Southeast Polk Middle School
Student Handbook

Southeast Polk
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2026-2027

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OPENING STATEMENT

School District Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Educational Goals, and Expected Outcomes

School Song, School Colors, and School Mascot

SOUTHEAST POLK FIGHT SONG-Onward Rams

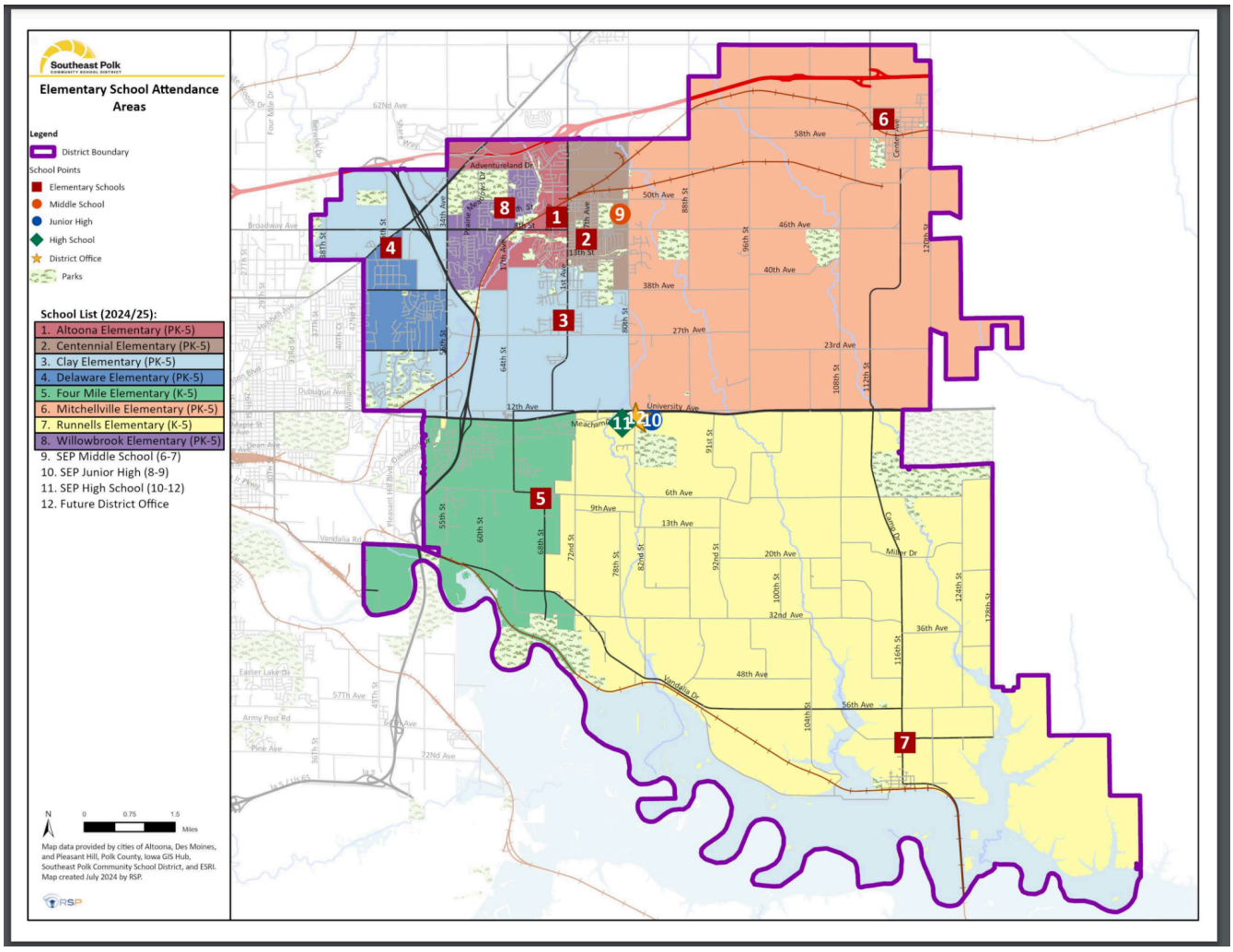
Onward Rams to win this game
This will help to spread our fame
We've got to fight with all our might

We've got to work and really fight
Come on, let's do it right – rah, rah, rah!

Black and gold our colors true
Come on, Rams, we are for you
So don't give in, give one more fight
Another victory's in sight

Yea, Rams, let's win tonight Rah, rah,
rah rah rah!
Rah, rah, rah rah rah!
Rah, rah, rah rah rah!
Team! Team! Team!

Map of the District



Staff Introductions

Southeast Polk Middle School Administration

Principal	Joshua Griffith	joshua.griffith@southeastpolk.org
Assistant Principal	Tracy Dailey	tracy.dailey@southeastpolk.org
Assistant Principal	Brooke Miller	brooke.miller@southeastpolk.org
Building Improv. Leader	Tron England	tron.england@southeastpolk.org
Activities Director	Darrin Carpenter	darrin.carpenter@southeastpolk.org

SEPCSD Board of Education

President	Chad Crabb
Vice President	Brett Handy
Member	Kelly Simmons
Member	Lori Slings
Member	Tracy Dawson
Member	Brigid Ernst
Member	Grant Gillon

Central Office Administration
8031 NE University Ave. Pleasant Hill, IA 50327
515-967-4294

Superintendent of Schools	Anthony Aylsworth
Deputy Superintendent of Schools	Justin Colbert
Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning	Carol Eddy
Chief Financial Officer	Kevin Baccam
Chief Operations Officer	Anthony Spurgetis

Definitions

"The district" means ***Southeast Polk Community Schools.***

"Parent" also means "guardian" unless otherwise stated.

"School grounds" includes the school district-owned or operated facilities, school district-owned or operated property, property within the jurisdiction of the school district or school district premises, and school-owned or operated buses, vehicles, and chartered buses.

"School facilities" includes school district buildings and vehicles.

"School activities" means all school activities in which students are involved whether they are school-sponsored or school-approved, whether they are an event or an activity, or whether they are held on or off school grounds.

Equal Educational Opportunity

Southeast Polk Community School District does not discriminate in its education programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, disability, religion, creed, marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs). The school district's goal is to educate students in programs and activities that foster a healthy social, intellectual, emotional, and physical self-concept. Each student has the opportunity to use ***Southeast Polk's*** educational programs and activities. Each student is expected to conduct themselves in a manner that assures each student the same educational opportunity.

Students who feel they have been discriminated against are encouraged to report it to the school district Affirmative Action Coordinator. The Affirmative Action Coordinator is ***Justin Colbert, Deputy Superintendent*** and can be contacted at 407 8th Street SE, Altoona, IA 50009, 515-967-4294, justin.colbert@southeastpolk.org.

Inquiries by students regarding compliance with equal educational opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, may be directed in writing to the Director of the Region VII office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, John C. Kluczynski Federal Building, 230 S. Dearborn St., 37th Floor, Chicago, IL, 60604 (312) 730-1560, fax (312) 730-1576 OCR.Chicago@ed.gov, the Iowa Civil Rights Commissioner, https://icrc.iowa.gov, (515) 281-4121 or the Iowa Dept. of Education, Grimes State Office Bldg., Des Moines, IA 50319. (515) 281-5294. This inquiry or complaint to the federal or state office may be made instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

Southeast Polk Community School District, in its educational program, has an intervention process to assist students experiencing behavior and learning difficulties. ***Josh Griffith (Middle School Principal) and Lea Morris (SEP Director of Special Education)*** are responsible for this process. Parents wanting access should contact ***Josh Griffith 515-967-5533, joshua.griffith@southeastpolk.org or Lea Morris 515-957-3428, lea.morris@southeastpolk.org.***

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student Registration and Enrollment

Southeast Polk Community School utilizes online registration for all students. Please visit https://www.southeastpolk.org/parents/enrollment-registration/ for information on the registration and enrollment process.

School Calendar

Southeast Polk's school calendar may be subject to change throughout the school year due to weather, emergencies, or other reasons.

Southeast Polk
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2026-2027 Academic Calendar

BOARD APPROVED 12/11/2025

If there are any school cancellations, the Board of Education will review those days and determine if/when they will be made up for the scheduled school year.

JULY

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
		1	2	3		
6	7	8	9	10		
13	14	15	16	17		
20	21	22	23	24		
27	28	29	30	31		

AUGUST

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
3	4	5	6	7	-	-
10	11	12	13	14	-	2
17	18	19	20	21		7
24	25	26	27	28	31	12
31					38	13

SEPTEMBER

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
	1	2	3	4	62	17
7	8	9	10	11	87	22
14	15	16	17	18	118	27
21	22	23	24	25	150	32
28	29	30			168	35

OCTOBER

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
			1	2	181	37
5	6	7	8	9	212	42
12	13	14	15	16	244	47
19	20	21	22	23	268	52
26	27	28	29	30	300	57

NOVEMBER

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
2	3	4	5	6	331	62
9	10	11	12	13	362	67
16	17	18	19	20	394	72
23	24	25	26	27	407	75
30					414	76

DECEMBER

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
	1	2	3	4	438	80
7	8	9	10	11	470	85
14	15	16	17	18	501	90
21	22	23	24	25	514	93
28	29	30	31			

JANUARY

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
				1	514	94
4	5	6	7	8	546	99
11	12	13	14	15	577	104
18	19	20	21	22	602	109
25	26	27	28	29	633	114

FEBRUARY

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
1	2	3	4	5	664	119
8	9	10	11	12	696	124
15	16	17	18	19	720	129
22	23	24	25	26	752	134

MARCH

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
1	2	3	4	5	783	139
8	9	10	11	12	814	144
15	16	17	18	19	814	144
22	23	24	25	26	846	149
29	30	31			864	152

APRIL

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
			1	2	877	154
5	6	7	8	9	908	159
12	13	14	15	16	940	164
19	20	21	22	23	971	169
26	27	28	29	30	1002	174

MAY

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
3	4	5	6	7	1034	179
10	11	12	13	14	1065	184
17	18	19	20	21	1096	189
24	25	26	27	28	1114	194
31						195

JUNE

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	K-12 Hours	Staff Days
	1	2	3	4	-	-
7	8	9	10	11	-	-
14	15	16	17	18	-	-
21	22	23	24	25	-	-
28	29	30			-	-

Event	Details
Wednesday Schedule	Grades 6-12: 2 hour late start Grades K-5: 2 hour early out No AM/PM Preschool
Parent Teacher Conferences	**Grades 6-12**: 10/12/26 and 3/08/27- 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. 10/14/26 and 03/10/27- 12:30 to 7:30 p.m. Dismissal times: Grades 6-7 and Grades 10-12 @ 11:10 a.m. Grades 8-9 @ 11:28 a.m. **Grades K-5**: 10/13/26 and 03/09/27- 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. 10/15/26 and 03/11/27- 12:30 to 7:30 p.m. Dismissal time between 11:35 to 11:50 a.m. Buildings will notify of specific dismissal times.
No School for Students	8/13, 5/28: Staff Work Day 8/14-8/21, 10/19, 1/18, 2/15, and 5/27: Staff Development Days
No School	Holidays - Winter Break - Spring Break - Parent Teacher Conference Break

Date	Event
Aug 11 - 12	New Teacher Staff Development
Aug 24	First Day of School Grades K-12
Sep 8	First Day for Little Rams Preschool
Oct 23	End of 1st Quarter
Nov 13	End of 1st Trimester
Jan 4	Classes Resume
Jan 12	End of 2nd Quarter End of 1st Semester
Feb 26	End of 2nd Trimester
Mar 22	Classes Resume
Mar 27	End of 3rd Quarter
May 14	Seniors Last Day of School
May 16	Graduation (5:00 p.m. Knapp Center)
May 26	Last Day of School/End of 4th Quarter/ End of 3rd Trimester/End of 2nd Semester

K-12 Hours	Southeast Polk Community School District has elected to schedule a minimum of 1080 Instructional Hours in the District Calendar to meet State of Iowa requirements.

Daily Academic Schedule-Southeast Polk Middle School

6th and 7th Grade Schedule

Black and Gold Day

Period	Start Time	End Time
Early Bird PE	6:45	7:15
Rams Way	7:25	7:45
1	7:48	8:32
2	8:35	9:19
3	9:22	10:06
4	10:09	10:53
5	10:56	11:55
5A Lunch &/or WIN	10:54	11:24
5B Lunch &/or WIN	11:25	11:55
6th	11:58	12:58
6A Lunch &/or WIN	11:56	12:26
6B Lundh &/or WIN	12:28	12:58
7	1:01	1:45
8	1:48	2:32
Rams Way	2:35	2:40

6th and 7th Grade Schedule - 2HR LATE START

Black and Gold Day

Period	Start Time	End Time
Rams Way	9:25	9:40
1	9:43	10:08
2	10:11	10:36
3	10:39	11:04
4	11:07	11:32
5	11:35	12:34
5A Lunch &/or WIN	11:33	12:03
5B Lunch &/or WIN	12:04	12:34
6	12:37	1:36
6A Lunch & or WIN	12:35	1:05
6B Lunch &/or WIN	1:06	1:36
7	1:39	2:04
8	2:07	2:32
Rams Way	2:35	2:40

School Day – Arrival and Departure

Southeast Polk Middle School

Doors Open at 7:05 a.m.
School Starts at 7:25 a.m.
Dismissal at 2:40 p.m.
Buses Leave at 2:45 p.m.

Wednesday start time is exactly 2 hours later--doors open 9:05am, school starts at 9:25am.

Student Attendance

Students must attend school for the number of days or hours school is in session in accordance with the school calendar. Students are expected to be in class and to make attendance a priority. Attendance is not only compulsory by Iowa law (Iowa Code Chapter 299) but is the only way a student can participate and benefit from Southeast Polk Community School district's education program and accomplish the student's educational objectives. Although Southeast Polk believes that traditional, in-person school attendance leads to the greatest learning opportunities for students, there may be rare and unusual circumstances created by public emergencies declared by state or local officials which temporarily prevent students from attending traditional, in-person school. In such cases, the superintendent will have discretion to make reasonable accommodations for students on a case-by-case basis, to attend school through remote learning opportunities. Attendance will still be taken during these remote learning experiences.

Should a student return to school from an absence during the school day, or leave the school during the school day, the student must report to the main entrance check in/out desk. If the student is returning to school during the school day, the student must sign in at the main entrance desk prior to returning to class. This process is not meant to excuse an absence or act as a reason for an unexcused absence but merely to keep track of student activity and attendance.

Parents may call 515-967-5533 (select attendance) or email attendance_ms@southeastpolk.org to report a student's absence.

Excused Absences

Students or Parents of minor students who know they will be absent must notify the Southeast Polk Middle School guidance administrative assistant in advance of the absence**.** Absences approved by the guidance administrative assistant are considered automatically excused absences. Excused absences include but are not limited to:

- Personal illness;
- Death or serious illness in the immediate family or household;

- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be made other than during school time; Please bring a note from the doctor or dentist to excuse the absence.
- Reasons for absence from school which can be justified from an educational standpoint may be approved by the principal of the attendance center. Permission for such absences should be obtained in advance of the absence from school. Failure to obtain prior permission may result in the absence being considered unexcused.

It is the student's responsibility to make up any classroom work or required assignments.

If advance notification is not possible, parents must notify the Middle School guidance administrative assistant on the day of the absence prior to 9:00 a.m. If notification is not received, the automated caller will notify the parent of the student's absence and ask that the parent please contact the school. The automated call system is utilized twice per day and will notify families on the phone number provided during registration.

Students absent from school for any reason may be required by the school to submit a written explanation or specific reason for their absence, the specific days of times they were absent, verification by the doctor or dentist where appropriate, and a signature of the parent.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are absences that have not received prior approval and in which a student is absent without a reasonable excuse, as determined by Middle School administration. Unexcused absences include but are not limited to:

- Shopping trips;
- Vacations/Out of town;
- Work for parents or employer;
- Oversleeping or missing the bus;
- Preparation or participation in parties and other celebrations;
- Participation in non-school sponsored extracurricular activities.

An unexcused absence may become an excused absence should a parent or student of majority age offer a reasonable excuse. Reasonable excuses include:

- Personal illness;
- Death or serious illness in the immediate family or household;
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be made other than during school time; Please bring a note from the doctor or dentist to excuse the absence.
- Reasons for absence from school which can be justified from an educational standpoint may be approved by the principal of the attendance center. Permission for such absences should be obtained in advance of the absence from school. Failure to obtain prior permission may result in the absence being considered unexcused.

Consequences

Students who are found to be absent without reasonable excuse may be subject to one or more of the following disciplinary measures;

- After-school detention;
- Short-term suspension from school;
- In-school suspension;
- Removal of school privileges;
- Mediation.

Per board policy 501.09 R(1), when a student is absent (excused or unexcused) from school for more than seven days, a notice will inform the parents of next steps in regards to their student's absence. Notification of next steps will also occur at 7 days, 10 days and again at 15 days. At 10 days, a doctor's note will be requested and at 15 days and attendance contract will be instituted.

Tardiness

The teacher and/or main office will record unexcused tardies and tardies to school and will inform the student each time an unexcused tardy is recorded. A tardy/tardy to school is considered a minor violation and will be recorded in the student's behavior history in Infinite Campus and consequences will follow our PBIS steps. A student is considered tardy when they are late to school, or not in the classroom when the bell rings.

Open Enrollment

Iowa's open enrollment law allows students residing in one school district to request transfer to another school district upon the parents' request. Parents/guardians may apply for open enrollment for their child to attend another Iowa public school at any time during the year. Students wishing to open enroll to another school must contact the Southeast Polk Community Schools Central Office for more information.

Early Release During School Hours

All requests for early dismissals are to be taken to an administrative assistant and should be obtained before classes in the morning, if possible. These requests should be in writing signed by the parent, email from parent, or by a phone call by the parent to the school.

All students leaving the building will be required to sign a student checkout sheet located at the main entrance check in/out desk and will also sign-in upon returning.

Inclement Weather

Should school be canceled due to inclement weather prior to the start of the school day, students and parents will be notified via email, phone, and text notifications made through Infinite Campus.

Should school be dismissed early due to inclement weather, parents will be notified by email, phone, and text notifications made through Infinite Campus. Parents will also be notified of the status of the school's transportation services by the same means.

Unless weather conditions prevent it, students will still be returned to their regular drop-off sites. Should weather conditions be too extreme for regular school transportation, students will be kept at school, or potentially returned to school until parents are available for pick-up.

Should there be extracurricular activities or practices scheduled during school or after school on the day of inclement weather, the Activities Director and Superintendent will determine on a case-by-case basis whether to hold the extracurricular activity. This is true should school be canceled or experience an early out.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Appearance

Southeast Polk Community Schools believes inappropriate student appearance causes material and substantial disruption to the school environment and can present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors. Southeast Polk believes there is a strong correlation between student academic performance and conduct and students' appearance. Because of this, students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate to their age level and does not disrupt the school or educational environment.

Students are expected to adhere to standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a good learning environment. Clothing or other apparel promoting products or activities that are illegal for minors and clothing displaying obscene material, profanity, or reference to prohibited conduct are disallowed. When in the judgment of the Middle School Administration, a student's appearance or mode of dress disrupts the educational process or constitutes a threat to health or safety, the student may be required to make modifications. Clothing that may be restricted, or requested to be modified include but not limited to:

- One piece footed pajamas and slippers
- Sleeveless T-Shirts
- See through/fishnet fabrics/open mesh clothing
- Exposed undergarments (bra, underwear, etc)
- Clothing that exposes midriff, cleavage, buttocks
- Clothing or accessories that are dangerous or could be used as a weapon
- Any clothing that calls undue attention and may disrupt the educational climate
    - Displays of obscenity, profanity, vulgarity, or discriminatory remarks.
- Students must store outerwear (coats, scarves, blankets) and umbrellas in their lockers during the school day.
- No hats, hoods, or head coverings.

- Shoes must be worn at all times. Bedroom slippers, shoes with rollers, and stiletto heels are not allowed due to potential safety hazards improper footwear may present.

Students who refuse to comply or are found to be a habitual offender may be sent to the Middle School administration who will determine appropriate consequences in accordance with district adopted disciplinary policies and procedures.

Student Care of School Property/Vandalism

Students must take care of school property including desks, chairs, books, lockers, school equipment, and other school property. Vandalism and/or destruction of school property is not tolerated. Students found to have committed vandalism or to have destroyed or otherwise harmed school property may be subject to discipline and/or required to reimburse the school district for actual cost of the damages. In certain circumstances, students may be reported to law enforcement authorities.

Accidental damages may, but are not required to, be treated differently. Whether an incident is considered accidental will be determined on a case-by-case basis by SEP Middle School administration, depending on the circumstances of the situation, the student's actions leading up to the situation and the student's response after the situation occurred.

Food and Drink

Only water is allowed in student water bottles. Misuse of water bottles can result in this privilege being revoked. Water bottles will be able to be filled at appropriate water bottle filling stations. Individualized snacks are allowed at each teacher's discretion. No gum is allowed during the school day.

Student Expression and Publication

The board of directors of Southeast Polk Community Schools protects the intellectual freedom of the school district's students and practitioners. Expressions made by the students, including student expression through publication, is not an official expression of the school district. The *Student Expression and Publication Code* policy are made available to parents and students via district policy 502.05-Student Expression and Student Publications.

Students who violate expression and publication rules may be subject to disciplinary measures. Disciplinary measures cannot violate a student's protected right to expression and publication, except to the extent that regulation of protected speech is allowed by law. Disciplinary measures should relate directly to the violation of the legally allowed regulation of speech. Appropriate level of discipline will be determined by building administration through the administrative regulations set forth by the superintendent of schools.

Student Expression

Southeast Polk Community Schools aims to protect the educational environment for all students to help ensure it is free from substantial disruption or infringement upon students' rights. Students are generally allowed to express their viewpoints and opinions.

The school may regulate speech in certain qualifying circumstances, to help ensure the safety and welfare of the school community. The expression must be done in a reasonable time, place and manner that it is not disruptive to the orderly and efficient operation of the school district. The school may regulate speech that: causes or is reasonably anticipated to cause a material and substantial disruption to the education environment; infringes upon the rights of others; is obscene or lewd; is school sponsored; and/or promotes illegal activities.

Students who believe they have been unreasonably restricted in their exercise of their rights should follow the complaint procedure outlined in the *Student Complaint/Grievances* portion of the student handbook.

Student Publication

Students may produce official school district publications as part of the curriculum under the supervision of administration**.** Student-produced official school publications include material produced in journalism, newspaper, yearbook, or writing classes and distributed to the student body either free or for a fee. Students cannot express, publish, or distribute in an official school district publication material that is obscene, libelous or slanderous, encourages students to commit unlawful acts, violates school district policies, rules or regulations, or causes a material and substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school as required by Iowa law. It is the responsibility of the faculty member sponsoring and administration to maintain professional standards of English and journalism and comply with the law.

Should a student believe they have been unreasonably restricted in their exercise of expression through publication, they should follow the complaint procedure as outlined in the Student Complaint/Grievances portion of the student handbook.

Public Display of Affection

Students are to refrain from physical contact of a sexual nature. Examples include but are not limited to prolonged hugging, hand holding, kissing, etc.

Student Complaints/Grievances

Students may file a complaint regarding school district policies, rules, and regulations or other matters by complying with adopted procedures as outlined in board policy 502.06-Student Complaints and Grievances.

Student Search and Seizure

Southeast Polk Community Schools believes that in order to maintain and protect the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors to the school district and for the protection of school district property and educational environment, students, students' belongings, school-owned lockers, desks or other facilities may be searched or inspected pursuant to constitutional protections and state and federal law. A student and protected student areas

may be searched without a search warrant based on a reasonable and articulable suspicion that a law and/or school district policy, rule, or regulations have been violated. Board Policy 502.10 R(1)

Personal Searches

A student's person and protected student areas may be searched when a school official has reasonable suspicion to believe the student is in possession of illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials or has violated law or school district policy, rule, or regulations. A student means a student's person. Student-protected areas are a student's personal effects which include but are not limited to backpacks, satchels, purses, gym bags, etc.

Personally intrusive searches of the student's body require more compelling circumstances to be considered reasonable. If a pat-down or search of student's garments such as jackets, socks, pockets etc., is conducted, it must be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex as the student and with another adult witness of the same sex present, when feasible. A more intrusive search, short of a strip search, of the student's person and personal effects, is permissible in emergency situations when the health and safety of students, employees or visitors are threatened with imminent harm. This emergency-induced search can only be conducted by a school official of the same sex as the student, with an adult of the same sex present unless the health or safety of students will be endangered by delay.

Lockers and Desks

Although school lockers and desks are temporarily assigned to individual students, they remain the property of the district. The school district has a reasonable and valid interest in ensuring the lockers, desks, and other spaces are properly maintained. For this reason, lockers, desks, and other spaces are subject to unannounced inspections and students do not have a legitimate expectation of privacy in the locker, desk, or other space. Any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered will be confiscated by school authorities and may be turned over to law enforcement.

Motor Vehicle

Students are permitted to park on school premises as a matter of privilege and not of right. The school retains authority to conduct routine patrols of the student parking lots. The interior of a student's vehicle on the school premises may be searched if the school official has reasonable and articulable suspicion to believe that illegal, unauthorized, or contraband items are contained inside.

Seizure

School authorities may seize any illegal, unauthorized, or contraband materials discovered in a search. Such items are not to be possessed by a student while they are on school district property, on property within the jurisdiction of the school district, while on school-owned or school-operated or chartered vehicles, while attending or engaged in school activities, and while away from school grounds if the misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient

management, and welfare of the school district. Possession of such items will result in disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion and may be reported to law enforcement.

Student Lockers and Desks

Students are allowed to use the lockers and desks for storing school-related materials and personal items where necessary for attendance at school. Students are required to keep their assigned locker and desk clean and undamaged. Expenses to repair any damage done to a student's locker and desk may be charged to the student.

It is highly recommended that students do not store valuables in their lockers or desks. The school district is not responsible for such items. A student may use a lock to secure their locker space, however this does not prevent searches conducted by the school. The building principal may periodically inspect all or a random selection of lockers and desks for inspection. Either students or another school administrator will be present during the inspection of lockers. These searches may be conducted at any time and without advance notice in compliance with the district's search and seizure rules and policies.

Bullying and Harassment

Southeast Polk Community Schools is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. A safe and civil school environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Bullying and/or harassment can seriously disrupt the ability for a school district to maintain a safe and civil environment, hindering the students' ability to learn and succeed. Bullying and/or harassment of students, employees, and volunteers is against federal and state law, and Southeast Polk's rules, regulations, and policies.

Bullying and/or harassment will not be tolerated on school district property, on property within the jurisdiction of the school district, while on school-owned or operated or chartered vehicles, while attending or engaged in school activities, or while away from school grounds if the misconduct materially interferes with the orderly operation of the educational environment or is likely to do so.

Definitions

"Harassment" and "bullying" mean any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or other ongoing conduct toward an individual based on any trait or characteristic of the individual which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

“Trait or characteristic of the student” includes but is not limited to age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status or familial status.

“Electronic” means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. It also includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging.

Complaint Procedure

Complaints of bullying and/or harassment may be filed promptly, reasonably and in good faith with the Deputy Superintendent, Justin Colbert. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with adopted district policy and procedures. Within 24 hours of receiving the report that a student may have been the victim of conduct or behavior that constitutes bullying and/or harassment, the district will notify the parent, guardian, or legal custodian of the student.

After considering the totality of the circumstances, should the Deputy Superintendent determine after the investigation, that a student has suffered bullying and/or harassment by another student enrolled in the district; a parent, guardian, or legal custodian of the student may enroll the student in another attendance center within the district that offers classes at the student’s grade level, subject to the requirements and limitations established in Iowa law.

An alternate investigator will be designated in the event it is claimed that the superintendent or superintendent’s designee committed the alleged bullying or harassment or some other conflict of interest exists.

Retaliation and False Reports

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying and/or harassment complaints, and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures. Any student found to have violated this policy or retaliated against another student for filing a complaint under these rules is in violation of the bullying and/or harassment rules and may be subject to discipline up to and including suspension and expulsion.

Southeast Polk Middle School Bullying/Harassment Procedures

Students who feel that they have been harassed should:

1) Communicate to the harasser that the student expects the behavior to stop, if the student is comfortable doing so. If the student needs assistance communicating with the harasser, the student should ask the counselor, teacher, principal or trusted adult for help.
2) If the harassment continues, the student will need to report it to a teacher, counselor or administrator.

3) The school official will begin the investigation and meet with the harasser to process the bullying and harassment issue. If the issue is severe enough an immediate consequence will be issued. The school official will contact the parent/guardian of the harasser and the victim making them aware of the situation.
4) If there is another reported incident of bullying or harassment by the same student, then the consequences will increase and the school resource officer will be involved.

How to report bullying at SEP Middle School

1. Tell a trusted adult. If you are not comfortable reporting the issue to school officials please tell a trusted adult and ask them to contact the school or law enforcement.
2. Report the issue to your counselor. Your counselor will then investigate the issue and act accordingly.
3. Fill out the online Middle School Bullying Report form. This form will be sent to the assistant principals who will work with the counselors to investigate.
4. To report bullying or harassment directly to a school official, please call or email Assistant Principal (Tracy Dailey) or Building Improvement Leader (Brooke Miller).

Threats of Violence

The policy for *Discipline for Students Who Make Threats of Violence or Cause Incidents of Violence* can be found as board policy 503.08**.** Parents and guardians should review and become familiar with this policy**.** All threats of violence, which include any written, verbal, symbolic, electronic, or behavioral message, that either expressly or implicitly express an intention to inflict emotional or physical injury or damage against students, employees, visitors, or school facilities are prohibited. A student who makes a threat of violence, causes an incident of violence that results in injury or property damage, or who commits an assault, will be subject to escalating levels of discipline for each occurrence.

Threats will be promptly investigated. When appropriate, referrals will be made to local law enforcement. The district retains the authority to assign the level of disciplinary measures appropriate to the severity of the threat of violence or incident of violence.

Threats issued and delivered away from the school or school activities may be grounds for disciplinary action if the threat impacts the orderly and efficient operations of the school.

Disciplinary measures may include discipline up to and including suspension and expulsion. The following factors will be considered in determining the extent to which a student will be disciplined for threats of violence: the background of the student, including any history of violence or prior threatening behavior; the student's access to weapons of any kind; the circumstances surrounding the threat; the age of the student; the mental and emotional maturity of the student; cooperation of the student and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) in the investigation; the existence of the student's juvenile or criminal history; the degree of legitimate alarm or concern in the school community created by the threat; and any other relevant information from any credible source.

A student who makes a threat of violence, causes an incident of violence that results in injury or property damage, or who commits an assault, will be subject to escalating levels of discipline for each occurrence. When appropriate, referrals will be made to local law enforcement. The district retains the authority to assign the level of disciplinary measures appropriate to the severity of the threat of violence or incident of violence (2023 Iowa Acts, chapter 96 (House File 604), sec. 7, new section 279.79, subsection 5).

Fighting/Physical Aggression at Southeast Polk Middle School

1st Offense: Out-of-school suspension for three to five days, days may be added depending on the severity of offense. Mandatory intake/re-entry meeting between administration and the students' family. No fighting contract will be signed by the student, family and school in which future acts of violence may result in a possible disciplinary hearing with the board of education. Criminal charges may be filed.

2nd Offense: Out-of-school suspension for five to seven days, more days may be added depending on the severity of offense. Mandatory intake/re-entry meeting between administration and students' families. Possible disciplinary hearing with the board of education. Criminal charges may be filed.

3rd Offense: Out-of-school suspension until disciplinary hearing is held with the board of education. Criminal charges may be filed.

Weapons and Weapon Look-aLikes

Weapons, weapon look-alikes, and other dangerous objects cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district. Weapons, weapon look-alikes, and other dangerous objects in the possession of a student that are brought onto the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district will be confiscated.

The possession will be reported to law enforcement and parents or guardians of the student. Students may be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures. Disciplinary measures may include discipline up to and including suspension and expulsion.

Firearms are strictly prohibited from school grounds, except for weapons under the control of law enforcement officials or other individuals specifically authorized by the board. Any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school or knowingly possessed a weapon at the school must be expelled from school for a period of no less than one year. However, the superintendent may modify the expulsion requirements on a case-by-case basis. Firearms include but are not limited to any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; incendiary or poison gas, or any destructive device such as bombs, grenades, mines, etc.

Student Substance Abuse

Students are prohibited from distribution, dispensing, manufacture, possession, use or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco/nicotine products, other controlled substances, or look-a-like substances while on school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district, while on school-owned and/or operated school or charter vehicles, while attending or engaged in school activities, and while away from school grounds if the misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school.

Students found to be in violation of this rule will be subject to appropriate disciplinary measures and may be required to satisfactorily complete a substance abuse or rehabilitation program. Disciplinary measures may include discipline up to or including suspension and expulsion. For students under the age of 21, local law enforcement authorities may be notified.

In addition, pending board approval, the middle school will have a multi-tiered response to students involved in or associated with the actions listed above.

Internet

Students will be able to access the internet through their teachers. Individual student accounts and electronic mail addresses may be issued to students. Students may be permitted to use district-issued email addresses and internet-based collaboration software to send and receive messages at school. Students will receive age-appropriate training prior to using the internet.

Students will be under teacher supervision while on the network and the district uses technology protection measures to block and filter inappropriate/unauthorized use as much as possible and to the extent permitted by law or vendor policies. Additionally, student's internet activities may be monitored by the school district to help ensure students are not accessing inappropriate sites that contain restricted material. However, it is not possible to constantly monitor individual students and filter everything they are accessing. Because the internet is a global network and information appears, disappears, and changes constantly, it is not possible to predict or control what students may locate. Some students may encounter information that may not have educational value.

Students will not intentionally access or download any text file or visual depictions or engage in any discussion that includes restricted material. Restricted material includes but is not limited to obscene, libelous, indecent, vulgar, profane or lewd; advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law; constitutes insulting or fighting words, the very expression of which injures or harasses others; or presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or the manner of distribution, it will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, or will cause the commission of unlawful acts or the violation of lawful school regulations.

Should a student be found to have accessed restricted materials, students may experience disciplinary measures up to and including suspension and expulsion. Board policy 605.06 outlines the Internet-Appropriate Use policy at Southeast Polk Community Schools.

Electronic/Technological Devices

Students may carry their cell phones/electronic devices at their own risk. Southeast Polk is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cell phones or other electronic devices.

Cell phones and electronic devices (earbuds, headphones, Airpods) must be turned off and left in a student's locker during the day. Misuse of devices include but are not limited to taking photos in the locker room or restroom, using a device to cheat, using a device to incite violence, using a device to bully, harass, threaten, or intimidate another person, to disseminate inappropriate photos or other restricted material, etc.

In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians and students are to use the school phones. Phones are located in the main office and every classroom. Parents/guardians may call the office to relay emergency information. If a student must use a cell phone for medical, family, vocational, or other reasons, permission must be obtained from the building administration.

Consequences:

- 1st Offense: Students can pick up a cell phone in the main office at the end of the day.
- 2nd and all subsequent offenses: Parent/guardian can pick up the cell phone after 3:05 p.m. Student is responsible for communicating with parent/guardian and making arrangements to pick up the cell phone.
- Violation of this policy can result in the following, up to and including but not limited to: loss of privileges (may be required to turn in phone at start of each day and pick up at end of day), detention, Saturday school, in-school and out-of-school suspension. Cell phone consequences will reset at the end of each quarter.

Hall Passes

Students must have a hall pass to be in the hallways when classes are in session. Students may obtain a hall pass utilizing the digital pass system-SmartPass; accessible via Chromebook. If a student is found in the hallways without a pass, they will be sent back to class. Repeated offenses may be subject to disciplinary measures.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to do their own schoolwork. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to looking at another student's schoolwork without permission, copying others' work, copying from other unauthorized sources such as past exams, or unauthorized use of devices. Academic dishonesty is strictly prohibited. Students may face disciplinary measures as outlined in this handbook if found to have engaged in academic dishonesty. In addition to such disciplinary measures, students may face loss of class credit.

Dual Enrollment

Home schooling/private instruction or home school assistance program students enrolled in classes or participating in school activities at Southeast Polk Community Schools are subject to the same policies, rules, and regulations as other students and are disciplined in the same manner as other students. Dual enrollment students interested in participating in school activities or enrolling in classes should contact the Associate Superintendent of Teaching and Learning at the district office at 515-967-4294.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Good Conduct Rule

Participation in school activities is a privilege. Students who wish to have the privilege of participating in extracurricular activities must conduct themselves in accordance with law, board policy, and school rules and must refrain from activities which are illegal, immoral, or unhealthy. Students who participate in extracurricular activities serve as ambassadors of the school during the calendar year, both away from or at the school. The privilege of participating in these activities is conditioned upon meeting the eligibility criteria established by the board, administration, and individual activity coaches, sponsors, and directors. The Activities Director will keep records of violations of the good conduct rule. The district's good conduct policy is found at 503.04 and 503.04 R(1).

The Southeast Polk School District has set forth a set of expectations for all participants. These expectations shall be defined as follows:

Participants will...

1. Demonstrate principles of justice and compassion.
2. Respect rules and authority.
3. Respect the rights of other persons.
4. Respect everyone's physical and emotional well-being, to include their own.
5. Respect and demonstrate good sportsmanship.
6. Demonstrate a sense of school pride.
7. Demonstrate understanding and application of the concepts of teamwork and leadership.
8. Demonstrate a sense of commitment and dedication to achievement of excellence.

These expectations are designed to exemplify and encourage responsible citizenship among all students. Participating students serve as representatives of the district to their peers and to the public in and out of the district. Because of the responsibility inherent in representing the Southeast Polk Community School District, a high level of conduct is expected of all students.

The district has set forth the Student Conduct Code that governs the actions of all participating students. These guidelines outline the expectations for acceptable conduct in the areas of academics, attendance, and behavior.

Statement of Compliance

The Southeast Polk Community School District will enforce the Student Conduct Code for all co-curricular (extended requirements beyond the regular school day associated with a credit bearing class which meets during the regular school day) and all school sponsored extracurricular (an activity with a district paid sponsor/director/coach which meets outside of the regular school day and receives no credit) activities.

I. Academic, Attendance, and other Requirements:

A. Students are subject to the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa High School Athletic Association and Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union rules regarding eligibility requirements.
B. Students must be in school for at least 1/2 of their scheduled day and/or 2 block periods or 4 periods of the day of a performance (music, theater, and speech), a scheduled contest, a program or trip, or a practice for any of the above if the student expects to participate. Any exceptions must be cleared through a building administrator or the activities office. Guidelines for such an exception include, but are not limited to, doctor appointments, dental appointments, family emergencies as determined by the administration, or school-related absences. Early release time from school to attend a school sponsored event counts as part of the attendance requirements.
C. Any Southeast Polk student serving an in-school suspension for violation of school rules will be eligible to practice for a co-curricular or extra-curricular activity, but will be ineligible to participate in a performance or event until completion of the in-school suspension. Any student serving an out-of-school suspension will be ineligible to practice or perform in an event until the day following the completion of the out-of-school suspension, and is not allowed on school property or allowed to attend school events, home and away during the period of suspension.
D. To be eligible to represent Southeast Polk in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, a student must pass all full-time academic courses (including P.E.). This is according to the State of Iowa Code, “Scholarship Rules,” 281-36.15.
E. A student may be eligible to participate for a maximum of eight (8) consecutive semesters upon entering 9th grade for the first time. Students who complete graduation requirements at the conclusion of the eighth consecutive semester are eligible to participate in summer activities. Students who complete graduation requirements prior to the eighth semester of high school and end their enrollment as an early graduate are not eligible to continue their participation in school activities.

F. Students transferring to Southeast Polk from other school districts must transfer in good standing with the previous school's Student Conduct Code to be eligible at Southeast Polk. Students will be ineligible until the length of the suspension assigned by the previous school is completed.
G. Students are not eligible once they have reached the age of 20.
H. Male and female athletes must complete an annual physical examination with certification from the examining physician or approved personnel that the student can safely engage in athletics. Students must submit the completed physical as part of the required Southeast Polk Online Athletics Registration Process.
I. Parents/guardians must complete the Southeast Polk Online Athletics Registration Process for each sport in which the student participates prior to being eligible to participate in that sport. The Student Conduct Code is contained within this registration process.

II. Violations

If it is determined that a student has violated the Student Conduct Code, the student shall be penalized as specified in Section III below. The following constitute a violation of the Student Conduct Code.

A. Possession, use, or purchase of alcoholic beverages, except as may otherwise be permitted by Iowa law. Evidence of "Use" includes having the odor of alcohol on one's breath. Evidence of possession includes having alcohol in one's system.
B. Attendance at a function where alcohol or controlled substance, as defined by Iowa Law, is being consumed or used and not immediately leaving said function. Being in a motor vehicle as a passenger or driver that contains alcohol or a controlled substance, as defined by Iowa Law, and not immediately leaving said motor vehicle. It is understood that a student is not prohibited from being in attendance of such functions wherein alcohol is present, that are sponsored, controlled or supervised by the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) or being a driver or passenger of a motor vehicle where the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) accompany said student and alcohol is present.
C. Possession and/or use of controlled substances as they are defined by the Code of Iowa, without a legal prescription, and with knowledge, intent, and control thereof.
D. Possession, use, or purchase of tobacco products electronic cigarettes to include vape products, regardless of student's age.
E. Engagement in any act that would be in violation of local or state law, excluding minor traffic offenses, regardless of whether the student was cited, arrested, convicted, or adjudicated for the act(s), as to make the student unworthy to represent the ideals of his/her school.
F. Involvement in inappropriate or offensive conduct as to make the student unworthy to represent the ideals of his/her school. Some examples of inappropriate or offensive conduct would include fighting, bullying, harassment, and inappropriate sexual behavior.

G. A student may seek help from school officials with alcohol/drug/tobacco problems unrelated to a reported incident which involves a code violation. School officials shall notify parents and seek appropriate help for the student without penalty.

III. Consequences

Activities Governed by the Student Conduct Code Regulations:

- Athletics (including cheerleading, dance team, and managers)
- Vocal music (including Show Choir), instrumental music (including Jazz Band)
- Speech, Debate, drama, FCCLA, DECA, FFA
- Academic Competitions

*Students involved in multiple activities will serve their suspension concurrently. Students will regain eligibility at the conclusion of the first completed suspension. No student will be permitted to participate in one activity while serving a suspension in another for a violation of the Student Conduct Code.

Non-School Sponsored clubs (Rugby, Ultimate Frisbie, Ping Pong Club, Ski and Snowboard, etc.) will have their own policy for administering a penalty for a code of conduct violation. This penalty will not however satisfy serving a penalty in a school sponsored activity.

A. First Offense

Suspended up to the number of contests/performances listed below, to be served consecutively including tournament or state-sponsored activities.

Football	2	Boys & Girls Soccer	.25*
Boys & Girls Swimming	3	Volleyball	.25*
Boys & Girls Basketball	5	Wrestling	.25*
Boys & Girls Golf	3	Boys & Girls Cross Country	2
Baseball	.25*	Softball	.25*
Boys & Girls Tennis	3	Boys & Girls Track	3
Boys & Girls Bowling	3		

**25 = the number of games or matches in a season not dates. A double header in baseball or softball, a soccer tournament, or a wrestling double dual counts as 2 or more in penalty phase. Baseball and softball have 40 game schedules, volleyball has approximately 35 matches, a wrestler may have approximately 35 matches, and soccer may have approximately 17 matches in a season.*

All remaining school sponsored activities in which students represent Southeast Polk in non-graded events, contests, meetings, or performances shall include a 2 event, contests, etc., suspension period.

B. Second Offense:

Up to double the event suspension of the first offense. The student is also required to have completed a Student Assistance Program evaluation prior to reinstatement of

eligibility. Information is included in correspondence sent to the parent/guardian regarding the district's Student Assistance Program provider.

C. Third Offense:

A student who has been found to have violated the Student Conduct Code for a third time will have permanent loss of eligibility.

*If charges have been filed against a student for a felonious act and the school administration deems the act in violation of the Student Conduct Code, the activities director, school principal and superintendent will meet and confer to determine the student's eligibility to participate in extra-curricular activities until the court process has been concluded or finalized.

Determination of Guilt

Students are found in violation of the Student Conduct Code if:

- Issued a citation by law enforcement and/or referred to court
- Admits to a violation of the Student Conduct Code
- A determination of guilt is reached following an investigation by the Principal, an Assistant Principal, or the Activities Director.

Administration of Penalty/Appeal

- Penalties associated with violations of the Student Conduct Code will be administered as violations are determined.
- A letter which contains the violation of the Student Conduct Code and associated period of ineligibility will be delivered to the email address on file for the custodial parent(s) and student.
- Students may appeal decisions by school administration regarding the Student Conduct Code within five days of the delivery of the letter. All appeals must be in writing and addressed to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Students may appeal decisions by the Superintendent regarding the Student Conduct Code within five days of the delivery of this letter. Final appeals must be in writing and addressed to the Superintendent of Schools. These final appeals will be considered by the Southeast Polk Board of Education.
- Please note that an appeal by a student will not stay the operation of the discipline imposed while the appeal is pending.

General Points Related to the Suspension

- Students serving a Student Conduct Code penalty will not be dismissed from school early to travel with a team or group. It is at the discretion of the coach/sponsor as to whether that participant travels with the group if the departure is after normal dismissal.
- Students serving a Student Conduct Code penalty will not be permitted to "dress out" for contests/events/activities.

- Students serving a Student Conduct Code penalty are expected to attend all practices and finish the season in good standing (as determined by the activities director). Failure to do so will result in the suspension being carried over to the next activity.
- Students unable to serve their suspension completely in one activity due to the end of that activity will have their suspension prorated in a consistent manner between activities.
- Students that are academically ineligible and violate the Student Conduct Code will serve their suspension upon regaining their academic eligibility.
- Students found in violation of the Student Conduct Code may not register for a new activity after the state mandated/district defined start date.

Student Behavior and Removal from Classroom

Temporary removal from a classroom means that a student will be temporarily removed from the current classroom due to disruption of the learning environment and may temporarily work in an alternate location such as the main office. This is at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Per Iowa law (SF 2428) disruptions are categorized as nonviolent or violent.

Nonviolent Disruptions-disorderly conduct, abusive or profane language, bullying, or repeatedly disruptive behavior.

- A **6-12 studen**t who is removed from a classroom can't return until the teacher and principal discuss the readmission, which, at the earliest, **will be the next school day.**
- The principal is required to inform teachers of discipline steps.
- If a student is removed more than once, the teacher, principal, a counselor, and the student's parent will meet to establish a plan to address the student's behavior.

Violent Disruptions-injury, property damage, or assault.

- A **6-12 student** who is removed from a classroom can't return until the teacher and principal discuss the readmission, which, at the earliest, **will be the next school day.**
- If a student is removed from a classroom for assaulting the teacher and the teacher does not consent to the student returning, the student shall not be readmitted to that specific classroom.

The Middle School is required to establish a building oversight committee consisting of 2 teachers, an administrator, and a counselor. This group will review and make recommendations related to student behaviors.

Detention

Detention means that a student is required to attend school during non-school hours for disciplinary purposes. Whether detention is to be imposed, the time of detention, and the length is determined by school administration on a case-by-case basis.

Student Suspensions

Suspensions and discipline in lieu of or on condition of suspension, may be considered when a student violates board policy, school rules, or the law. All suspensions will be determined by principal or assistant principals after an investigation of the incident or allegation. Written notice and reasons will be given to the parents and student regarding the suspension, probation, or intervention. Students who are suspended from school will still be expected to complete course work to receive class credit.

Probation or Intervention

Probation is a conditional suspension of a penalty for a set period of time. Time period and conditions are determined by principal or assistant principals. This may be imposed where violations do not necessarily require removal from school.

Interventions are actions in lieu of suspension intended to help the student understand and refrain from engaging in the behavior again. This may be imposed where a student's behavior may be indicative or symptomatic of a great underlying issue.

In-School Suspension

In-school suspension is a temporary isolation of a student from one or more classes while under administrative supervision and remaining on the school property.

Out-of-School Suspension

Out-of-school suspension is used when other available school resources are unable to constructively remedy the student's behavior. Out-of-school suspension is the removal of a student from the school environment for short periods of time. A student may be removed from school for periods not to exceed 10 school days by the principal due to gross or repeated infractions or when the student's presence causes interference with the educational environment or operation of the school. The principal may use out-of-school suspension after an investigation and the student is afforded due process as outlined in school policy and the law.

Student Expulsions

An expulsion occurs when a student is removed from the school environment, including but not limited to classes, activities, and other school related events. Students may be expelled for violation of board policy, school rules, or the law.

At the recommendation of the superintendent, a student may be considered for expulsion for disciplinary purposes. Only the board may make the determination to expel a student. Students considered for expulsion will be given due process as outlined in school policy and the law.

Fines and Fees

Students may be assessed for fines, fees, and other similar charges for materials needed in a course, overdue school materials, activity participation, misuse of school property, or any other reason permitted by law. Parents and students meeting specific financial eligibility standards will be eligible for a waiver of student fees or a reduction upon parental request. Should a parent or student seek a waiver, they should contact the district office or visit the district website for more information and waiver forms.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Insurance for Students

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) is offered through the Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa program (Hawki). Hawki is the state of Iowa's medical insurance program for uninsured children. Parents can apply for low-cost health insurance for their children through the program. For more information, parents are urged to call 1-800-257-8563 or go to the website, Hawki-Healthy and Well Kids in Iowa for more information.

Extracurricular Student Insurance

Health and accident insurance is available to students at the beginning of the school year. Parents may purchase insurance for their children at their discretion and bear the entirety of the cost. If a parent is interested in purchasing insurance, they must contact the activities office at 515-967-6631 for more information.

Southeast Polk Community Schools requires students participating in intramural or extracurricular athletic activities to have health and accident insurance. The student must provide written proof of insurance prior to the start of the athletic activity. Board Policy 507.06

Immunizations

Prior to starting school or transferring into the school district, students must submit a certificate of immunization as required by law. Students without a proper certificate are not allowed to attend school until they have received the required immunizations or may be admitted on the condition that the student is in the process of completing the immunization process. Should a student fail to meet the immunization requirements, this is grounds for suspension, expulsion, or denial of admission.

Exemptions are recognized only for specific medical or religious purposes as recognized by the law. The student must provide a valid Iowa State Department of Health Certificate of Immunization Exemption.

Physical Examinations

Parents are encouraged to have their children receive periodic physical examinations.

Students participating in athletic activities are required to provide the school with a physical examination form signed by the student's health care provider, stating that the student is physically fit to perform in athletics prior to the start of the sport. Failure to provide proof of a physical examination causes the student to be ineligible to participate in the athletic activity. Students that cannot afford a physical examination should contact the school nurse or guidance counselor for additional resources.

Administration of Medication

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

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

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

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

Student Illness or Injury at School

A student that becomes ill or is injured at school must notify their teacher or another employee as soon as possible. In the case of a serious illness or injury, the school shall attempt to notify the parents according to the information on the student's emergency contact form. If the student is too ill to remain in school, the student will be released to the student's parents or, with the parents' permission, to another person directed by the parents.

While the school is not responsible for treating medical emergencies of an ill or injured student, employees may administer emergency or minor first aid if possible. The school will contact emergency medical personnel, if necessary, and attempt to notify the parents where the student may have been transported for treatment.

Communicable and Infectious Diseases

Students who have an infectious or communicable disease are allowed to attend school provided they are able to do so, and their presence does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to other students or employees. The health risk to others in the school district environment will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the student's physician, a physician chosen by the school district, or public health officials. Infectious or communicable diseases include but are not limited to mumps, measles, chicken pox, etc.

Sexual Abuse and Physical Abuse of Students by School Employees

Southeast Polk Community Schools does not tolerate physical or sexual abuse of students, including inappropriate and intentional sexual behavior, by employees. Students who are physically or sexually abused by an employee should notify their parent or guardian, and report to a principal or other trusted school employee. A report may also be made directly to the Level 1 investigator.

The Iowa Department of Education has established procedures adopted by the district for investigating allegations. The procedure requires the district to identify the Level 1 investigator and Level 1 investigator alternative. Southeast Polk's Level 1 investigator is Deputy Superintendent, Justin Colbert, and can be contacted at District Office, 515-967-4294, justin.colbert@southeastpolk.org. Southeast Polk's Level 1 investigator alternative is Lea Morris, Director of Special Education. Allegations will be handled promptly and confidentially to the maximum extent possible.

Health Education List

Southeast Polk Community Schools provides the following age-appropriate and research-based materials and resources:

The list of topics for 6th-7th grade health as defined by Iowa Code include:

Health education is required in kindergarten through 12th grade to teach from a multicultural, gender-fair approach with global perspectives incorporated at all levels in the education program. The education program requirements for human growth and development are written in law from kindergarten through 12th grade.The Board approved and adopted resource for Secondary Health instruction at Southeast Polk is Savvas Health. Iowa Core Health Standards

Emergency Drills

Periodically the school holds emergency drills for fire, tornado, and other threats or disasters. At the beginning of each semester students are notified by their teachers of the emergency drill procedures. Additionally, the procedures and proper exit areas are posted in each room.

Students are expected to remain quiet and orderly during a drill or an emergency. Fire alarms and other calls to alarm should be taken very seriously. Students who pull the fire alarm or call

in false alarms, will be disciplined up to and including suspension or expulsion. Additionally, depending on the situation, they may be reported to local law enforcement authorities.

Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students

Corporal punishment, mechanical restraint and/or prone restraint is prohibited in all schools by Iowa law. Employees are prohibited from administering corporal punishment, mechanical restraint and/or prone restraint.

That said, trained district employees and others may have to use behavior management interventions, physical restraint and/or seclusion of students. The school uses the least restrictive behavioral interventions appropriate for the situation.

Physical restraint or seclusion may be used for the following reasons:

- To prevent or terminate an imminent threat of bodily injury to the student or others; or
- To prevent serious damage to property of significant monetary value or significant nonmonetary value or importance; or
- When the student's actions seriously disrupt the learning environment or when physical restraint or seclusion is necessary to ensure the safety of the student or others; and
- When less restrictive alternatives to seclusion or physical restraint would not be effective, would not be feasible under the circumstances, or have failed in preventing or terminating the imminent threat or behavior; and
- When the physical restraint or seclusion complies with all applicable laws.

All physical restraints and seclusions will be conducted and documented in accordance with the adopted policy and state law *[board policy 503.06]*.

STUDENT SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT

Conferences and Student Progress

Students receive progress reports in the form of report cards at the end of each semester. Progress reports will be sent electronically every three weeks during each quarter. Students who have concerns about their grades should talk to their teachers to determine how they can improve performance. Teachers will notify parents and students should the student be doing poorly in the class.

Students who receive an incomplete in a class must complete the class within two weeks after the start of the next quarter. Extensions may be granted by the principal. Failure to finish an incomplete may result in a failing grade and/or loss of credit.

If parents have any concerns or questions about their child's progress, they may contact their child's classroom teacher. Additionally, parent-teacher conferences are regularly scheduled and held in the fall and spring. Individual conferences are also available to parents with ongoing concerns. Meetings can be scheduled with a teacher or group of teachers, by contacting the teachers directly.

Testing/Survey Programs

Students undergo standardized testing annually. These tests are used to determine academic progress for individual students, for groups of students, and for the school district and to comply with state law. Students may be excused from testing for certain reasons by contacting the building principal.

Certain survey or testing programs are established and maintained to evaluate Southeast Polk's educational program and to assist in providing services to students and their families. These programs include surveys, marketing surveys, analysis, or evaluations. Southeast Polk will provide notification, information and/or request permission prior to surveys being administered in accordance with state and/or federal law.

Health Education Program for Students

Southeast Polk Community Schools provides instruction in health education in compliance with the Iowa Department of Education's Human Growth and Development Education requirements adapted appropriately for each grade level.

Upon request, parents may review the health education curriculum prior to their use. Parents who object to the health education instruction in human growth and development may file a written request that the student be excused from the instruction. Written requests must include a proposed alternative activity or study that is subject to the approval of the superintendent. Parents who wish to review or file a written request must contact the building principal.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Assemblies

Throughout the year Southeast Polk Middle School sponsors school assemblies. Students must act in an orderly fashion and remain quiet on their way to an assembly, during an assembly and on their way back to the classroom after an assembly. Students attend assemblies unless, for disciplinary reasons, the privilege is taken away. Students who are not participating in assemblies must report to the main office during the assembly.

Field Trips

In certain classes, field trips and excursions are authorized and may be taken as an extension of the classroom to contribute to the achievement of the educational goals of the school district. If a field trip is required for a course, students are expected to attend the field trip. Absences in other classes or school activities due to attendance on field trips or excursions are considered excused absences. Students attend field trips unless, for disciplinary reasons, the privilege is taken away. Students who are not attending field trips shall report to the office or designated area, during the field trip.

While on field trips, students are guests and considered ambassadors and representatives of the school district. Students must treat employees, chaperones and guides with respect and courtesy.

Parents will be notified of the field trips that will be offered through a class or program. Students will be supervised during any field trip. If parents do not want their child to participate in these field trip experiences, they are asked to send a note or call the school.

Student Organizations

School-sponsored student organizations are those which are recognized by the school district and board. Participation in school-sponsored student organizations is a privilege. Individual sponsors or coaches may impose rules in addition to those contained in this handbook. The privilege of participation may be suspended or canceled for violating an individual coach's or sponsor's rules as well as for violation of school district policies, rules or regulations.

Buses and Vehicles Used for Activities

Students who ride a district bus or vehicle for activities must ride to the event on district transportation. Students ride home on the district bus or vehicle unless prior arrangements have been made with the pre-approval of the Activities Director, Coach, and parent, or the student's parents personally appear and request from the coach to transport the student home.

Students are to conduct themselves in an orderly manner fitting to their age and maturity level on district transportation. Students who fail to behave appropriately will be subject to disciplinary measures.

Student Funds and Fundraising

Students may raise funds for school activities upon pre approval of the principal. Funds raised remain in the control of the school district and the board. School-sponsored student organizations must have the approval of the principal prior to spending the money raised.

Classes that wish to donate a gift to the school district should discuss potential gifts with the building principal prior to selecting a gift.

Dances

School-sponsored dances must be pre-approved by the building principal**.** School district policies, rules, and regulations apply to students. Only Southeast Polk Middle School students will be allowed to attend dances. Students violating any of the above will be removed from the dance and school grounds.

STUDENT RECORDS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Student Records; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Notice (FERPA)

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are considered education records and are confidential. For a complete copy of Southeast Polk's policy on education records and other related information and procedures please contact Southeast Polk District office or the policy may be found online--board exhibit/policy 506.01-E(8).

FERPA affords parents and students over the age of 18 (eligible students) certain rights with respect to a student's education records. These rights are:

1. Right to inspect and review the student's education record.
2. Right to seek amendment(s) of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the law authorizes disclosure without consent.
3. The right to file a complaint with the US Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the law. Complaints should be made to the following:

   Student Privacy Policy Office
   US Department of Education
   400 Maryland Avenue
   Washington, DC 20202-8520
   File a Complaint | Protecting Student Privacy (ed.gov)

Student Directory Information

Under FERPA, there is certain information that is contained in a student's education files that may be released to the public without prior consent from the parent or eligible student. This information is called directory information and is generally not considered harmful or invasive. Directory information includes student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance.

Parents and eligible students may restrict the disclosure of directory information by making the request in writing. Written requests should be turned into the building principal by the first day of the current school year. Permission is included in the annual school registration process.

Student Photos

Southeast Polk Community Schools allows for school photos to be taken by a commercial photographer. Prior to students' photos being taken, students and students' parents will be notified by the attendance center for the student.

Photos taken will be included in the yearbook, unless parents or students request otherwise.

Student Disclosure of Identity

Students may make a request to a licensed employee to accommodate gender identity, name, or pronoun that is different than what was assigned to the student in the student's registration forms or records. Should a student make this request, licensed employees are required to report the request to the principal and/or assistant principals. The administrator will contact the student's parents/guardian regarding the request. These procedures must also be applied to nicknames.

Student Legal Status

If a student's legal status, such as a student's name or the student's custodial arrangement, should change, the parent must notify the district. These changes are important to keep up-to-date to ensure that the school district is maintaining a current and accurate student record.

School Library

Southeast Polk Middle School maintains a school library for use by employees and students during the school day. Materials maintained in the library are consistent with all applicable laws and board policy. All parents and guardians of students enrolled in the district have access to the online catalog on the district website.

The library is open during the school day from 7:30am-2:40pm**.** Students using the library are expected to use classroom decorum and follow all school district policies, rules, and regulations. The library staff reserves the right to send any student who is creating a disturbance back to the classroom.

Requests from parents or guardians to prohibit their enrolled student from accessing specific library material must be directed to the school principal.

Inspection of Instructional Materials

Parents and other members of the school district community may view the instructional materials used by the students upon request. Copies may be obtained according to board policy 605.02. Tests and assessment materials are only available for inspection with the consent of the building principal. Persons wishing to view instructional materials or to express concerns about instructional materials should contact the building principal, 515-967-5509.

Should a parent or other members of the school district community have any objections regarding instructional materials, they may contact the building level principal who will provide all necessary forms, or they may access the objection forms through the school district's policy

605.03 R(1), and accompanying forms 605.03E(1), 605.03E(2), 605.03E(3), 605.04E(4), 605.03E(5).

MISCELLANEOUS

Student Guidance and Counseling Program

Southeast Polk Community Schools maintains a guidance program that provides certain services that assist students with their personal, educational and career development. Confidentiality is maintained by the employees involved in the guidance program to the extent the law allows.

Visitors/Guests

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

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

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

Bringing visitors to school is not encouraged but has been allowed in special cases. Common courtesy suggests that you secure permission from the building administration in advance. Permission will not be granted to visitors from nearby districts. We ask that parents not pick up their child and remove them from school for lunch.

School Nutrition Program and Free and Reduced Lunch

Southeast Polk operates a school nutrition program out of the school cafeteria. Students may either bring their own meals or purchase meals through the school. There are 2 avenues to make payments- online or check/cash. Online payments can be made from the district website under Quick Links called RamMall. Click the icon for Food Payments. Follow the prompts to complete the online payment. Checks and cash may be delivered to the school offices for deposit.

Free and reduced lunch is available to those who qualify and may require those services. For more information and forms contact SEP Food and Nutrition Services at 515-957-3432 or school.nutrition@southeastpolk.org.

Buses and Other School District Vehicles

Buses and other school district vehicles ("vehicles") are primarily used to transport students to and from school. Appropriate classroom conduct is to be observed by students while riding the vehicle except for ordinary, appropriate conversation. Students are responsible to the driver, chaperone and/or sponsor while on the school district vehicle, loading, or unloading or leaving the vehicle. The driver may discipline the student and may notify the principal of inappropriate conduct. All people riding school district vehicles to and from the school, extracurricular activities, or any other destination must comply with the law and school district policies, rules, and regulations.

District Owned Recording Devices

The Southeast Polk Community School District Board of Education has authorized the use of recording devices on school district owned property. The recording devices will be used to enhance safety and security within the educational environment. Students, employees, and parents are hereby notified that the content of the recording may be used in a student or employee disciplinary proceeding. The content of the recordings may be considered confidential student records and will be retained with other student records. Recordings will only be retained if necessary for use in a student or employee disciplinary proceeding or other matter as determined necessary by the administration. Parents may request to view the recording of their child.

Lost and Found

Southeast Polk Middle School maintains a lost and found located outside of the health office. The lost and found table is cleared with items donated 4 times per year; announcements will be made prior to items being removed from the lost and found. Items of higher value will be kept in the main office.

Artificial Intelligence

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in research and graded work by students must include proper source citations. Copyright protections must be strictly adhered to. Students who fail to comply with these requirements may face discipline as stated in relevant district policies.

Prior to using AI tools, classroom teachers will inform the students how AI tools may be used to engage in and complete educational tasks and assignments. Classroom teachers are trained in the use of AI tools and how to implement them appropriately in the classroom. Classroom teachers will establish appropriate parameters for AI tool usage and will monitor student use of AI tools as appropriate. Students are expected to abide by their classroom teachers' rules.

Students will not use AI tools to access or create information that is discriminatory, constitutes bullying or harassment, shares confidential or personally identifiable information of others, or access or create material that is harmful to minors, obscene, or child pornography. Any violation may result in the loss of access to the AI tool, and further discipline as appropriate.

Steps to Minor Classroom Behavior Management

Initial Behavior– Redirect/Re-teach appropriate behavior based upon PBIS (depending on severity)

Minor # 1 – Teacher referral/conference/contact home

Minor # 2 – Teacher referral and contacts home, admin informed

Minor #3 - Office Referral/ phone call by administrator, consequence given

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

I acknowledge that I have received or can access a copy of Southeast Polk Middle School's Student Handbook available at https://www.southeastpolk.org/school/junior-high/. I understand the student handbook contains important information. I acknowledge I am expected to be familiar with the contents. I also understand that I should consult Southeast Polk Middle School administration with any questions I have about the contents of the student handbook.

I understand that the student handbook is a general source of information and may not include every possible situation that may arise.

_____

Parent's Signature Date

_____

Parent's Name (Printed)