

SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
ACKERMAN SCHOOL



STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK
2018 - 2019

ACKERMAN SCHOOL

Mission, Vision and Core Values

Mission

Ackerman School provides a safe and supportive student-centered environment where children of diverse abilities can reach their full potential through high expectations, differentiated instruction, and therapeutic services.

Vision

Ackerman School provides innovative educational opportunities so students can acquire the academic and life skills necessary to contribute productively to our school and community.

Core Values

In order to fulfill our mission and vision to the Ackerman community, we:

- *Model* empathy, patience, respect, and self-control
- *Communicate* in a positive, honest and professional manner
- *Collaborate* to ensure consistency and flexibility in our actions

ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS

Ackerman School is committed to providing a high quality, rigorous education to all students grounded in the Missouri Learning Standards and supported by students' individual learning needs. All students receive instruction guided by the District's curricula in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. In addition, all students participate in elective classes including art, music, physical education, and instructional technology. Lessons provided by the guidance counselor and school librarian are all part of each student's educational program.

Our school is committed to using a continuous improvement model to improve student achievement in the all academic and emotional areas. Staff and students work together using Classroom Learning Systems to set goals, analyze data, and increase student engagement, and ensure students have a voice in their learning. We use Teacher-Student Partnerships to engage families in the learning process through classroom and school events and by encouraging families to discuss student academic success with their children.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are a vital part of our school culture. We expect students to behave positively and recognize their accomplishments using the Positively Awesome Well-Behaved Students (P.A.W.S.) Program. It is our goal to recognize students several times throughout the year as the Ackerman Student of the Day. In addition, as students earn PAWS, they earn rewards at each milestone. As we acknowledge positive behavior, we are also encouraging our students to collaborate with students who have different strengths and needs than their own through our Buddy Classroom Program. With this program, classrooms are assigned to work together to collaborate on service learning and celebrations.

It is our goal to continue to increase family engagement and to improve communication between the school and families. It is important to keep contact information up to date with the school. If you have changes in phone numbers, mailing address, or email address, please contact the school. We encourage families to participate and volunteer in our school. Please contact your child's teacher about ways to participate.

TRANSPORTATION

The Board of Education, in accordance with state law, provides free transportation for eligible students attending the Special School District schools and classes. The needs for individual student accommodations are determined through the IEP process. Transportation is arranged through the school. **It generally takes 10 working days to set up or make changes to transportation.** Please do not contact the garage if you need to make a change in your child's transportation; instead, contact the school if changes are needed.

You can help ensure that transportation runs smoothly for students by doing the following:

- Please have your child ready for pick-up *ten minutes* prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Please contact the bus garage if the bus has not arrived and it is more than 15 minutes past the scheduled pick up time.
- Please assist your child on and off the bus when necessary. The transportation provider will not leave the bus to come to the door of the home.
- Please be at the designated stop to receive your child. Students will not be permitted to leave the bus at a point other than the designated stop.
- Please ensure that you have made arrangements for someone to receive your child. If there is no one home to meet the bus, the transportation provider will deliver the child to the local police department.
- Please notify your child's school as soon as possible if you will be moving. It will take time to change transportation.
- Please ensure the school has current phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts.
- Pick-up and drop-off locations, if different than the home address, must be within the local home district of attendance.

Please be advised that:

- You should be notified of any changes in pick-up time at least one day prior to the effective date of the change.
- You will be notified of any change in drop-off time of more than 15 minutes.
- Buses operate on a routing schedule that does not allow for temporary changes in pick-up or drop-off locations.
- Buses, which arrive on schedule, are not required to wait if the child is not at the stop.
- Buses will not return for students who have missed the bus.
- Buses that arrive within the 15 minute window, will wait approximately 2 minutes for students to come to the bus.
- Students must be picked up and dropped off at the same address **every day**; morning and afternoon addresses may be different, but are to be consistent each day.

Please do not take your child to school expecting the transportation provider to drop him or her off at a new address unless you have been notified that transportation arrangements have been completed.

Students should not arrive to school before 8:45am and need to be picked up at 3:30pm. Students should not arrive early or stay after school. If you drop your child off earlier than 8:45am, you may be asked to sit with them until a staff member is available. If you are picking up your child, you must be here at 3:30pm. If we have not heard from you by 4:00pm regarding picking up your child, Children's Division and the local police will be contacted.

FAMILY SUPPORT

Our students are most successful when school and home work together to create an environment where learning can take place. You can support your child's education by doing the following:

- **IEP Participation:** One of the most important activities concerning your child is the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process. The IEP is the written document that describes your child's education program that is developed annually during an IEP meeting. This is the time to share your ideas and your concern's about your child's education.
- **Partners for Student Success Handout**
- **School Hours:** Our school hours are 8:45am-3:30pm. Professional development activities take place before school. Please drop your child off no earlier than 8:45am.
- **Communication:** Communication is the key to student success. It is important to communicate regularly with your child's classroom staff. Please keep us informed of changes in address and phone numbers. Your child's teacher will provide you with his/her contact information. In addition, families will be asked to provide their preferred contact method to help with communication. Please contact building administrators if you need additional support/information/resources.
- **Social Work Services:** Social work services are provided as outlined by the student's IEP. Crisis intervention is available for children and their families. Our social workers are able to coordinate the efforts of all agencies involved with a student. They also coordinate care-team meetings. Please notify your child's social worker of changes with outside providers or extenuating circumstances within the home. Please sign releases when needed for exchange of information.
- **Food Service:** Breakfast and lunch are available for free to students. If you send food for a school activity, please make sure it is "store-bought" due to health regulations. Please keep the school nurse/classroom teacher informed if your child has any food restrictions or allergies.
- **Family and Community Resource Center:** Special School District has established a resource center for parents and community members at the district's central office. The center contains books, videos, newsletters, etc. on every disability and disability-related area. Please contact them at 314.989.8108 or 314.989.8438 for more information.
- **Student Progress:** Student progress is documented through instructional data and is collected at pre-determined intervals. Progress reports are sent home on a quarterly basis. Please sign and return all paperwork that requires a parent/guardian signature.
- **School Dress:** Students should be appropriately dressed to attend school. Insignia and slogans on clothing that are offensive, gang related or profane are

not permitted. Clothing advertising illegal controlled substances or alcohol products is not to be worn. Clothing which brings undue attention such as halters, off the shoulder tops, low necklines, bare midriffs, short skirts, underwear tops, muscle shirts, tank tops, transparent/net and tight garments are not to be worn. Pants that sag below the waist may not be worn. Any article of clothing worn by the students that brings undue attention, causes a disruption is considered to be in poor taste, or a safety hazard shall not be worn. Bandanas and wave caps are not allowed. Additionally, clothing should be appropriate for the weather. Please write the student's name on lunch boxes, book bags and clothing for easy identification.

- **Pets:** Only pets associated with approved agencies can visit school. Please keep all family pets at home.
- **Visitor/Observation Procedures:** Parents/guardians are always welcome at Ackerman School. Please call 48 hours in advance to schedule an appointment for classroom observations. Sign in at the office upon arrival. Complete an observation/confidentiality form. Put on a visitor badge. Limit your observation to one instructional period. To maximize instructional time, please be careful not to talk with your child, the staff or other children during your observation.
- **Safety/Security:** It is very important for security reasons that you come to the office when dropping off or picking up your child. Please sign your child in and out at the office and ensure that your child is in a staff person's custody before leaving. SSD has purchased a visitor management system that is used to screen all visitors against the registered sexual offender databases using their government issued ID. All visitors must have a government issued ID in their possession to visit.
- **Reporting Absences:** If your child is not going to be attending school, please call school before school begins at 989.7200 and provide a reason for the absence. This will enable us to inform the teacher before school starts. Once students are in the classrooms, attendance is taken and sent to the office. If your child is not at school and we have not heard from you, we will call to verify the child's absence. It is important to make sure the school has the most recent emergency contact numbers. Daily attendance is expected.
- **Early Dismissal:** Parents should report to the office, sign out their child and the secretary will call the classroom. If a relative or friend will be picking up the child, the school must have signed parent permission or the person must be listed as an emergency contact in SIS. Proper identification may be required before signing out a child.
- **Personal Property:** Students should only bring to school the items necessary for completing schoolwork and/or personal self-care items. Please ensure that your child leaves toys, cell phones, electronic devices, jewelry, trading cards, etc. at home unless specially asked for by the teacher. Students are not to trade or sell personal items at school or on the bus. Staff is not responsible for the safe return of lost or stolen items. The school is not responsible for replacing or repairing

stolen or damaged items. If a student brings an electronic device to school, it will be checked in upon arrival and returned at the end of the day. If the child fails to turn in the electronic device, it will be confiscated and can only be returned to the child's guardian.

- **Backpacks and Bags:** If a student makes a threat to bring a weapon to school or if a student brings something inappropriate to school, he or she will no longer be allowed to bring a backpack or bag to school. This measure is taken as a safety precaution.
- **Property Damage:** Students and families will be charged for damaging school property (Board Policy JFCB).
- **Community-Based Instruction/Special Olympics:** Community-based instruction is an opportunity for students to practice the skills they learn in the classroom in a real life setting. Teachers plan trips that are related to the current instructional activity. In addition to community-based instruction, students participate in Special Olympics activities. Some of the events include bowling, bocce ball, t-ball, and track and field. Please sign all necessary permission forms to ensure student participation. We will be providing a calendar of classroom events for your participation.
- **School Closing:** Inclement weather that poses a threat to the safety of the students may result in the closing of school. In addition, there are times when we experience power outages. When Ackerman School will be closed for the day, announcements are made on television and via SchoolMessenger. The District will announce this as soon as possible. SSD Information Line is 989-8440 – this hotline will provide school closure information as well.
- **Emergency School Closings during the School Day:** Occasionally, dangerous weather or building conditions occur during the school day and school must be dismissed early. If school is dismissed early, an announcement will be made on television and radio. To ensure the safety of your child, please develop an emergency back-up plan for situations like this. Again please keep school informed of any address or phone number changes.
- **Family/School Learning Agreement:** Ackerman School has developed a Family Engagement Plan and a Family-School Compact to give parents the opportunity to become active participants in their child's education. Please read the plan found on the following pages and return the signed Family-School Compact found with this information.
- **All SSD school premises are smoke-free.**

STUDENT HEALTH

Immunizations

Students must comply with Missouri immunization laws. If immunization records are not on file for a student, the parent/guardian must provide a copy of the official immunization record to the school prior to the first day of attendance. Exemptions from immunization may be allowed for religious or medical reasons. The school nurse is available to answer specific questions regarding immunization requirements.

Medication

It is recognized that some students will require medication during the school day. In keeping with the Special School District policy, please follow these guidelines:

- Parent/guardian completes the “Parental Authorization for Giving Medication” form.
- Only medication prescribed by an *authorized prescriber* will be given at school.
- Only those medications that **must** be given during school hours will be given at school.
- Medications must be brought to school in a pharmacy-labeled container with instructions for administering the medication at school (**Please Note:** Many medications have been labeled to be given three or four times a day. Special School District’s medication policy states that all medication must be labeled with specific instructions for dispensing the medication during the school day. We will not be able to dispense medication that is not labeled with the specific time it is to be given at school. This procedure may require that your doctor write two (2) prescriptions – one for school/one for home or your pharmacist may divide the medication into separate containers and label them accordingly.)
- If you are unable to deliver medicine directly to school, please contact the principal or the nurse. **Please do not send medication with the students; please do not put student medication in backpacks or lunch boxes.**
- When your child’s *authorized prescriber* orders a change in medication, dosage or frequency of administration, please obtain a new prescription label with the correct information.

Student Illnesses

In order for students to benefit from the planned educational program, it is important that your child be alert and feeling well. Please keep your child home if any of the following symptoms are present:

- Student is unresponsive and/or unable to maintain an awakened state
- Fever of 100.4°F and above (taken orally)
- Temperature that is abnormally low (a rectal temperature less than 95°F)
- Persistent coughing
- Abnormal nasal drainage
- Complaining of sore throat or difficulty swallowing combined with a fever
- Vomiting more than once
- Diarrhea
- Unusually loose or watery stools
- Unidentified or widespread rash

- Suspected communicable disease such as flu, chicken pox, scabies, impetigo, etc.
- Persistent or unusual pain
- Any draining or infected sores
- Red, crusted and/or draining eyes
- Head lice (see Head Lice Protocol)

If you keep your child at home for any reason, please call 989-7200 to report the absence. If your child exhibits any of the above symptoms at school, you will be notified to make arrangements to pick him/her up from school promptly. Appropriate measures will be taken to make sure your child is comfortable until you arrive.

Students may not return to school until they are free from all symptoms for a 24-hour period. (Note: If your child is sent home with an illness, we will cancel transportation for the next school day).

Return to School Following Serious Illness or Hospitalization (Student Protocol)

To ensure safety and continuity of care for our students, the following guidelines will be followed in the event your child becomes seriously ill and/or hospitalized. The nurse will contact the parent/guardian of any seriously ill or hospitalized student who has had an extended period of absence and inform them that she will be mailing home, a Release of Information Concerning Serious Illness or Hospitalization Form.

- The nurse will request that the parent complete the top portion and the parent/guardian will then request that the Licensed Care Provider complete that remainder of the form before the student returns to school.
- This form must be submitted to the nurse when the child returns to school. This will ensure continuity of care and alert the nurse to any changes in health, treatments, or medication.
- The principal will discontinue transportation during the child's absence from school.
- Transportation will be resumed via principal contact when the student is released by the Licensed Care Provider to return to school. If the requested health information is not submitted to the nurse, the principal, social worker, and nurse will determine what further steps need to be implemented.
- The District's medical consultant, the Lead Nurse, and the school nurse may assist in determining the appropriate care for the returning student.
- If a change of placement needs to be considered, an IEP team meeting will be held.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Ackerman School is aware that students participate in the use of social media. At times, this participation directly impacts the school environment. If social media use is

impacting student learning, school personnel will attempt to mediate with the parties involved. In addition, the student Code of Conduct will be consulted.