

Parent Announcements
January 2018
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JANUARY SCHOOL CALENDAR.

Monday, January 15, 2018 = No School - Martin Luther King, Jr Day.

SCHOOL CALENDAR FORMULA. State Requirement: Pupil Attendance Days + Interrupted Days + Full Day of PT Conferences + 4 Teacher Institute Days = 180. Must build in 5 emergency days. Emergency days must be "made up" at the end of the year. We have used two emergency days (January 2 and January 4). At this time, the last day of student attendance will be Friday, May 25, 2018, with the last day for teachers being Tuesday, May 29, 2018. If we would happen to exhaust all of our emergency days (we have three left), the last day of student attendance would be Thursday, May 31, 2018, with the last day for teachers being Friday, June 1, 2018.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDENT ATTENDANCE. Nothing is more important than the education of your child. And attendance at school is a vital part of your child's success. Our student attendance rate is 95% (which is very good). Our school calendar is provided to our community months in advance. What am I getting at? I understand emergencies or real sickness, but taking your children out of school for vacations, trips, or simply giving them permission to skip school, hurts your child's education and nothing is more important than the education of your child. There is no way collecting homework for the week can replace the educational value of being in class with their teacher. In addition, it is the responsibility of parents and the school system to teach our young people the importance of "just showing up." The "just showing up" philosophy is a key ingredient to having a successful life. As we prepare our young people for the "real world," it is critical we do not teach them it is ok to "blow off school." "Blowing off school" will eventually lead to "blowing off a job" or other responsibilities. This attitude and mentality does not play out well in the real world when they have a job. The hard skills we teach our young people will help them get a job; however, it is the soft skills that we teach them that will help them keep that job. Attendance might be a soft skill, but it is also a critical skill.

GIVING. I am always overwhelmed by the amount of heartfelt giving demonstrated by the people of our community during the holiday season. The purest form of giving is that with no strings attached, and that is exactly what you do year after year. This generosity is one of the best gifts you give your children, the gift of a great example. As Winston Churchill said, "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." So many of you...do so much...for so many. Thank you.

2017 TAX LEVY. Our last year's extension was \$2,605,073. Our tax levy request is \$2,760,262. This is an increase of 5.96%. This is comparing what we actually received last year to what we are asking for this year.

SPORTSMANSHIP AT BALLGAMES. As you know, we have very high behavior expectations for our students and our student-athletes. We receive countless compliments for their behavior and in many ways it separates us from the others. We do not judge how others do it. We just know how we do it. It has always been my belief that "academics (hard skills) and life skills (soft skills) must be taught and emphasized in order for students to live their dreams and be productive citizens." Learning how to respond appropriately to adversity is often the difference between winning and losing on the court and off the court. It is important all of us set an example for the type of behavior we want from our young people. I know this is hard. But, our young people do not listen to us, but they always watch us. Please lead by example. Everyone has a role at a ball game. The players have a role. The coaches have a role. The officials have a role. And the parents have a role. It is important everyone focuses on their role and not the role of the other stakeholders. It is when these roles become intertwined that problems occur. Everyone needs to fulfill their role and fulfill their role well. One of the roles of the coaches is to stand up/defend his players with officials. Sometimes parents try to fulfill this role and it seldom "pans out." In all my years in athletics, I have rarely seen an official "get better" when a parent yells at them or corrects them. However, I have seen officials take it out on the players/team (not the good ones). That is not our intention, but that is the reality. In addition, I believe excessive judging of officials leads to players having a crutch and a "woe is me" attitude vs. having the ability to overcome obstacles and rise above situations. This plays out in life as well. With all that said, I know it is difficult. I know it is not easy. But, I also know it is very, very important. Any fans, including adult fans, who behave in an inappropriate manner or who are ejected from an event by a game official/judge/administrator during Southeastern School athletic or extracurricular activities, whether the activity is home or away, will be denied admission. The penalty for the offense could result in additional days or less days depending on the severity and circumstances of the incident. First Offense: 30-day suspension from all extracurricular activities ("In most situations, an automatic 8 game/contest/event suspension"). Second Offense: 12-month suspension from all extracurricular activities.

BALLGAME ETIQUETTE. For the safety of everyone, please remain in your seats until timeouts or between games. People walking up and down the sideline during play is very dangerous. Thank you for your understanding and help in this matter.

TWO-HOUR DELAYED START. At the October 2015 Board Meeting, the Board of Education "approved the use of a two-hour delayed start procedure when deemed necessary by the administration." In a nutshell, this two-hour delayed start will give us another option when dealing with weather conditions. Over the past three years, we have canceled school several times because at the time of travel (6:30-8:30), conditions were not considered safe for students and staff. Usually this was due to wind chill temperatures, but could also be for dense fog, light freezing rain, etc. On several of these days, if school would have started two hours later, we could have had school. Therefore, a two-hour delayed start will be an option for the 2017-2018 school year.

Why is this important?

- 1) A day of teaching/learning in February is not the same as a day of teaching/learning in May/June.
- 2) Missing multiple days of school prior to state testing and then adding multiple days after state testing does not help state testing.

It is my plan to primarily use the two-hour delayed start to battle dangerous wind chill temperatures AND to make the announcement the night before. This gives everyone a chance to prepare and make the necessary and appropriate arrangements. Obviously, it could be used for other scenarios, but for the most part it will have a very targeted purpose.

Two-Hour Delayed Start Questions and Answers

1. How will parents be notified of a two-hour delayed start? Parents will be notified by School Messenger, television, and radio.
2. What time does school start on a two-hour delayed start? Everything will be two hours later. Southeastern Junior/Senior High classes will begin at 10:15 (Students will report to their third period class which starts at 10:20). Southeastern Elementary classes will start at 10:00.
3. What time will the bus pick up my child? Everything will be two hours later. If the bus usually picks your child up at 7:25, then the bus will pick up your child at 9:25.
4. What time do employees start? Everything will be two hours later. If an employee usually has to be at school at 7:55 regularly, then they will have to be at school at 9:55.
5. Will there be Pre-K on a two-hour delayed start? There will be NO Pre-K (morning or afternoon).
6. Will breakfast be served on a two-hour delayed start? Only cereal or pop tart, milk, and juice will be served.
7. Can parents drop their children off early? No. Parents should make the necessary arrangements to ensure their children arrive at school at the appropriate time. Please do not leave younger children home alone or drop children off early.
8. When will school be dismissed on two-hour delayed start? School will be dismissed at regular school dismissal times.
9. I have stated that the primary use of the two-hour delayed start is to battle dangerous wind chill temperatures AND to make the announcement the night before. What is the rationale for such a targeted purpose? Obviously, the safety of our students is the primary reason for any weather-related cancellation or delay. Making the call the night before ensures that parents have the opportunity to make the necessary arrangements especially for elementary students. A decision made the morning of may result in students being left unsupervised at home or cause them to have even greater exposure to the elements. For example, a student whose parents have already left for work may have to walk to school instead of being dropped off. I realize there are going to be mornings where it appears the two-hour delayed start would be ideal. However, for the reasons previously stated as well as the uncertainty in predicting improved road conditions and/or weather changes, I will not be making the two-hour delayed start call the morning of. I am sure there are exceptions, but that is the rule.