

Notes



2026-2027
Student Handbook

**311 Sparta Street
Spencer, TN 38585
(931) 946-2171**

Mission Statement

We, the faculty, staff, parents, and community of Spencer Elementary School, believe in creating a challenging, safe, and rewarding environment, which facilitates optimal lifelong opportunities that meet the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs of all the students.

Vision Statement

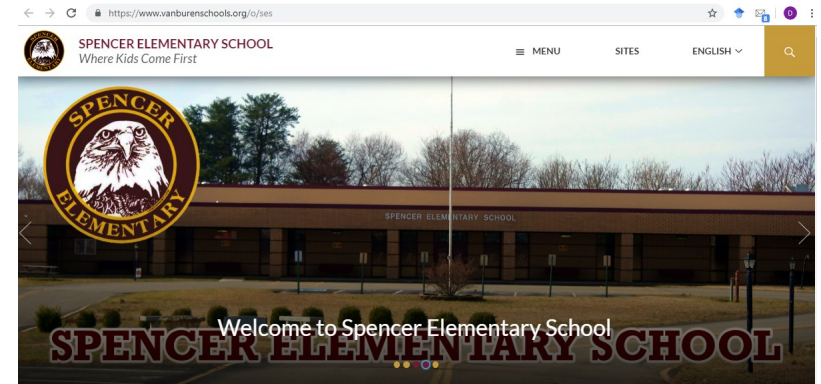
Our ultimate vision is a bond within our school family of students, faculty, staff, and parents which allows us the opportunity to grow and develop together unlocking within each child the ability to apply his or her thoughts and ideas in a responsible way that builds a better future for us all.

Information and policies supplied in this handbook are in effect at the publication date, but are not inclusive and are subject to change as the need arises by school administration to ensure the most effective and safe learning environment.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

The school website is updated weekly and should be checked periodically for the latest news and information.

<http://vanburenschools.org/o/ses>



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AHERA:

As required by Tennessee state law, we are required to notify you that Van Buren County Schools Asbestos Management Plan is located in the office of the Director of Schools. It is a public document and is open to the public upon request.

**Welcome to
Spencer Elementary School**

311 Sparta Street
Spencer, TN 38585
Telephone: (931) 946-2171
Fax: (931) 946-7113
School Website: ses.vanburenschools.org

Registration Day
Wednesday, August 6, 2026

Student's Name _____

Teacher _____

Handbook Published July 2026

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the staff at Spencer Elementary School, we are happy to welcome you to the 2026-2027 school year.

We recognize that in order to be successful in school, our children need support from both the home and school. We know a strong partnership with you will make a great difference in your child's education. As partners, we share the responsibility for our children's success and want you to know we will do our very best to carry out our responsibilities. We ask that you guide and support your child's learning by ensuring he/she:

- Attends school daily and arrives on time, ready for the day's learning experience
- Completes all homework assignments given by teachers
- Reads daily to develop a love for reading and to improve literacy skills
- Shares school experiences with you so that you are aware of his/her school life
- Informs you if he/she needs additional support in any area or subject
- Knows that you expect him/her to succeed in school

Please make sure your child's teacher knows how your child will go home each day. A regular daily routine is best for all. **If you need to make a change, please make sure you send a note with your child or call the office before 2 p.m.** For your child's safety, only people identified on the student emergency form will be allowed to pick up your child from school. **For security reasons, school gates will be closed after 8:10 am and will remain closed until 2:40 pm.** If you need to bring your child late or pick them up early, you must park in the front playground parking lot and walk down the sidewalk to the front office.

A copy of the school calendar can be found on the district website. Our first full day of school will be Monday, August 10th and daily school hours are from 8 am-2:55 pm. This SES Student Handbook includes school policies and procedures along with other useful information. Please review the information inside this handbook with your child and keep it for a reference throughout the school year. **Students may not be dropped off before 7:30 a.m.** each morning. If you have any questions or need assistance please contact the school at (931)946-2171. We are going to have a GREAT year!

Respectfully,

Gary Bates, Principal
Darrin Baker, Assistant Principal

PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

Please read and sign this page acknowledging that both you and your student understand the SES policies and agree to abide by them. **Please tear this page out and return to school.**

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

Initial by each item acknowledging that you have read and agree to each policy:

- ____ Attendance/Truancy Policy (Pages 12 and 13)
- ____ School-Issues Materials Policy
- ____ Cell Phone Policy
- ____ Media Release Form
- ____ Internet Usage
- ____ Skyward Family Access

My child, who is a student at Spencer Elementary School, and I have read the student handbook. I understand that policies and procedures have been updated to reflect local, state, and federal guidelines. My child agrees to abide by all stated policies, rules, and regulations.

I will encourage and support my child in obeying these policies, rules, and regulations. I also understand that if I have any questions regarding my child's school performance I am to contact the principal during regular school hours.

Student Signature

date

Parent/Guardian Signature

date

Parent Agreement for Use of School-issued Materials

I hereby agree that I will be responsible for all materials issued to my child, including textbooks, library books, chrome books, iPad and calculators. I hereby further agree that I will reimburse the Van Buren County Board of Education for the value of any materials that are badly damaged, destroyed or misplaced which my child used in the 2025/26 school year at Spencer Elementary School.

Media Release

During the 2025/26 school year, your child's image/photograph or work could be used in one of the following ways: posted on the school website, submitted as an entry in an educational sponsored contest, appear on local television, used in a printed publication such as a newspaper or magazine. No home address or telephone number will appear with any published image. Initialing and signing the tear-out page gives permission to use.

Acceptable Use Agreement for Internet and Electronic Resources

Full description of Internet Use Terms and Conditions can be found at www.vanburenschools.org

The use of the internet is consistent with educational objectives. Precautions have been taken to restrict access to controversial materials. In addition, students will be instructed in the acceptable use of the internet and internet etiquette. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials that may be discovered. By signing the internet usage agreement is made to abide by the terms and conditions established in the Van Buren County Schools Student Internet Use Terms and Conditions. Should any violations occur, school disciplinary actions may be taken. Use of the internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in loss of privileges. *Students will be required to access web-based state testing.

Skyward Family Access

By signing this agreement and/or accessing the Skyward Family Access website, you allow Van Buren County Schools to make confidential information, attendance record, grade information, demographic information and other school information available to you by means of the Internet on a website that is secure and accessible by a unique login and password. Only you will be able to see your student's records with your unique login and password. Each parent/guardian will be assigned a login and password. Therefore, your login and password should not be shared with anyone. You are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of this information. Van Buren Schools will not make your username and password publicly available. You understand and agree that Van Buren County Schools is not responsible for unauthorized Internet access to your student's digital records by persons who do not have your consent. By signing this Access agreement and/or using your login and password to access Family Access you confirm that you understand and accept the guidelines and conditions for access to your student's digital records and you waive any claims or causes of action that you may have against Van Buren County Schools by reason of such unauthorized access. You may cancel this service at any time by contacting the school office.

Spencer Elementary School

ADMINISTRATION

Gary Bates— *Principal*

Phone: (931) 946-2171

Email: gbates@vanburenschools.org

Darrin Baker— *Assistant Principal*

Phone: (931) 946-2171

Email: dbaker1@vanburenschools.org

FRONT OFFICE

Camillia Lewis — *Secretary/Bookkeeper*

Phone: (931) 946-2171

Email: clewis@vanburenschools.org

Sarah Hickerson — *Assistant*

Phone: (931) 946-2171

Email: shickerson@vanburenschools.org

COUNSELING

Laura Carpenter— *School Counselor*

Phone: (931) 946-2171

Email: lcarpenter@vanburenschools.org

Crystal Owens — *Social Worker*

Phone: (931) 946-2171

Email: cowens@vanburenschools.org

Coordinated School Health Director

Kelly Lewis

Phone: (931) 946-2171

Email: klewis1@vanburenschools.org

SCHOOL NURSE

Carly Whalen

Phone: (931) 946-2171

Email: cwhalen@vanburenschools.org

Spencer Elementary School

Faculty and Staff

PreSchool

Jacqueline Miller millerj5@vanburenschools.org
 Kristy Dyer dyerk@vanburenschools.org

Kindergarten

Monica Powers mpowers@vanburenschools.org
 Blake Eldridge beldridge@vanburenschools.org

1st Grade

Natasha Copeland ncopeland@vanburenschools.org
 Holly Wheeler hwheeler@vanburenschools.org
 Shawna Delon delons@vanburenschools.org

2nd Grade

Chloe Howard chillis@vanburenschools.org
 Macy Delon mdelon@vanburenschools.org
 Amber Hensley ahensley@vanburenschools.org

3rd Grade

Tammy Underwood underwoot2@vanburenschools.org
 Amy Carter acarter@vanburenschools.org
 Beth Delong bdelong@vanburenschools.org

4th Grade

Jaylyn Blaylock jblaylock@vanburenschools.org
 Jacqueline Hillis jbumbalough@vanburenschools.org
 Charlotte Hart hartc5@vanburenschools.org

5th Grade

Kim McLain kmclain@vanburenschools.org
 Leshauna Woolard lwoolard@vanburenschools.org

Physical Education

Drew Roberts droberts@vanburenschools.org
 Tyler Sapp tsapp@vanburenschools.org

STEM

Armindy Bigley abigley@vanburenschools.org

Art

Earl Delong delonge@vanburenschools.org

Ongoing Fund Raising for the SES

Krogers and Publix

If you shop at their store, go to their web site, and register for Spencer Elementary School to receive the rewards.

Kroger Community Rewards

Giving more back to the community! Kroger is committed to helping our communities grow and prosper. Year after year, local schools, churches and other nonprofit organizations will earn millions of dollars through Kroger Community Rewards. Kroger Community Rewards makes fund-raising easy. All you have to do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Plus Card! after registering.

Box Tops

The Box Tops has changed. You now register and scan your receipt and the box tops are automatically added to the schools account. We will be credited for clipped Box Top and for the same item on your scanned receipt after your register at <https://www.boxtops4education.com/earn>

Fall Fun Run Fund Raiser

This fund raiser requests donations to the school in your child's name. Each class will have a time to go to the baseball field to participate in the Fun Run.

Reading for Education Pamphlets

The school receives monetary percentage off of the online orders submitted.

If the district sends a homeless child to a school other than the school of origin or the school requested by the parent or guardian, the district must provide the parents a written explanation for, including notice of the right to appeal, the decision. The information must also be provided whenever a dispute arises over school selection [ESSA Title IX, Part C, §722(g)(3)(B)].

Each LEA liaison for homeless children and youth shall ensure the parents or guardians of homeless children and youth are informed of the educational and related opportunities available to their children and are provided with meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children [ESSA Title IX, Part C, §722(g)(6)(A)(iv)].

Public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated where such children and youths receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act, such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens [ESSA Title X, Part C, §722(g)(6)(A)(v)].

21st Century Community Learning Centers

A program or activity funded as part of a 21st Century Community Learning Center providing before and after school activities to advance student academic achievement must undergo periodic evaluation to assess its progress toward achieving its goal of providing high-quality opportunities for academic enrichment. The results of evaluations shall be made available to the public upon request, with public notice of such availability provided [ESEA §4205(b)(2)].

Waiver Request

If a school district requests the U.S. Secretary of Education to waive any provision or regulation of the ESEA, it must provide notice and information about the waiver to the public in the manner in which is customarily provides public notice [20 U.S.C. §7861(b)(3)(B)] [ESEA Title IX, Part D, §8401(b)(3)(B)(iii)].

National Assessment of Education Progress: Our district may voluntarily participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress. You will be informed before the assessment is administered. Your child may be excused from participation for any reason, is not required to answer any test questions. Please inform the office of your wishes. (ESEA Title VI, Part C, 411 ©(1))

ZERO TOLERANCE (Consult VBOE policy @ <https://www.vanburenschools.org/page/school-board-and-policies>)

1. ALCOHOL USE/POSSESSION

2. DRUG USE/POSSESSION

The illegal use or possession of drug products and paraphernalia in any form on school grounds and school buses is strictly prohibited on the school campus. The same policy is in effect for any school activity or event sponsored by the school. The State of Tennessee requires the school to file charges against the student found with any form of illegal drug products on school grounds or at school events.

3. TOBACCO USE/POSSESSION

The use or possession of tobacco products and paraphernalia in any form on school grounds and school buses is strictly prohibited on the school campus. The same policy is in effect for any school activity or event sponsored by the school. The State of Tennessee now requires the school to file charges against the student found with any form of tobacco products on school grounds or at school events.

4. FIREARM USE/POSSESSION

5. THREATS OF VIOLENCE TOWARD STUDENTS/TEACHERS OR SCHOOL

RtI2 Facilitator
Stephanie Sullivan ssullivan2@vanburenschools.org

Librarian
Angela Bouldin abouldin@vanubrenschoos.org

Special Education Supervisor
Tonya Pettit tpettit1@vanburenschools.org

Special Education Teachers
Cheryl Chavez cchavez@vanburenschools.org
Autumn Everett aeeverett@vanburenschools.org
Jamey Pack jpack@vanburenschools.org

Speech
Jessica Hillis jhillis@vanburenschools.org

School Psychologist
Monica Sullivan msullivan@vanburenschools.org

School Resource Office
Brent Hickerson bhickerson@vanburenschools.org

Cafeteria Manager
Carrie Thompson cthompson5@vanburenschools.org

Bus and Attendance Supervisor
Joseph Hensley jhensley@vanburenschools.org

2026-2027 Van Buren County Schools Calendar

AUGUST

3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th-In-service (No Students)

Thursday, 6th Registration New Students Only, abbreviated day (8:00am-9:00am)

Monday, 8th First Full Day for Students

SEPTEMBER

Friday, 4th No School-Labor Day Holiday

Monday, 7th Labor Day Break—No School

Thursday 17th Parent/Teacher Conference 3:30-7:00

OCTOBER

Monday, 12th—Friday 16th Fall Break—No School

Friday, 23rd Report Cards

NOVEMBER

Tuesday, 3rd Optional Teacher Inservice Day

Wednesday 25th—Friday 27th Thanksgiving Break—No School

DECEMBER

Friday 18th Abbreviated Day

Monday Dec. 21st— Friday Jan. 1st Christmas Break—No School

JANUARY

Monday, 4th Students Return

Friday, 8th Report Cards

Monday, 18th MLK Day—No School

FEBRUARY

Thursday, 11th Parent/Teacher Conference 3:30-7:00

Monday, 15th Presidents' Day—No School

MARCH

Friday, 12th Report Cards

Monday, 22nd—Friday, 26th Spring Break—No School

APRIL

MAY

Thursday 20th Kindergarten Graduation

Friday 21st High School Graduation

Friday, May 25th Last day of school, Abbreviated Day

*Thirteen days are built into the calendar and may be used in the event of inclement weather, emergencies, and any other type of event requiring the closure of school. Any days missed beyond the initial (13) must be made up and rescheduled according to the discretion of the Director of Schools.

Achievement on State Assessment

All schools must provide to parents, teachers, and principals the individual student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports, which allow specific academic needs to be understood and addressed, and include information on the student's achievement on academic assessments aligned with state academic achievement standards *[ESEA §1111(b)(2)(B)(x)]*.

National Assessment of Education Progress

Districts, schools, and students may voluntarily participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Parents of children selected to participate in any NAEP assessment must be informed before the assessment is administered that their child may be excused from participation for any reason, is not required to finish any assessment, and is not required to answer any test question. A district must make reasonable efforts to inform parents and the public about their right to access all assessment data (except personally identifiable information), questions, and current assessment instruments *[ESEA Title VI, Part C, §411(c)(1); (d)(1)–(2)]*.

Schoolwide Programs

An eligible school operating a schoolwide program shall make the comprehensive plan available to the LEA, parents, and the public. The information contained in such plan shall be in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that the parents can understand *[20 U.S.C. §6314][ESEA Title I, Part A, §1114]*.

English Learner Programs

A school district that uses federal funds to provide a language instruction education program for English learners must no later than 30 days after the beginning of the school year inform the parents of each child identified for participation or participating in such a program:

- the reasons for the identification of the child as an English learner;
- the child's level of English proficiency;
- how that level was determined and the status of the child's academic achievement;
- methods of instruction used in the program in which their child is participating and methods of instruction used in other available programs;
- how the program will meet the educational strengths and needs of their child;
- how the program will specifically help their child learn English and meet age-appropriate academic achievement standards for grade promotion and graduation;
- the specific exit requirements for the program;
- in the case of a child with a disability, how the program meets the child's IEP objectives; and
- information about parental rights detailing the right of parents to have their child immediately removed from such program upon their request and the options that parents have to decline to enroll their child in such program or to choose another available program or method of instruction.

For a child not identified as an English learner prior to the beginning of the school year, the district must notify parents within the first two weeks of the child being placed in such a program *[ESEA Title I, Part A, §1112]*.

Homeless Children

To be eligible for McKinney-Vento funds, the school must provide written notice at the time any child seeks enrollment in the school, and at least twice annually while the child is enrolled in the school, to the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth that, shall be signed by the parent or guardian or unaccompanied youth; that sets forth the general rights provided; and specifically states:

- the choice of schools homeless children are eligible to attend;
- that no homeless child is required to attend a separate school for homeless children;
- that homeless children shall be provided comparable services, including transportation services, educational services, and meals; and
- that homeless children should not be stigmatized by school personnel.

Public Release of Student Directory Information

Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), an LEA must provide notice to parents of the types of student information that it releases publicly. This type of student information, commonly referred to as “directory information,” includes such items as names, addresses, and telephone numbers and is information generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The notice must include an explanation of a parent’s right to request that the information not be disclosed without prior written consent.

Additionally, ESSA requires that parents be notified that the school routinely discloses names, addresses, and telephone numbers to military recruiters upon request, subject to a parent’s request not to disclose such information without written consent [§8025].

A single notice provided through a mailing, student handbook, or other method that is reasonably calculated to inform parents of the above information is sufficient to satisfy the parental notification requirements of both FERPA and ESSA. The notification must advise the parent of how to opt out of the public, nonconsensual disclosure of directory information and the method and timeline within which to do so [20 U.S.C. 1232g] [ESEA §8025].

Military Recruiter Access to Student Information

Districts receiving federal education funds must notify parents of secondary school students that they have a right to request their child’s name, address, and telephone number not be released to a military recruiter without their prior written consent. Districts must comply with any such requests [ESEA §8528(a)(2)(B)].

Parent and Family Engagement

A district receiving Title I funds must develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written district-level parent and family engagement policy. Each school served under Title I must also develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents and family members of participating children a written school-level parent and family engagement policy. If an individual school or district has a parent and family engagement policy that applies to all, it may amend the policy to meet the requirements under the ESEA [ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116(a)(2)] [20 U.S.C. §6318(b); (c)].

Parents shall be notified of the policy in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language the parents can understand. Such policy shall be made available to the local community and updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school [ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116(b)(1)].

Schools must:

- hold at least one annual meeting for Title I parents;
- offer a flexible number of meetings;
- involve parents and families in an ongoing manner in the planning, review, and improvement of Title I programs;
- provide Title I parents and families with timely information about the programs, a description and explanation of the curriculum, forms of academic assessment and expected levels of student proficiency;
- if requested, provide opportunities for regular meetings to discuss decisions related to the education of their children; and
- develop a school-parent compact that outlines the responsibilities of each party for improved student academic achievement [ESEA Title I, Part A, §1116(c)].

Report Cards on Statewide Academic Assessment

Each school district that receives Title I, Part A funds must prepare and disseminate an annual report card. Generally, the state or district must include on its report card information about public schools related to student achievement, accountability, teacher qualifications and other required information, as well as any other information that the state or district deems relevant.

These report cards must be concise and presented in an understandable and uniform format accessible to persons with disabilities and, to the extent practicable, provided in a language that parents can understand. In Tennessee, **these requirements are met through the state’s report card** [ESEA Title I, Part A, §1111(h)(1) and (h)(2)].

DATES TO KNOW:

*Dates are subject to change.

PROGRESS REPORTS GO HOME:	END OF 9-WEEKS GRADING PERIOD:
09/11/26	1 ST QTR – 10/9/26
11/20/26	2 ND QTR – 12/17/26
02/11/27	3 RD QTR – 3/5/27
04/16/27	4 TH QTR – 5/25/27

**Report cards are typically issued within a week of the end of a marking period. State assessment window will be April 19 - May 7. Please avoid this time for appointments so testing can be completed.

GRADING

The grading scale at Spencer Elementary School is as follows:

- A = 90 to 100
- B = 80 to 89
- C = 70 to 79
- D = 60 to 69
- F = 0 to 59

Written reports of student grades or performance in each class or subject are issued to parents at least once every 4 1/2 weeks. Report cards and progress reports will be given to each child. Refer to the calendar for dates.

The nine weeks grades are determined by the following criteria:

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Fifty Percent (50%) | Daily assignments |
| Fifty Percent (50%) | Test average (5-7 Tests per grading period) |

Spencer Elementary School

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are from 8-2:55 each day. School doors open at 7:30 a.m. each school day. Supervision is not provided for students who arrive before 7:30 a.m. or remain later than 3:10 p.m., unless they are participating in a supervised school activity. These procedures are designed for the safety and well-being of the students.

SCHOOL RULES

The following rules were developed by the staff at Spencer Elementary School to teach responsibility, self-respect, and respect for others.

**BE READY
BE RESPECTFUL
BE RESPONSIBLE**

Expectations are taught each year and posted throughout the building so that students understand appropriate behavior for each location. SES is a trauma informed school and uses those practices to promote a positive school environment. School-wide positive behavior supports are used to encourage students to follow school rules.

*SES focuses on the Character Counts program and promotes the following character traits with recognition programs each month:

EAGLE CHARACTER CODE

E—Earn Respect
A—Act Responsibly
G—Gain Trust
L—Lead by example
E—Excel in Education
S—Show Kindness

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Teachers maintain discipline in their classrooms. If a problem arises, the teacher chooses the appropriate consequence. Choices may include, but are not limited to, the following: verbal reprimand/redirection, loss of privilege, parent notification, lunch detention, early morning detention, counseling referral, office referral.

Office referrals may result in counseling referral, afterschool detention/work with principal, morning detention, Mandatory Parent Meeting, In School Suspension, Out of School Suspension, etc.

Discipline should be reasonable, humane, and administered with kindness in accordance with the policies of the Van Buren County Board of Education.

REWARDS

SES will host “Fun Friday” reward parties every 4 weeks. Students will have the opportunity to earn points/bucks weekly in their classrooms to earn the admission to the party.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as amended in Dec. 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) makes it clear that Congress expects local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools receiving federal funds to ensure that parents are actively involved and knowledgeable about their schools and their children’s education. The law requires schools to give parents many different kinds of information and notices in a uniform and understandable format and, to the extent practicable, in a language that the parents can understand. Listed below are some of these required notices that must be made to parents by school districts or individual public schools.

Teacher Qualifications and Highly Effective Teachers

At the beginning of each year, an LEA shall notify parents that they may request, and the LEA will provide, information regarding whether professionals are highly effective, including the qualifications of the student’s teachers and paraprofessionals. This includes information about whether the student’s teacher:

- 1) has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 2) is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
- 3) is teaching in the field of discipline not of the certification of the teacher; and
- 4) is teaching alongside paraprofessionals and, if so, the paraprofessional’s qualifications [ESSA § 1112(e)(1)(A)].

Student Privacy

Districts must give parents annual notice at the beginning of the school year of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

- activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal student information for the purpose of marketing or selling that information;
- administration of surveys containing request for certain types of sensitive information; and
- any nonemergency, invasive physical examination that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school, scheduled in advance, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of student.

A district must develop and adopt policies regarding the rights of parents to inspect:

- third-party surveys before they are administered or distributed to students; measures to protect student privacy when surveys ask for certain sensitive information;
- any instructional materials;
- administration of physical examinations or screening of students; collection, disclosure, or use of personal information from students for the purpose of marketing or selling that information; and
- the parental right to inspect any instrument used to collect personal information before it is distributed to students.

Districts must give parents annual notice of an adoption or continued use of such policies and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in such policies [20 U.S.C. 1232g].

Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents of elementary and secondary students certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED) –

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –

- Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
- Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –

- Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
- Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Van Buren County Schools will/has develop[ed] and adopt[ed] policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. **Van Buren County Schools** will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. **Van Buren County Schools** will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. **Van Buren County Schools** will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this direct notification requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
 - Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

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

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

School may dismiss early due to inclement weather or emergency conditions, so we need an early dismissal plan on file for your child. It is your responsibility to keep up with the weather conditions and be prepared for the possibility of early dismissal. This information will be on local television, radio, and sent through our Automated Phone System. Only the people listed on the Emergency Release Form will be allowed to pick up your child. Identification may be requested if the office staff does not recognize the individual. Remember, it may be several months before this plan is used. If your plan or contact information changes please come by the office to update information.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress in a manner that does not create a distraction in the learning environment.

1. No midriff, cut-off, spaghetti straps, or see-through shirts or tops.
2. No clothing with alcohol, tobacco, profanity or inappropriate slogans/pictures.
3. Tennis shoes are required for physical education and recess. Only tennis shoes are allowed on the gym floor. It is best to wear them daily rather than changing shoes at school.
4. Caps, hats, hoods ,or bandanas may not be worn in the building (except Hat Day).
5. The length of shorts, skirts, and dresses should be at least mid-thigh.
6. Shirts/sweaters/dresses must have sleeves. Undergarments should not be visible.

BRINGING TOYS/FOOD ITEMS TO SCHOOL

Students should not bring items from home unless their teacher instructs them to do so. The student will assume responsibility for any items brought to school.

If personal belongings are lost or broken at school, the school will not be responsible. Please help your child keep all personal belongings at home.

Due to food allergy concerns, contact the teacher before bringing food items to school for parties or classroom treats. It is best for foods to be packaged and contain an ingredient label. Healthy treats such as fresh fruits or vegetables are appreciated.

TELEPHONES/CELL PHONES

Office telephones may not be used by students to call home unless there is an emergency. Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones to school. However, if a parent feels that his/her child needs to bring one to school, it **may not be out** during school hours and **must be turned off**. Cell phones that are out during school hours will be taken to the office for parent pick-up. Continuous issues with cell phones will result in phones being kept for longer periods of time.

Effective July 1, 2025, Tennessee law mandates that all public schools implement policies restricting student use of personal electronic devices—including cell phones, tablets, smartwatches, and gaming devices—during instructional time. These policies aim to minimize classroom distractions and enhance student focus. Exceptions are permitted for educational purposes, emergencies, and for students with documented medical needs or disabilities as outlined in an IEP or 504 plan .

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is a key factor in school achievement, therefore students are required by state law and board policy to be present each day school is in session. In order to be promoted, a student in the Van Buren County school system must attend classes the state mandated minimum amount of time. If a student must be absent for one of the following board policy reasons, the absence will be **EXCUSED** with documentation:

- Student's personal illness (parental note/doctor's statement)
- Illness in family requiring temporary help from student (Physician statement required)
- Death in family – Three (3) days maximum (parental note/telephone call)
- Special recognized religious activities (parental note/telephone call)
- School sponsored activities
- Court appearance (documentation required)
- Extenuating circumstances created by emergencies which the student has no control over (parental note/doctor's note)

All absences for other reasons will be **UNEXCUSED**. The absences listed above will also be recorded as **UNEXCUSED** if the official documentation is not turned into the office within 2 school days of the absence. **Students are allowed 6 parent notes for the entire school year(3 PER SEMESTER)** as an excused absence with no other documentation. Additional absences will require other official documentation.

The process of truancy proceedings will begin after a student has been absent **UNEXCUSED** three (3) days within a semester.

A student missing more than six (6) days per semester (12 per year) will be expected to make up additional days. All make-up time will be made up at SES through the LEAPS after-school program or through other events deemed appropriate by the school principal (participation in school sports' practices or games are not acceptable to make up time). If the additional absences are not made up the student could risk being promoted. Students who have to make up time in the schools "Time for Time" program for missing more than the allotted days does not take the place of or intervene in Truancy Proceedings due to unexcused absences.

Students participating in school sponsored activities, whether "on" or "off" campus during regular school hours shall not be counted absent. In order to qualify as "school sponsored" the activity must be school planned with standards, school directed, and teacher supervised. Students scheduled for one of these activities that do not attend will be counted absent using the same criteria as all other absences.

In order for a tardy to be excused, the student must present a **doctor's statement** at the time of his/her arrival. **Any tardy without a doctor's statement will be unexcused.**

The same will apply to students checking out early if it is not for one of the reasons for an excused absence. Upon their return, they must present a doctor's statement or a note from the parent or guardian (which counts as one of the three allowable parent notes) for it to be excused.

Any student requiring medical treatment for an extended period of time will not be counted absent, but will receive homebound services **when requested by the doctor.**

[NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by § 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.]

[Optional] See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent.

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

To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))

To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))

To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)

In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))

To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))

To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))

To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))

To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))

To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))

To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))

Information the school has designated as "directory information" if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))

To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))

To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

PARENTAL NOTIFICATIONS

Notification of Rights under FERPA for Elementary and Secondary Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day Spencer Elementary School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

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

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the Spencer Elementary School to amend their child's or their education record should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

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

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

[Optional] Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student.]

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the [School] to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

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

ATTENDANCE PROGRESSIVE INTERVENTION PLAN

TRUANCY

Tier I of the progressive truancy plan shall apply to all students within the district and include schoolwide prevention-oriented supports to assist with satisfactory attendance. Each school will be responsible for implementing school-wide prevention-oriented supports for student attendance. These supports will be published annually to parents and students prior to the start of school.

As a part of Tier I plan, students with 3 unexcused absences will meet with the school counselor or social worker to discuss reasons for the absences and a plan to remedy the problem. If they continue to accumulate unexcused absences (5) they will progress to Tier II.

Tier II of the progressive truancy plan shall be implemented after the student accumulates five (5) unexcused absences, but before referral to juvenile court and includes the following:

1. A conference with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
2. An attendance contract, based on the conference, signed by the student, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and the Attendance supervisor/designee. The contract shall include:
 - A. A specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the student; and
 - B. The period for which the contract is effective; and
 - C. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offenses, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court.
3. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student's progress; and
4. A school employee shall conduct an individualized assessment detailing the reasons a student has been absent from school and if needed, referral to counseling

Tier III shall be implemented if the truancy interventions under Tier II are unsuccessful. Tier III shall consist of the following interventions: school-based community services and Truancy Board. The interventions shall address students' needs in an age-appropriate manner. Finalized plans shall be approved by the Director of Attendance. If any tier of progressive truancy intervention is unsuccessful with a student and the school can document that the student's parent/guardian or other with control over the students is unwilling to cooperate with the truancy intervention requirements outlined in the truancy plan, then the Director of Schools or designee may report the student's absences to the appropriate judge pursuant to law/policy without first having to implement subsequent intervention tiers, if any. Evidence of unwillingness to cooperate with the truancy intervention plan requirements includes, but is not limited to, a parent's/guardian's multiple failures or refusals to attend conferences, return telephone calls or attend follow-up meetings, failure or refusal to enter into an attendance contract or failure or refusal to actively participate in any of the tiers of the truancy plan.

TRANSPORTATION

A consistent, daily plan for arrival/dismissal is important for your child's safety. All changes to this plan must be communicated by parent note. In cases of emergency, you may call the office before 2:00pm. Avoid last minute changes to ensure your child is safely transported. Proper behavior is required of all bus students in the interest of safety for all passengers. The cooperation of parents is required to assure your child a safe ride to and from school.

Riding a bus is a privilege that can be revoked because of discipline problems.

Questions regarding bus transportation can be directed to Joseph Hensley, Van Buren County Schools Transportation Supervisor at (931) 946-2242.

BUS #	DRIVER'S NAME	Van Buren County Bus Routes 2019/2020
#5	Robin Green	PINEY/BAKER MTN
		Old State Hwy 111, Archie Rhinehart Pkwy, Walling Rd, Clendenon Rd, Howard Rd, Bellview Circle Rd, Hwy 111, Piney Rd
#6	Dale Bouldin	NEW MARTIN
		Highway 30, Jack's Branch, Plainview, Groves Rd, Deweese Rd, Park Rd, Myers Rd, Slater Loop, Gulf Rd, Honeysuckle Rd
#7	Carolyn Kelly-Yates	ROCKY RIVER
		Harper Rd, Rocky River Rd, Boyd Rd, Earl Ln, Hwy. 30, Russell Rd, Laurelburg Rd, Hillis Cemetery Rd, Westview Rd
#11	Michelle Brock	MOONEYHAM
		Mooneyham/Lonewood Rd, Van Winkle Rd, Wilson Rd, Herb Mooneyham Rd, Doc Roberts Rd, Mockingbird Ln, Earl's Loop, Salzer Mtn. West, Salzer Mtn. East
#12	Marlene Lowery	SHADY OAKS/GREENBRIER
		Spring St, College St, Turkey Scratch Rd, Sherwood Dr, Baker and Boyd, Joe Brock St, Shady Oaks Dr, Drake and Shockley St, Greenbrier, Bluff View Dr, Pine Grove Rd, Old State Hwy 111, Phifer Mine Rd, Goforth Rd
#15	Peggy Mooneyham	SPENCER
		Captain Carter Rd, Woodlee St, Andrew K. Parker Rd, Moon Rd., Spokelay, Little Falls Rd, Argo Rd, Hale St, North Hwy 111, Old McMinnville St, Spencer Dr, IB Maynard, Turkey Scratch, Popular St, College St, Old Dunlap Rd, Scenic Drive, Church St. Taft St, Billingsley St, Hill Rd.
#16	Rita Gilbert	CUMMINGSVILLE
		Cummings Cove Rd, Bald Knob Mtn, Sparkmantown Cummingsville Rd, Hodges Ferry Rd, Sparkmantown Rd, River Side Dr, River Oaks, Cane Creek Rd, Hickory Valley Rd, Lemont and Yates Mtn. Rd, Hidden River, Del Toro Dr, Brock Ln, Connell Rd, Cummings Chapel, Stoney Point Mtn. Rd
#17	Marcie Hillis	BONE CAVE
		Mitchell Hollow Rd, Cedar Grove Rd, Bone Cave Rd, Hunter Miller Rd, Post Office Rd, Antioch Rd., Sparkman Town Rd, Baker Mtn Rd (Hwy 30 side), R.T.Davis Rd, McCoy St

BUS SAFETY COMPLAINTS

The following procedure will govern how students, teachers, staff, and community members shall submit bus safety complaints. All complaints shall be submitted to the transportation supervisor. Each bus shall be equipped with the phone number for reporting safety complaints. This number shall appear on the rear bumper. The transportation supervisor shall begin an investigation of all bus safety complaints within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt. Within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the initial complaint, the transportation supervisor shall submit a preliminary report to the director of schools. This report shall include: 1) The time and date the complaint was received; 2) The name of the bus driver; 3) A copy or summary of the complaint; and 4) Any prior complaints or disciplinary actions taken against the driver. Within sixty (60) school days of receiving the initial complaint, the transportation supervisor shall submit a final written report to the director of schools that details the investigation's findings as well as the action taken in response to the complaint.

MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

Medication shall be administered only when the student's health requires that it be given during school hours. It is the parent's responsibility to bring this medication to school and give it to the school nurse/designee and to remove any unused medication when treatment is completed. All prescription medication must be brought to school in the original container. The pharmacy label must include the following information:

Name of student
Prescription number
Name of medication and dosage
Administration route or other directions ---- DATE
Licensed prescriber's name
Pharmacy name, address and phone number

All non-prescription medication must be brought to school in the original manufacturer's labeled container with the ingredients listed and the child's name affixed on the container. Medication will be administered in accordance with the dosage requirements on the label. No more than one month's supply of any medication should be brought to school.

NON-DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

Students and school employees shall be provided a school environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination/harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee to discriminate against or harass an individual through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious in nature.

Such discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated. Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures, or words either written or spoken of a sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious nature.

HOMELESS INFORMATION

If you have lost your housing and now live in a shelter, motel, vehicle, camp ground, or on the street, please get in touch with our Homeless Liaison, Dr. Denise Whittenberg at (931) 946-2242 ext# 23, Jill Bouldin, Homeless System Navigator at (931) 946-2242 ext. 25 or Ms. Vanessa Waters, State Homeless Coordinator at (615) 917-3750 for information resources.

IMMUNIZATION

No students entering school, including those entering kindergarten or seventh grade, those from out-of-state and those from non-public school, will be permitted to enroll (or attend) without proof of required immunizations. It is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to have their children immunized and to provide such proof to the principal of the school that the student is to attend. All certificates of immunization shall be on forms furnished by the Department of Health. Per TCA 49-6-5005 Schools are required to provide parents with info about meningococcal disease and the effectiveness of the vaccination. Parents/Guardians can contact the school, health department, or their doctor to

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found is located in/by the front office. All items that are turned in to the office will remain there for ten (10) days. After ten days, all items will be subject to disposal. We have a huge number of lost and unclaimed coats and jackets each year, please write your child's name in their coats/jackets.

MAKE-UP WORK

Any assignment missed due to an EXCUSED absence will be given to the student upon request by the student. Arrangements for missed assignments or tests will be made up on the day the student returns to school. It is the responsibility of the **STUDENT**, **NOT** the **TEACHER**, to initiate the request for all make-up work, including the test. However, the teachers will encourage all students to get their make-up work in on schedule, and those instructing younger students will be more tolerable, especially to students in K-3. Students will be given the same number of days to complete the daily make-up work that they missed. Teachers will schedule a make-up test that is convenient for both parties. Students can be given a grade of "0" for all assignments missed if the absence is classified UNEXCUSED.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Students that do not pass their courses and/or make-up time from days missed will be assigned to summer school at the discretion of the Principal.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are furnished by the State of Tennessee and are issued to each student at the beginning of the school year/semester. Once issued, the textbook becomes the responsibility of the student. If lost or damaged, the student will pay for it. The same policy will apply to lost or damaged library books, equipment or supplies related to a content area or athletics.

VISITORS

The school policy is to permit on school grounds only people who have legitimate business at SES. Visitor parking is located in front of the main school building. All visitors must report to the main office upon arrival at school. All visitors will sign in, receive a visitor pass, and sign out before leaving school grounds. **No one will go directly to a classroom.** Students cannot bring visitors to school. Teachers will send anyone not on their class roll to the office. Unauthorized visitors must leave the school grounds.

INFLUENZA COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENT

Pursuant to Public Chapter 22, schools must annually provide parents and guardians with information about influenza disease and the effectiveness of vaccination against influenza at the beginning of every school year. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the TN Department of Health encourage everyone six months of age and older to get a flu shot each year. Everyone can benefit from getting a flu vaccine, but it is especially important for young children who are among the most at risk for serious illness and death from influenza.

BUS TRANSPORTATION/DISCIPLINE 2026-2027

BUS STOP	
1	Arrive at the bus stop ten minutes before scheduled pickup time. It is important that your student arrive at the bus stop on time. We cannot wait for your student to come out of the house, off of the porch, or get out of a vehicle once the bus has arrived. While waiting for the bus, students must stand away from the road. Younger students should be permitted to load first.
2	Students are only permitted to get on or off the bus at their assigned stop. To get off the bus at any other location on the assigned route the student is required to have a form signed by the principal. Guest riders with a form are only permitted to ride on a space available basis.
3	Students must depart from the bus in an orderly manner. Students should move away from the bus promptly to a location at least 10 feet from the roadway. If crossing the roadway the student should be at least 10 feet in front of the bus and be able to see the driver's face. They should not cross the road until the driver waves to them that it is safe.

DISCIPLINE	
4	Students are under the supervision and control of the bus driver while on the bus, and all reasonable directions given shall be followed by showing consideration and respect for the bus driver and your fellow students. The school bus is an extension of school activity; therefore, students shall conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior.
5	The principal of the student shall be informed by the bus driver of any serious discipline problem and may be called upon to assist if necessary. Upon recommendation by the bus driver, a student may be denied the privilege of riding the bus if the principal determines that the student's behavior is such as to cause disruption on the bus, or if the student disobeys state or local rules and regulations pertaining to student transportation.
6	All Van Buren County School Buses are equipped with camera systems. These cameras record at all times and the video will be used as needed to settle misbehavior problems on the bus as the principal sees fit.

SAFETY	
7	Emergency exits must be free from obstructions at all times. The bus driver may prohibit any equipment or object considered to be dangerous to the safety and welfare of those on board. Student possessions may not be placed in the aisle, in front of the bus or on the floor. Ball equipment and class projects will be permitted only when they can be held on the student's lap, and not obstruct the student's view.
8	No food or drink will be consumed on the bus during regular scheduled routes. Every child should have a backpack for loose papers. Lunches may be carried in their backpack.
9	Students are not allowed to have in hand or mouth any objects, food, candy, gum, etc...while on the bus.
10	Students must remain seated at all times. They are not permitted to use the emergency windows, emergency doors or touch the safety equipment without the driver's permission.
11	No glass containers or objects, balloons, or animals are permitted on the bus.
12	Students are not permitted to open or close windows without the permission of the driver. Keep hands, arms, and heads inside the bus. Throwing objects in or out of the bus is prohibited.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR	
13	Do not fight, engage in rough play, or use profane language or obscenities while waiting for the school bus, on the bus or after leaving the bus.
14	Students should not deface or cause damage to the bus in any way. Parents/guardians will be responsible for damage and asked to pay for repair/replacement materials.
15	Tobacco products and paraphernalia are prohibited on the bus.
16	The Bus Driver has the authority to seat any or all students for any reason.

CAFETERIA

As a result of a federal grant all Van Buren County students receive (1) breakfast meal and (1) lunch meal free of charge. Students who choose extra items of food must pay the cashier for them. Students are not allowed to charge for extra food items.

Students are allowed to set up an “account” to be used for meals. Students may deposit money into the meal account and may use the last four digits of their social security number to purchase items from the account.

Any questions regarding food and nutrition or the SES cafeteria can be directed to Christy Troglen Van Buren County Schools Nutrition Supervisor at (931) 946-2242 or Carrie Thompson, SES Cafeteria Manager at (931) 946-2171.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Spencer Elementary School holds emergency drills monthly. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas are posted in all rooms. All teachers and substitutes have safety plans and procedures in the classroom. Teachers will instruct students where to go and what to do in case of an emergency. Students should follow all instructions given to them and remain calm. In the event of an actual emergency, parents are asked to wait for directions and refrain from calling or coming to the school. Be aware that cell phone use can interfere with the emergency services system causing a delay in emergency management response. **In order to keep our emergency lanes clear, please wait to line up in the parent pick-up loop after 2:40 each afternoon.**

PUBLICATIONS

The yearbook will be sold each year. It contains pictures of students, staff, and candid shots of activities during the year. Purchasing information will be sent home with students and yearbooks will be delivered in the late spring. Student pictures, names, and work may be published in local newspapers or on the school website. If you do not want your child’s name or picture to be published, please submit a written signed request to the school.

ACTIVITIES

Spencer Elementary School seeks to provide students with a well-rounded education that includes a variety of activities. All students may participate in activities scheduled by the school and sponsored either by the PTO or the school itself. Activities are designed to increase students’ awareness of their world and to develop skills essential for social and academic development. Some activities offered at Spencer Elementary School include:

- Eagle Excellence
- PTO Events
- Field Day
- BEST groups
- Run Club
- Field Trips
- 4-H Club
- Book Fairs
- L.E.A.P.s After-School Program

EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT AND INFORMATION

If a student has a medical emergency at school or a school-related activity when the parent cannot be reached, the school must have written parental consent to obtain emergency medical treatment and information about allergies to medications, etc. Therefore, parents are asked each year to complete an emergency information form. Parents should keep emergency care information up-to-date as needed through the school office throughout the school year.

INTERFERENCE/DISRUPTION OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

“BULLYING”

The staff is authorized to take reasonable measures to establish appropriate school behavior. Any professional employee shall have the authority to control the conduct of any student while under the supervision of the school system. This authority shall extend to all activities of the school, including all games and public performances of athletic teams and other school groups, trips, excursions and all other activities under school sponsorship and direction. Such measures may include the use of reasonable force to restrain or correct students and maintain order.

A student shall not use violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance or any other conduct which causes the disruption, interference or obstruction of any school purpose while on school property, in school vehicles or buses, or at any school-sponsored activity, function or event, whether on or off campus. Neither shall she/he urge other students to engage in such conduct.

Harassment, intimidation and other conduct that may be considered “bullying” will not be tolerated. Students shall not engage in conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with another student’s academic development or that creates a hostile or offensive learning environment.

A student found guilty of misbehavior may receive punishment ranging from verbal reprimand to suspension and/or expulsion dependent on the severity of the offense and the offender’s prior record.

Van Buren County School System provides “Bullying Prevention” activities throughout the school year to promote awareness of the harmful effects of bullying and to develop bullying prevention strategies for students and staff.