athletics**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this code of conduct is to establish clear expectations for parents and guardians to support a positive, respectful, and encouraging environment for student athletes, coaches, officials, and other spectators.

### **Expectations**

#### **1. Support and Encouragement**

- Encourage your child to do their best, have fun, and enjoy the game.
- Praise your child for their effort and improvement, not just for winning.

#### **2. Respect for Coaches and Officials**

- Respect the decisions of coaches and officials. Refrain from questioning, criticizing, or confronting them during or immediately after games or practices.
- Address any concerns with coaches in a respectful manner, following the appropriate channels.
  - i. Request a meeting at a time convenient for both you and the coach. Email or a phone call/text can be appropriate for setting this up.
  - ii. Concerns must be addressed with the coaching staff first prior to taking the issue to the administrative staff.
  - iii. Concerns should be addressed individually, rather than in groups, to ensure clear and focused communication and to maintain the privacy of students.

#### **3. Positive Behavior**

- Display good sportsmanship by being a positive role model. Applaud good plays by both teams.
- Avoid negative comments, booing, or taunting players, coaches, officials, or other spectators.

#### **4. Appropriate Conduct**

- Refrain from using inappropriate language, gestures, or behaviors.
- Avoid the use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco products at all school events.

#### **5. Team Support**

- Support all team members, not just your own child. Encourage a team-first attitude.
- Help your child understand the importance of teamwork, cooperation, and respect for teammates.

#### **6. Communication**

- Maintain open lines of communication with your child's coaches. Understand the coach's philosophy, expectations, and goals for the team.
- Attend parent meetings and stay informed about team events, schedules, and policies.

#### **7. Health and Safety**

- Ensure your child is in good health and properly equipped for practices and games.
- Inform coaches of any health concerns or injuries that may affect your child's ability to participate.

#### **8. Attendance and Punctuality**

- Ensure your child attends all practices and games. Notify coaches in advance if your child cannot attend.
- Ensure your child arrives on time and is picked up promptly from practices and games.

#### **9. Compliance and Consequences**

- a. Failure to comply with this code of conduct may result in student athlete removal from the team or may lead to consequences at the discretion of the administration.

# **Athletic Event Attendance Policy for Students and Parents**

## **Purpose:**

This policy establishes guidelines for student and parent attendance at athletic events at our school and while in attendance at other schools and or event spaces to ensure a safe, supportive, and enjoyable environment for all participants.

## **1. Attendance Eligibility:**

- a. Students and parents are encouraged to attend athletic events to support the school's teams.
- b. All attendees must adhere to the school's code of conduct and any additional guidelines specific to athletic events.

## **2. Spectator Conduct:**

- a. Spectators, including students and parents, are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and respect for all participants, officials, property, and opposing teams.
- b. Disruptive behavior, including but not limited to verbal abuse, harassment, cursing, vulgar actions or language, any form of violence, destruction of property, or any form of vandalism (including trashing of property) will not be tolerated and administration has the right to have you removed from the building.

## **3. Student Attendance:**

- a. Students are encouraged to attend athletic events to show school spirit and support their peers.
- b. Attendance at certain events may be subject to school policies and academic performance requirements.
- c. Athletes must sit as a team in the bleachers or other area designated by the coach when acting as a spectator prior to or after games. Athletes must not loiter in locker rooms, lobbies, or concession areas.

## **4. Parent Attendance:**

- a. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend athletic events to support their children and the school community.
- b. Parents are expected to model positive behavior and serve as role models for sportsmanship. All the above policies apply to parents.
- c. Athletic team practices are closed to outside spectators, including parents, guardians, friends and family unless otherwise directed by the team's coaching staff.

## **6. Alcohol and Substance Policy:**

- a. The consumption of alcohol and illegal substances is strictly prohibited at all athletic events.
- b. Any attendee found in violation of this policy will be subject to immediate removal from the event and may face further consequences.

## **7. Event Seating and Areas:**

- a. Attendees must follow designated seating arrangements and areas as specified by event organizers.
- b. Restricted areas, including team benches and playing fields, are off-limits to spectators without proper authorization.
- c. At all home games, spectators must be seated in bleachers and remain seated during the entirety of the game unless visiting the restroom, concession stand, or exiting the building . Failure to comply will result in removal from the gym.

## **8. Photography and Recording:**

- a. Spectators are allowed to take photographs and record videos for personal use only.
- b. Commercial use or distribution of images and videos captured at athletic events requires prior approval from the school.

## **9. Emergency Procedures:**

- a. Attendees must follow emergency procedures and cooperate with event staff in case of evacuation or other safety-related situations. **All students and parents attending athletic events are agreeing to adhere to this code of conduct agreement, which outlines expected behavior by attending.**

## **Parental and Community Involvement**

Start Elementary School is committed to parental involvement and family strengthening. As set forth in R.S. 17:406.1, effective approaches to involving families more fully as partners in the process of their children's learning require the participation and coordination of numerous state and local, public and private agencies shall be encouraged. Start Elementary School shall seek to make connections through a variety of local and culturally sensitive methods to facilitate parents/family members access to local/regional family strengthening programs available in the community. (Programs can be specifically identified, as applicable, e.g., Families Helping Families, Regional Family Resource centers, Parent Information Resource Center, Families In Need of Services [FINS] programs and other family strengthening programs exhibiting peer to peer support systems and positive mental health initiatives).

Start Elementary School shall seek training to facilitate mutual understanding of research-based practices promoting positive relationships between parents, LEA personnel and community service providers.

Start Elementary School shall seek to identify the mental health needs of its students and match those needs with available local resources including public, nonpublic and/or volunteer organizations (These can be specified to the extent possible). Pending inclusion of mental health services in the Medicaid Health Services Program (School-Based), the availability of mental health services will be expanded in Start Elementary School.



# School-Parent Compact

## 2025-2026

A School-Parent Compact for Achievement is an agreement that parents, students, and teachers develop together. It explains how parents and teachers will work together to make sure all our students reach or exceed grade-level standards.

Richland Parish Title 1 believes that it is the system's responsibility to assist schools in coordinating and implementing programs for and with parents that will address the needs of students, parents, families, communities, and the school.

### OUR GOALS FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The Richland Parish School Board and Start Elementary School are committed to your child's learning.

#### DISTRICT GOALS

Richland Parish will provide:

- Rigorous, state-approved Tier 1 curricula
- Certified instructors
- A positive learning environment

#### SCHOOL GOALS

The key components of our plan that will lead to school improvement include:

- The school will provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables students to meet the state's academic achievement standards.
- The school will maintain a safe, supportive, and respectful environment for all students, staff, and parents.
- The school will actively engage parents and families in the educational process by providing regular communication, opportunities for involvement, and resources to support student learning at home.
- The school will ensure ongoing professional development for teachers and staff to improve instruction and student outcomes.
- The school will regularly assess student progress and use data to inform instruction, providing timely feedback and support to students.

#### STUDENT GOALS

- I will actively participate and produce standards aligned, meaningful work as part of every lesson.
- I will ask for help when I need it.
- I will do my homework, read every day for 15-20 minutes, and practice my math fluency every day for 5 minutes.
- I will give my parents all the notes and information I receive from my school every day.

#### PARENT GOALS

- Parents will create a supportive learning environment at home by ensuring their child completes homework and reads daily.
- Parents will maintain open lines of communication with teachers and school staff to stay informed about their child's progress and any school events or issues.
- Parents will attend parent-teacher conferences, school events, and volunteer when possible to support the school community.
- Parents will encourage and reinforce positive behavior and respect for others at school and at home.

#### HOW PARENTS CAN GET INVOLVED

- Join the Parent Action Committee. Meetings are held four times each year. Parents and staff review the school improvement plan, family engagement policies and events, and make decisions relating to the education of their children and positive use of extracurricular time.
- Attend our annual Back to School Night. At this meeting, you can find out about the requirements of the Title1 program. An explanation of this policy is also included in the school's handbook.
- Attend our parent breakfasts each semester to gain a better understanding of the curriculum, the state standards, your child's progress, school and state assessments, and learn curriculum "how to's" presented by knowledgeable teachers.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences, school events, and volunteer when possible to support their student's classroom or school community.

#### COMMUNICATION ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING

Start Elementary School is committed to frequent communication with parents about children's learning. Here are the ways you can expect us to communicate with you:

- Weekly/daily folders
- Website
- Facebook Page (Start Elementary School 25-26)
- School Information App (news updates and messaging capabilities with teachers and admin)
- Progress Reports (at grading period midpoint)
- Report Cards (each six weeks)
- Student Progress Center (Jcampus)
- Individual student report about your child's performance on the state assessments
- During opportunities to volunteer and participate in class, and observation of classroom activities.

## **Start Elementary School Parent and Family Engagement Policy**

### ***School Year 2025-2026***

In support of strengthening student academic achievement, Start Elementary School receives Title I, Part A funds and must jointly develop with, agree on with, and distribute to parents and family members of participating children a written parent and family engagement policy that contains information required by section 1116(b) and (c) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The policy establishes the school's expectations for parent and family engagement and describes how the school will implement a number of specific parent and family engagement activities, and it is incorporated into the school's plan submitted to the district.

#### **Start Elementary School agrees to implement the following requirements as outlined by Section 1116:**

- Involve parents, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way, in the planning, review, and improvement of programs under Title I, Part A, including the planning, review, and improvement of the school parent and family engagement policy and the joint development of the targeted assistance or schoolwide program plan.
- Update the school parent and family engagement policy periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school, distribute it to the parents of participating children, and make the parent and family engagement policy available to the local community.
- Provide full opportunities, to the extent practicable, for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the ESSA in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language parents understand.
- If the schoolwide program plan under Section 1114(b) of ESSA is not satisfactory to the parents of participating children, submit any parent comments on the plan when the school makes the plan available to the local educational agency.
- Be governed by the following statutory definition of parent and family engagement and will carry out programs, activities, and procedures in accordance with this definition:

Parent and family engagement means the participation of parents in regular, two-way, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities, including ensuring:

1. Parents play an integral role in assisting their child's learning,
2. Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education at school,
3. Parents are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child, and
4. Other activities are carried out, such as those described in Section 1116 of ESSA.

#### **● Jointly Developed**

Start Elementary School will take the following actions to involve parents and families in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs, including opportunities for regular meetings, if requested by parents, to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their child and respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.

*The district and school policies, and the School Improvement Plans are reviewed each school year and revised annually. Sources used in the development of these policies and plans include individual*

*school meetings, annual parent survey results, parent meetings, and parent-teacher conferences. This policy and all school policies are posted on our system and school websites where they are available for parent comments and suggestions. This policy is a working document subject to review and revision.*

- **Annual Title I Meeting**

Start Elementary School will take the following actions to conduct an annual meeting, at a convenient time, and encourage and invite all parents and families of participating children to attend to inform them about the school's Title I program, the nature of the Title I program, the parents' requirements, the school parent and family engagement policy, the schoolwide plan, and the school-parent compact.

*Parents are surveyed annually to determine whether parent engagement needs are being met effectively and appropriately through the implementation of the parent and family engagement programs. Parents are given the option to complete the survey via paper copy or electronically. The results of these surveys are used to develop strategies for school improvement and to revise the district and school Parent and Family Engagement Policies. These results are also used in planning future parent meetings. Areas evaluated include academics and school leadership, parent involvement, Title I, school environment, and the school Parent and Family Engagement Program. Surveys are written in a language that parents and families understand.*

- **Communications**

Start Elementary School will take the following actions to provide parents and families of participating children the following:

1. Timely information about the Title I programs,
2. Flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, and may provide with Title I funds, transportation, child care or home visits, as such services relate to parent and family engagement, and
3. Information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand.

*Start Elementary School will make the SES Family Engagement Policy available to all parents by publishing the policy in all student handbooks and on the district website. All student handbooks are written in a language that parents and families understand.*

- **Reservation of Funds (only applicable to districts with Title I allocations of \$500,000 or more)**

Start Elementary School will take the following actions to involve the parents and families of children served in Title I, Part A schools in decisions about how the 1 percent of Title I, Part A funds reserved for parent and family engagement is spent by:

*Each Parent and Family Engagement Coordinator offers each parent the opportunity to give feedback on the 1% reservation of funds by surveying parents on the use of funds. During the Annual Title I meeting, the school will share the budget for parent and family engagement activities.*

- Coordination of Services

Start Elementary School will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement programs and activities with other Federal, State, and local programs, including public preschool programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children by:

- *Start Elementary School will coordinate with Pre-Kindergartens to facilitate a smooth transition for both parents and students to Start Elementary School by working collaboratively with these agencies.*
- *Start Elementary School school will coordinate with Rayville High School to facilitate a smooth transition for both parents and students by working collaboratively as students move from one instructional level to the next.*
- *Start Elementary School will coordinate with members of the Rich Network, The Children's Coalition, etc. to participate in district-wide parent and family events.*

- Building Capacity of Parents

Start Elementary School will build the parents' capacity for strong parent and family engagement to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school and the community to improve student academic achievement through the following:

1. Provide parents with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessments used to measure student progress, and the achievement levels of the challenging State academic standards;
2. Provide materials and training to help parents to work with their child to improve their child's achievement, such as literacy training and using technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), as appropriate, to foster parent and family engagement; and
3. Provide assistance to parents of participating children, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following:

- The challenging State's academic standards,
- The State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,
- The requirements of Title I, Part A,
- How to monitor their child's progress, and
- How to work with educators to improve the achievement of their child.

*Start Elementary School will provide tips and ideas to parents on helping their children with core content subject areas. Parents are given the opportunity to check out a wide variety of resource materials from the Parent Resource Centers to use at home with their children. In addition, parents will receive newsletters, progress reports, the opportunity to schedule parent/teacher conferences, phone calls, and parent communication flyers. Parents will also be encouraged to serve as PAC members and SIP team members.*

- **Building Capacity of School Staff**

Start Elementary School will provide training to educate teachers, specialized instructional support personnel, principals and other school leaders, and other staff, with the assistance of parents, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, implement and coordinate parent programs, and build ties between parents and the school by:

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <i>On-going professional development for faculty and staff</i></li><li>● <i>Individualized coaching</i></li><li>● <i>Parents/families/school staff serving together on school and district committees</i></li></ul> |
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## **ADOPTION**

The Start Elementary School Parent and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly and agreed on with parents and family members of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by this document and the district meeting sign-in sheet. This policy was adopted by Start Elementary School on July 30, 2025 and will be in effect for the period of the 2025-2026 school year. The school district will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before August 23, 2025 by publishing it in all student handbooks and placing it on the school district website.

## **Parent Notification of Guidelines for Use of Seclusion and Physical Restraint with Exceptional Students**

The Richland Parish School System has established the following guidelines and procedures to comply with the revised mandates of Act 479, enacted during the 2025 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature. This legislation provides direction regarding crisis intervention strategies, which may include the use of positive behavioral supports, sensory rooms, or other calming spaces intentionally designed to comfort and stabilize students. Act 479 also outlines guidelines for rare and extraordinary situations where seclusion or physical restraint may be necessary to safely de-escalate a student who presents an imminent risk of harm to themselves or others. These techniques will be employed only as a last resort and in strict accordance with Louisiana Bulletin 1706, Sections 540 through 543. Furthermore, the use of seclusion must be approved in advance by the Supervisor of Special Education prior to implementation.

### **I. Seclusion and Restraint**

Every effort should be made to prevent the need for using seclusion or restraint techniques. Environments should be structured and focused on positive interventions and supports to greatly reduce, and in many cases eliminate, the need to use seclusion or restraint. Seclusion and restraint should only be used when a student's behavior presents a threat of imminent risk of harm to self or others, and only as a last resort to protect the safety of self and others. Techniques may be implemented when the risk of not intervening is greater than the risk of intervening and to the degree necessary to stop the dangerous behavior. Techniques must be implemented in a manner that causes no physical injury to the student, results in the least possible discomfort, does not interfere in any way with the student's breathing or ability to communicate with others, and does not place excessive pressure on the student's back or chest or cause asphyxia. Seclusion and restraint must be implemented in a manner that is directly proportionate to the circumstances and to the student's size, age, and severity of behavior. A school employee shall continuously monitor a student who is secluded or physically restrained for the duration of such seclusion or restraint and shall release a student from seclusion and physical restraint as soon as the reasons for justifying such action have subsided.

Seclusion and restraint must not be used as a form of discipline or punishment, as a threat to control, bully, or obtain behavioral compliance, or for the convenience of school personnel. It is imperative that no school employee subject a student to unreasonable, unsafe, or unwarranted use of seclusion or restraint. Seclusion and restraint techniques must not be used to address behaviors such as general noncompliance, self-stimulation, or academic refusal. Such behaviors must be responded to with less stringent and less restrictive techniques. No school employee shall place a student in seclusion or restraint if he is known to have any medical or psychological condition that precludes such action, as certified by a licensed pediatrician, neurologist, or mental health provider in a written statement provided to the school in which the student is enrolled.

### **Seclusion**

The seclusion of a student must take place only in a designated seclusion room that meets established safety standards to ensure the student's physical and emotional well-being. The creation and use of a seclusion room must be formally approved in advance by the Director of Special Education before implementation. A student may only be placed in a seclusion room by a trained school employee who uses approved methods for escorting, placing, and supervising the student. While in the seclusion room, the student must be continuously monitored, and the supervising staff member must be able to see and hear the student at all times. Only one student may occupy a seclusion room at any given time to ensure individual safety and proper supervision.

It is critical to understand the distinction between a Seclusion Room and a Sensory Room, as they serve fundamentally different purposes. Under no circumstances should a Sensory Room be used as a Seclusion Room. Sensory Rooms are intended to provide a calming, therapeutic environment that helps students regulate their emotions and return to a state of stability. These rooms are not to be associated with discipline, isolation, or restraint.

#### **Seclusion should ONLY be used:**

- for student behaviors that involve an **imminent risk of harm** to self or others
- **as a last resort**, when de-escalation and other positive behavioral interventions and support attempts have failed and the student continues to pose an imminent risk of harm to self or others
- **as a last resort**, if and when less restrictive crisis intervention techniques such as positive behavioral supports, constructive and non-physical de-escalation, and restructuring of a student's environment have failed to stop a student's actions that pose an **imminent risk of harm** to self or others

#### **Seclusion should NOT be used:**

- as a routine school safety, discipline, or intervention measure or to address behaviors such as general non-compliance, self-stimulation, and academic refusal, and other behaviors that, while disruptive to a classroom setting or other daily school activities, do not present an imminent risk of harm to self or others

#### **A Seclusion Room or other confined area must:**

- be free of any object that poses a danger to the student who is placed in the room
- have an observation window allowing school personnel to see and hear the student the entire time
- have a ceiling height and heating, cooling, ventilation, and lighting system comparable to an operating classroom in the school
- be of a size that is appropriate for the student's size, behavior, chronological, and developmental age

### **Physical Restraint**

Physical restraint should only be used by school employees who have completed all components of the district's adopted de-escalation & physical management program. **Annual** recertification is required. At no time should a school employee subject a student to mechanical restraints to restrict that student's freedom of movement.

#### **Physical Restraint should ONLY be used:**

- when a student's behavior presents a threat of **imminent danger of serious physical harm to self or others**, and only as a **last resort** to protect the safety of self or others
- to the degree necessary to stop a dangerous behavior
- in a manner that causes no physical injury to the student, results in the least possible discomfort, and does not interfere in any way with a student's breathing ability or ability to communicate with others

#### **Physical Restraint does NOT include:**

- consensual, solicited, or unintentional contact

- momentary blocking of a student's action if the student's action is likely to result in harm to the student or any other person
- a school employee holding a student for less than three consecutive minutes during any given hour for the protection of the student or others
- a school employee holding a student for the purpose of calming or comforting the student, provided the student's freedom of movement or normal access to his or her body is not restricted
- minimal physical contact (i.e., touching of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back) for the purpose of safely escorting a student from one area to another
- minimal physical contact for the purpose of assisting the student in completing a task or response

**Mechanical Restraint does NOT include:**

- any device used by a duly licensed law enforcement officer in the execution of his official duties
- any devices implemented by trained school personnel or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related service professional and are used for the specific and approved purposes for which such devices were designed, such as:
  - adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports
  - vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle
  - restraints for medical immobilization
  - orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm

**II. Written Notification and Reporting**

The principal or his designee shall notify each parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled at the school with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) of the prohibition of the use of seclusion and restraint if the student has a condition that precludes such action, as certified by a licensed pediatrician, neurologist, or mental health provider in a written statement provided to the school in which the student is enrolled. This notification is included in our *Guidelines and Procedures for Crisis Intervention and Implementing Seclusion/Restraint Techniques*, provided to parents of students with disabilities at the beginning of each school year and on the Prior Written Notice for the student's IEP meeting. IEP teams will discuss and document this discussion in the IEP. A student who has been placed in seclusion or has been restrained shall be monitored continuously, and monitoring shall be documented on the *Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form*.

**Immediately Following Implementation of Seclusion or Physical Restraint:**

- The school employee involved in the seclusion or restraint must immediately notify the school principal.
- The school principal must immediately notify the Supervisor of Special Education and/or Behavior Interventionist of the student secluded or restrained, personnel involved, and the location of restraint.
  - The school principal or his designee and the Supervisor of Special Education and/or Behavior Interventionist must review video and audio footage, if available, to ensure that policies and proper techniques were followed during the incident. The Supervisor of Special Education and/or Behavior Interventionist will document the video viewing and findings on the *Seclusion/Restraint Video Documentation Log*
- The school administrator shall notify the parent or legal guardian of the student via a phone call as soon as is practicable, but no later than the end of the same school day.
- The school principal should contact a school nurse or school health designee to assess the student as soon as possible, but no later than the end of the same school day, to look for and document any signs of injury or distress. School health designee is defined as the district school nurse, or the school-based health clinic nurse. In the event that one of these designees is not available the next contact should be Alyssa Brown or Ashley Royals, occupational therapist. Other personnel classified as health designees are: Katie Bennett, Kelly Harper, Asa Ausberry. These individuals should only be contacted as a last resort. Please follow the order of the list.
- A school employee who secluded or physically restrained a student shall document and report the incident on the *Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form*. The employee shall submit the *Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form* to the principal by the end of the school day. The principal

or his designee shall complete the *Parent Notification of Seclusion/Restraint Letter* and provide the letter to the parent by the end of the following day. If the seclusion or restraint occurs on a Friday, the letter must be completed and sent to the parent by the end of the day on Friday.

- The principal or designee must provide the *Use of Seclusion/Physical Restraint Reporting Form* and *Parent Notification of Seclusion/Restraint Letter* to the schools designated IEP Facilitator, Behavior Interventionist and Special Education Supervisor at the same time the parent is provided a copy (within 24 hours of incident).

### **III. Response to Seclusion or Restraint**

#### **Individualized Education Plan/Behavior Intervention Plan**

The IEP team must address the behaviors that prompted the seclusion/restraint in the student's IEP and BIP. If a student is involved in three incidents in a school year involving the use of seclusion or physical restraint as a result of posing an imminent risk of harm to self or others, his Individualized Education Plan team shall:

- implement the Behavior Support Process (for students who do not have a BIP)
- conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)
  - The School Psychologist and/or the School Social Worker, Behavior Interventionist, IEP Facilitator assigned to the student's school, Special Education Supervisor and/or Pupil Appraisal Supervisor shall actively participate in the FBA.
- review, revise, or develop a Behavior Intervention Plan, including any crisis intervention plans, to include any appropriate and necessary behavioral supports
  - prioritize the use of positive interventions and support

If the student's challenging behavior continues to escalate, requiring repeated seclusion or restraint practices, the Special Education Supervisor and/or Behavior Interventionist shall review the student's IEP and BIP at least every three weeks.

### **IV. School & District Responsibilities**

- Schools will include the *Parent Notification of Guidelines for Use of Seclusion and Physical Restraint with Exceptional Students* in the student handbook
- A list of personnel trained in Handle with Care will be kept at each school site and the district office.
- Reported incidents of seclusion/restraint will be entered into the LDOE database by the Special Education Supervisor or designee.
- Prior to the beginning of the school year, the *Parent Notification of Guidelines for Use of Seclusion and Physical Restraint with Exceptional Students* shall be:
  - provided to all school employees and every parent or legal guardian of a student with a disability
  - posted on the district's website
  - submitted annually to the Special Education Advisory Council

## **Richland Parish Non-Discrimination Statements**

Richland Parish Non-Discrimination Statement: The Richland Parish School System adheres to the equal provisions of federal civil rights laws and regulations that are applicable to this agency. Therefore, no employee, students, parents, or legal guardians will be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972); disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1073) in attaining educational goals and objectives and in the administration of personnel policies and procedures.

Anyone with questions regarding this policy may contact Christy Hendrix, Title IX Supervisor, Address: 411 Foster Street, Rayville, Louisiana 71269, Phone: (318) 728-5964, email: [chendrix@richland.k12.la.us](mailto:chendrix@richland.k12.la.us) or Joyce Smith, Section 504 Supervisor, Address: 411 Foster Street, Rayville, Louisiana 71269, Phone: (318) 728-5964, Email: [joysmith@richland.k12.la.us](mailto:joysmith@richland.k12.la.us)



Richland Parish advises students, parents, employees, and the general public that all career and technical education opportunities will be offered regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. Richland Parish School System offers career and technical education programs that include, but are not limited to Manufacturing, Health Sciences, and Architecture/Construction. Admission is open to all students.

For information about your rights or grievance procedures, contact Christy Hendrix, Title IX Supervisor, Address: 411 Foster Street, Rayville, Louisiana 71269, Phone: (318) 728-5964, email: [chendrix@richland.k12.la.us](mailto:chendrix@richland.k12.la.us) or Joyce Smith, Section 504 Supervisor, Address: 411 Foster Street, Rayville, Louisiana 71269, Phone: (318) 728-5964, Email: [joysmith@richland.k12.la.us](mailto:joysmith@richland.k12.la.us)

### **Equal Education Opportunities (RPSBPM: JAA)**

It shall be the policy of the Richland Parish School Board that the school district shall place emphasis upon the nondiscriminatory provision of educational opportunities for children and no person shall be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of any education service, program or activity on the basis of race, color, disability, religion, creed, national origin, age, or sex. All programs offered by schools within the school district shall be open to all students in compliance with statutory and judicial requirements.

The Superintendent shall designate a member of the staff to investigate any and all complaints which may be brought against the district in regard to any alleged discriminatory action. Adequate procedures shall be maintained to provide for prompt and equitable resolution of student complaints.