



www.strideacademy.org

320.230.5340

"Keep your child a step ahead."

Mission

STRIDE Academy will provide educational experiences for all children promoting a strong foundation in all core academic areas. Using research based curriculum, students will excel academically through real-life educational experiences in a challenging, caring and student-centered environment. By meeting each student's unique educational, emotional and social needs, students will be empowered to become responsible life long learners and leaders.

Staff

Dale Beutel, Executive Director
Jason Ulbrich, Principal
Lowell Haagenson, Dean of Student Services/
Special Education Director
Cameo DeDominces, Dean of Operations/
Activities Director
Julie Gromberg, Administrative Assistant
Michelle Hahn, School Nurse
Rodger Vix, Maintenance
Stacy Abraham, Paraprofessional
Courtney Budge, Speech
LeeAnna Christensen, Math
Elizabeth Cox, Paraprofessional
Tim Heerts, Choir
Jennifer Hensel, Physical Education/Health

Matt McClure, Science
Tyler Mykkanen, Special Education
Judy Nettleton, Art
Mary Ann Padgett, Social Worker
Claudette Schaeffer, Science/Language Arts
Arnelle Schlicht, Custodian
Adam Stock, Social Studies
Matt Stockinger, Paraprofessional
Mary Swanson, Math/Math Coach
Ann Theisen, Spanish
Ben Theisen, Paraprofessional
Becky Wallin, Band
Lisa Wallwork, Language Arts
Jacob Zierden, Social Studies – Long Term Sub

Contact Information

Phone Number: 320.217.6940

Fax Number: 320.217.6318

School Address: 3241 Oakham Lane, St. Cloud, MN 56301

Web Site: www.strideacademy.org

Email: first initial & last name @strideacademy.org (example: julbrich@strideacademy.org)

Arrival and Dismissal Procedure

CLASSES BEGIN AT 8:30 a.m. AND DISMISS AT 2:45 p.m. (these times are subject to change depending on transportation coordination). Students should NOT arrive at school prior to 7:45 a.m. and must be picked up by 3:00 p.m. Students need to be dropped off at the front entrance. Students will go directly to their first period class. Students must be picked up after school at the front entrance.

If it is necessary to have a transportation change made or a note delivered to your son or daughter, please call the office (320.217.6941) **BEFORE 2:00 p.m.** in order to allow enough time for delivery.

For the safety and well-being of your child, it is necessary for the school to require that students be dismissed only from the office. Students will not be dismissed from the classroom. If you intend to pick up your child at school during the day, please inform the teacher of the time and sign the checkout book in the office. We ask that parents NOT wait outside the classroom door. We ask when you are picking up your child you park your car in a parking spot and physically pick them up at the front entrance. **Please DO NOT stop or park your car in front of the entrance.** Normal office hours are from 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Attendance

Parents please call the office when your child is absent before 9:00 a.m.

Regular school attendance is vital for the child to experience optimum success at school and throughout life. Attendance habits developed in childhood often carry over into later school years and influence attitudes about work responsibility in later life. It is important that parents consider carefully any condition or activity that will keep the child out of school. Routine visits to doctor, dentists, etc., should be made at an after school hour if possible. Parents are urged to consider the school calendar carefully when planning family vacations, especially during summer session. Attendance is taken in every classroom at approximately 8:45 a.m. Calls will be made home throughout the day in order to verify absences. Parents must send a note to the office in order to excuse absences.

Excused Absences: Regular attendance in school is a critical factor in student progress. The burden of a child being excused from school is placed on the parent/guardian. The school has the right to accept or not accept an excused absence. The school can reject invalid or unacceptable excuses from school. If it appears a parent/guardian is requesting that the school excuse excessive absences or keeping a child home for unacceptable reasons, the school has the responsibility to collect data and report excessive absences as truant and report to the proper authorities.

Since STRIDE Academy follows a year-round school calendar with breaks approximately every three months, families with children attending the Academy are expected to plan family vacations around the school calendar. Family vacations are not routinely accepted as excused absences. A request for an excused absence to attend Summer Camp during Academy school attendance days must be approved by the Principal or Dean of Students.

Examples of Acceptable Reasons for Absenteeism

- Illness (The school may request medical verification.)
- Doctor, dentist, mental health or other medical appointment. We encourage parents to make appointments before or after school.
- Religious holidays
- Extreme family emergencies (house fire, serious accident)
- Death in the immediate family

Examples of Unacceptable Reasons for Absenteeism

- Staying home to baby-sit, “needed at home”
- Missed the bus, no way to get the student to school
- Overslept
- Student is “having a bad day”
- Travel, family vacations without prior approval
- Weather is too cold, too hot, too stormy
- Student has nothing to wear

Definitions

- Tardy: school start time – 2 hours
- Half-day absence: 3 – 4.5 hours
- Daily absence: greater than 4.5 hour

Avoid an unexcused absence by completing the Prior Approval form

Prior Approval Request for Excused Vacation or Family Activity		
_____ will be absent from		
(m/d/y) _____ to _____, a total of _____ school day(s).		
My child will be involved in a family activity. I understand that up to 5 days per year of family activities/vacations may be counted as excused absences and that any days in excess of that are counted as unexcused absences. neglect/truancy reports.		
_____	_____	_____
Parent Name	Parent Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Principal's Signature		Date
FOR ATTENDANCE OFFICE USE ONLY		
Excused Absences Dates: _____ Unexcused Absence Dates: _____		

School age students (7 to 18 years) are expected to attend school. Unexcused absences may result in a truancy petition. We will monitor attendance closely and report truancy as mandated by state law. We will work collaboratively with County agencies to assist in resolving issues that result in truancy petitions.

Backpacks

Backpacks are not allowed to be worn in the building during the school hours except with the approval of the building administrator. Backpacks are to remain in lockers.

Behavior Plan

Positive behavior reinforcement and consequences for inappropriate behavior choices are described in detail in our STRIDE Academy Behavior Plan.

Breakfast

A “grab and go” style breakfast will be available for all students. The cost for breakfast is \$1.45, however **families may qualify for free breakfast based on verification of income.** These forms are available in the Office. The breakfast serving times are 7:45 a.m. until 8:25 a.m. or when the last bus arrives.

Building Visitors

For the safety and well-being of all children, the following guidelines regarding visitors in the building have been developed:

- All visitors, including parents and volunteers, must check-in at the school office and receive a badge. Anyone not wearing a badge will be asked to go to the office and get one.
- Visitors who have not checked in at the office will be asked to check in or leave the premises.
- Children visiting - former students, relatives or friends wishing to visit STRIDE Academy may do so during lunch and recess only. Children must be accompanied by an adult and sponsored by a teacher.

Bullying

The Board of STRIDE Academy supports a secure school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. The staff is expected to create a climate in which all types of bullying are unacceptable.

Bullying is defined as any written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture, or a pattern of those behaviors, that is intended to cause distress upon one or more students in the school environment, including the school building, grounds, vehicles, bus stops, and all school-sponsored activities and events.

A student who engages in any act of bullying is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement authorities. The severity and pattern of the bullying behavior shall be taken into consideration when disciplinary decisions are made.

Anti-bullying efforts shall be aimed toward accomplishing the following goals:

- To send a clear message to students, staff, parents, and community members that bullying will not be tolerated.
- To train staff and students in taking pro-active steps to prevent bullying from occurring.
- To implement procedures for immediate intervention, investigation, and confrontation of students engaged in bullying behavior.
- To initiate efforts to change the behavior of students engaged in bullying behaviors through re-education on acceptable behavior, discussions, counseling, and appropriate negative consequences.
- To foster a productive partnership with parents and community members in order to help maintain a bully-free environment.
- To support victims of bullying with individual, group and/or peer counseling.
- To help develop peer support networks, social skills and confidence for all students.
- To recognize and praise positive, supportive behaviors of students toward one another on a regular basis.

Students who are the victim of bullying should report the incident to his or her teacher, Dean, or Principal.

Bus Safety Training

Bus Safety Training will be provided to all STRIDE Academy students soon after the beginning of school. Training verification slips are required for all students. Free bus safety curriculum and resources are available from the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Bus Supervision & Guidelines

Students must ride on their assigned bus only. According to District 742 transportation guidelines, students are not allowed to ride a bus other than the one they are assigned. They may not switch busses nor ride to a friend's home on a different bus. This policy is an issue of safety. Contact District 742 and STRIDE if any changes are needed in your transportation needs. **Riding a school bus is a privilege.**

There will be a shuttle bus from STRIDE Elementary School to the middle school in the morning. This shuttle will leave the elementary school at 7:45 a.m. There will also be a shuttle that will transport students from the middle school to the elementary school. Students needing to ride this shuttle will depart the middle school at the end of the school day. Students that may ride this bus will include those with siblings at the elementary school that are car riders, those that attend the extended day program, and those that are in extra-curricular activities taking place at the elementary school.

Transportation Bus Phone Numbers

District 742: 253-9370

MTN – Sauk Rapids: 252-2828

Spanier Bus: 251-3313

Cellular Phones

Cellular phones are not to be used by students during our school day. In fact, students are highly encouraged to leave cell phones home. A school phone is available in every classroom and office for any emergency communication. Also, our office phone is answered during all hours of school operation and we are happy to facilitate your incoming messages to your children until 2:00 p.m. every day. Finally, STRIDE Academy cannot accept responsibility for lost, stolen or damaged phones. The fact is, cell phones are a distraction to learning. Our lockers do not have locks on them – they are more like cubbies with doors, so all students do have access to all lockers throughout the school day. Student interest is naturally drawn to cell phones and it is, therefore, highly discouraged that middle school students bring a cell phone to school. If they forget to leave it home, students will be asked to bring their cell phone to the office for safe-keeping then picked up at the end of the school day.

Charter School

STRIDE Academy is a charter school authorized by the Minnesota Department of Education. As a charter school, we are a public, non-profit entity and receive funding through the Minnesota Department of Education. We must comply with all state and federal mandates that govern public schools in the State of Minnesota. We must also comply with requirements established by our sponsor, Friends of Education. Students are not assessed tuition fees to attend STRIDE Academy.

Custody

In cases where parents are separated or divorced and only one parent has legal custody of a child, the school should be given a copy of the court order that determines custody and visitation rights. The school must have legal documentation in order to comply with any limiting court order. The school is unable to keep a non-custodial parent from picking up a child unless a valid restraining order or other appropriate legal documents are supplied to the school. State and federal data privacy laws recognize the right of a natural parent, regardless of child custody, to have access to the school records of his or her child. A non-custodial, natural parent may arrange to review the school record of his or her child as well as arrange to have materials from school, such as newsletters, mailed to them.

Discrimination – Nondiscrimination

STRIDE Academy Board of Education has adopted the following policy regarding discrimination.

“No person shall, on the grounds of race, creed, sex, marital status, national origin, age, color, religion, ancestry, status with regard to public assistance, sexual or affectional orientation, familial status or disability be subjected to discrimination in any program operated by STRIDE Academy or in recruitment, consideration, selection, employment or rate of compensation by the Academy.”

Discipline

Students at STRIDE Academy are taught that the best discipline is self-discipline. Courtesy, cooperation, friendliness and an attitude of respect for people and property are expected. Five simple rules describe expected behavior:

- Show respect for others and their possessions.
- Keep hands, feet and other objects to yourself.
- Use acceptable language.
- Follow directions.
- Do not prevent teachers from teaching or other students from learning.

Students must understand that there are consequences for making inappropriate choices. STRIDE consequences defined within our Behavior Plan are designed to help the student make better choices.

Dress Code

STRIDE Academy requires middle school students to adhere to our district-wide dress code. A dress code is conducive to positive learning outcomes in that students are not distracted by what clothing items are worn by other students. Our dress code ~~The uniform~~ consists of any solid colored polo shirts. A polo shirt is defined as a collared shirt (no prints or stripes). It may consist of buttons, preferably no more than five, but it can be without buttons. The children may wear long, short or sleeveless polo shirts. Students may wear a solid colored sweater or sweatshirt over the polo shirt (collar showing). The uniform bottoms must be khaki colored pants, skirts, skorts, shorts or capris. Any shade of tan khaki is acceptable. Any style is also acceptable (ex. Cargo, relaxed, straight leg). All skirts and shorts must be at least mid-thigh or 2 inches from thigh in length. STRIDE Academy staff will monitor the uniform and will notify students and parents if the child is not meeting the qualifications for the dress code. A color brochure is available on the website or upon request. If a student is not wearing the correct uniform, they will be asked to change clothes into the correct uniform at school. We do have limited extra clothes. Parents will then be called to ensure that that the uniform policy is followed.

Emergency School Closings

It is very important that all students know what they are to do or where they are to go in case of an early school closing. Please make these arrangements with your child before school starts and notify the school of your plan. STRIDE will use District 742 early release schedule because they provide our transportation during the winter months. We will also have a posting on our school website.

Extended Day Program (STRIDE ALIVE PROGRAM)

STRIDE Academy offers an extended day program from 3:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. each school day. The cost is \$7.50 per day. Students are offered a snack, homework help, structured activities and free choice time. The program is also offered when STRIDE is not in session. The cost for this is \$19 per day. The extended day program will be housed in the elementary school. Please contact Julie Dickinson at 290-5096 or the Elementary School Dean at 230.5340 for more information.

Extra-Curricular Activities

STRIDE Academy offers both enrichment and athletic extra-curricular offerings for students in both the elementary and middle school. Information and registration forms for fall activities will be available at the open house on August 5th. Information and registration forms for winter and spring activities will be sent home with students.

Field Trips

Students in all grades participate in field trips. These trips may require bus transportation. The field trips are carefully selected by the instructional staff to enhance and enrich students' learning. All field trips will be consistent with Core Knowledge curriculum. Some of the field trip expense is covered by a special subsidy provided by our STRIDE Academy Fundraisers. Parents are asked to help cover the field trip cost. In special cases, arrangements may be made to help reduce costs to parents. Field trip scholarships are available upon request through the school Director. No child will be denied participation because of finances. STRIDE Academy uniforms will be worn during field trips.

Fundraising

We appreciate any fundraising support or ideas you may have to offer. Please contact the office or PATHS for additional information on fundraising procedures. The ability to raise additional funds greatly increases the opportunities for academic enrichment at STRIDE Academy.

Fire Drills

Minnesota schools are required to conduct five fire drills each year. At least one of these drills must be an obstructed exit fire drill. Fire drills will be conducted on a regular basis as per the State Fire Marshall regulations. In each room, an emergency escape plan is posted.

Harassment

STRIDE Academy has a commitment to confront behaviors that are considered to be harassment. Prompt reporting and investigation by administration is mandated by the STRIDE Academy Board of Education.

The following definitions of harassment apply:

Harassment is participating in, or conspiring for others to engage in badgering acts that injure, degrade, disgrace or threaten other individuals (examples include religious persecution or cruelty directed toward an individual with a disability).

Sexual Harassment is defined as, but not limited to:

- words or actions relating to sex that are derogatory, offensive, exploitative and/or degrading; or
- a display or circulation of materials and/or pictures, which are sexually explicit or demeaning (including web-based or electronically transmitted information).

Racial Harassment and racial bias is defined, but not limited to:

- words or actions relating to another individual's or group's race that is derogatory, offensive, exploitative and/or degrading; or
- A display or circulation of materials and/or pictures, which are derogatory to an individual's race (including web-based or electronically transmitted information).

Health Services

STRIDE Academy employ's the services of a Licensed School Nurse on a part-time basis. The Licensed School Nurse maintains and oversees medical and medicinal administration. The School Office is responsible for school health services and monitoring attendance.

If a student comes to school with medication, send that student to the office to consult with office personnel about administration of the medication. Our guidelines for administration of medication follow those established by the Minnesota Department of Education.

- Administering medication from unmarked bottles or envelopes violates the medical code of ethics.
- Students shall be administered medication in school only in exceptional circumstances, wherein the student's health may be jeopardized without it.
- Prescription medication may be given at school. Medications must be contained in the original container correctly labeled by the pharmacist or doctor. The pharmacist will provide parents with two prescription bottles, upon request. Medication authorization forms are available from the office.
- If medication is prescribed to be given three times daily, or less, families are encouraged to administer the doses before school, after school and before bedtime.
- Over-the-counter medication, including Tylenol, aspirin and cough syrup, may be given when accompanied by a note from the parent/guardian and physician. Over-the-counter medication must be in the original container with printed instructions on the bottle or box.

Homework

Homework is an essential part of a student's education. It is an extension of learning that occurs in the classroom. It engages family members in the student's learning. The purpose of homework is to:

- Share the learning process with family members,
- Reinforce what is learned in class,
- Develop good study habits,
- Prepare for activities that will occur in the classroom, and
- Provide additional time to complete assignments given during class.

We want STRIDE Academy students to develop a responsible attitude towards their school work. Well-designed homework assignments are age-appropriate and within the skill-range of the students. Homework will be **directly** related to class work and expectations will be explained. The amount of

homework will vary from grade to grade and subject to subject. It will also differ according to the learning needs of individual students. Not all students require the same amount of homework. Students should have a quiet place to work and a regular "homework time" that allows them to complete all homework assignments.

Intersession Activities

There are a total of 15 intersession days. STRIDE Academy would like to provide a variety of activities for students during intersession days. These activities will be taught by teachers, parents or community members. The cost of each activity will vary depending upon the cost to the school, supplies and instructor stipends. Intersession hours are 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Please do not drop students off earlier than 8:15 a.m. and pick up students no later than 3:10 p.m., because we pay our employees until 3:00 p.m. An intersession activity book will be sent home three weeks before each intersession. If you are interested in leading an intersession activity, please contact the Elementary School Dean at 230.5340 for more information. It is essential that you sign your children up as soon as possible; the classes fill fast.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of STRIDE Academy and are not locked – They are an extension of the cubbies used in elementary school, yet with doors so students have a place to hang their coats and backpacks and to house books and other classroom materials. Each student is assigned one locker for the school year. However, all students have access to the contents within all lockers, so please consider that reality if allowing students to bring any type of electronics or other valuables to school. Uniform lockers help create a positive learning environment. Therefore, no pictures, stickers, etc. will be placed on the outside of the lockers and for health-related reasons no food or liquids are allowed inside the lockers. If discovered, food and liquids will be removed from the student locker by a staff member.

Lost & Found

Lost and found is located in the office. Parents are encouraged to check lost and found often. At conference time, objects in lost and found will be on display. Following this period the unclaimed items will be donated to charity. Items left in lost and found at the end of the year will be sent to charity after the last day of school.

Lunch Schedule & Prices

"First Lunch" is 11:44 am -12:14 pm and "Second Lunch" is...12:14 pm - 12:44 pm. Lunch and milk are available at STRIDE Academy. Lunch for students and adults is \$3.35 which includes a milk. Our milk only price is \$.40 per carton. Please send money to the office for lunch/milk in a sealed envelope with student's name and class. We will send a note home when the lunch account is low; students will be required to bring a lunch form home when the account is -\$5.00. **Families may qualify for free or reduced lunch based on verification of income.** These forms are available in the Office. STRIDE follows federal guidelines and supports healthy lunch choices.

Lunchroom Guidelines

Students bringing cold lunches and not needing milk may walk directly to the tables and sit down. Students needing hot lunch and/or milk will stand in an orderly fashion in the lunch line, pick up their milk and/or tray of food, eating utensils, napkins and sit down. No saving spots for other students or sharing food. Students are encouraged to use their inside voices at tables, use good manners and keep their hands and feet to themselves.

Menus

Monthly hot lunch menus are sent home with children or will be posted to our website.

Parent / Teacher / Student Conferences

The STRIDE Academy Board of Education supports a Conference Procedure that gives parents a variety of formats in which they receive information about their student's progress. The conference schedule provides times that are convenient and encourage parental participation. Parent/Teacher conference dates and times are as following: October 20, 2011 from 8:30am – 7:30pm and April 5, 2012 from 8:30am – 7:30pm.

PATHS (Parents And Teachers Helping Students)

Who is PATHS? If you are a parent or guardian of a STRIDE Academy Student YOU are members of PATHS and are invited to attend the meetings. What is PATHS? It is a volunteer organization of parents and guardians who want to assist our teachers and staff in making STRIDE Academy the best school it can be! The meeting agenda will be posted on the PATHS bulletin board located near the gymnasium entrance. If you have any questions regarding PATHS, please contact Krista Swenson at 230-5340.

Pets

Pets are only to be brought to school with teacher permission and in a kennel or other restrained housing.

Photographs

Photographs are taken in the fall of the year. Individual and class composite photographs are available for purchase. Pictures are tentatively planned for August 26, 2011.

Pledge of Allegiance

Anyone who does not wish to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance for any personal reason may elect not to do so. Students must respect another person's right to make that choice.

Respect

Staff, students and parents at STRIDE are expected to be respectful to each other at all times. In addition, we expect that staff, parents and students engage in respectful interactions and communication.

Safety Issues

- All school doors will be locked during the school day except for the front door.
- All staff, visitors, and volunteers will wear name tags or guest identification.
- Parents, visitors, and volunteers need to check in at the office and wear identification when visiting or working at school. Adults without identification will be asked to check in at the office.
- Students need to be checked in and out from the office. Parents checking out children during the day should come to the office to check their child out of school.
- A note or phone call is required for the school to release a child to anyone other than a parent.
- Students and staff will participate in regularly scheduled fire and tornado drills.
- NO parking along the front curb, fire lanes or bus areas.

School Board/School Board Meetings

The School Board meeting schedule is available on our website or upon request. Meetings are open to the public. Board minutes are available on the STRIDE Academy website or upon request. Parents interested in serving as a Board Member should contact the Director or Board Chairperson.

The STRIDE Academy School Board Members are:

Dr. Stan Karcz - Chairperson	Valerie Weyer - Teacher Representative
Tim Heerts - Teacher Representative	Shawna Kedrowski - Parent Representative
Monica Schraut - Secretary	Mary Swanson - Teacher Representative
To Be Determined - Vice Chair	Jon Halter - Parent Representative
Caroline Ruegemer - Teacher Representative	Tammy Biery - Parent Representative
	Ex- officio: Dale Beutel and Jason Ulbrich

School Calendar (available on the website)

Research has proven that students spend the first 4-6 weeks of a traditional school relearning concepts taught from the previous school year. For this reason, STRIDE Academy offers a year-round calendar for its students to provide consistency in programming and minimize the impact of regression on educational progress. The calendar is essentially constructed to provide four 45-day quarters with 10-12-day breaks between quarters. These breaks generally occur in November, February, May and August. The school calendar provides for 180 days of student instruction.

Security

All doors (except our front doors) are locked to prohibit entrance into our building 24 hours per day 7 days per week without the use of a key. Our front doors are unlocked at 7:45 a.m. each school day to provide student, parent and visitor access. However, our second set of entrance doors remains locked and controlled electronically by office personnel to allow access while monitoring who enters our school. All visitors are required to report to the front office for a Visitor Pass before proceeding into the building.

Skipping Grades

STRIDE Academy truly believes that students learn best when they are placed appropriately. STRIDE Academy assesses all students in math and places students in a flexible ability group based on the assessment results. Students are placed in science, social studies, physical education, art and music according to age. However, students may be placed in a higher grade if they have mastered the Core Knowledge curriculum for the grade in which they are skipping. A team of teachers and administrators will assess students identified as possible candidates for skipping grades. In the event a request is made to skip a grade, a team of teachers and the Principal will construct a Core Knowledge Assessment to assess social studies, history and science knowledge and skills of the student. The results will be used to determine placement and/or gaps if the student were approved for grade skipping. The Principal will oversee and direct this process in cooperation with teachers, parents and students.

Standardized Testing

STRIDE Academy uses district assessments to monitor student progress and to make programming changes when needed. Students will be assessed two-three times per year and the data will be shared with parents during conferences in the 2011-2012 school year. The State of Minnesota requires administration of the MCA IIs (Minnesota State Wide Comprehensive Assessment). We follow the MDE (MN Dept. of Ed.) calendar of testing dates. The TEAE (Test of Emerging Academic English) is

administered to English Language Learners. We will notify parents of specific testing dates. STRIDE also uses the NWEA MAPS computerized test to help improve student achievement. Parents will receive their child's individual progress three times per year.

Student Planners

A few of the most important things parents and businesses say they want students to learn while in school are good communication, organization and planning skills. STRIDE Academy wants these things for our students too. Therefore, STRIDE invests in quality student planners designed to help students plan their required class projects, organize their daily assignments and participate in their weekly activities/athletics. We believe the initial investment is well worth the skills being built in using their student planner daily. This can be a great communication tool among parents, teachers and students so we encourage parents to check their child's planner every day and return it with notes to facilitate communication as needed. Also, student planners are used as hallway passes, so staff can see when a student left class and for what reason they are in the hallway. The cost to replace the planner is \$5.00

Support Services

Students at STRIDE Academy, who have additional or special needs, have the opportunity to receive support for learning. Services may be delivered in the classroom, in small groups within or outside of the classroom or in an individual tutoring session. Special education staff members have been trained to provide services. In order to receive special services, students are assessed through an extensive testing process. All students are assessed using a test that assesses the whole child. Parts of the process are conducted with parent involvement. Support services are available in the following areas: Speech and language, health, physical, vision, hearing, learning, social, emotional and behavioral needs. If you think your child has special needs in one of these areas, please contact the classroom teacher or special education staff to find out the opportunities.

Thursday Folders

Communication is essential for efficient functioning of the school and delivering quality education to all students. The primary mode of communication will be written. ALL students will be sent home with a Thursday Folder. The Thursday Folder will contain newsletters, assignments, student projects and information sent from the office. Please check the folder every Thursday and sign in the appropriate spot. Teachers are expected to communicate with parents weekly via e-mail, written notes or telephone calls. Teachers will send home mid quarter reports to communicate the academic progress of children.

Tobacco Use

STRIDE Academy is a tobacco free school. No one, including staff, visitors, or parents have the right to pollute the air or endanger the health of others. No one is permitted to smoke, chew, carry or distribute tobacco products in school, on school grounds, on school property, at any school sponsored activity at home or away, or on school sponsored transportation. Anyone engaging in these behaviors will be asked to leave school property.

Treats at School

When food is served in the classroom for parties, birthday treats, etc., it must be commercially prepared and wrapped or prepared by a licensed caterer or by the school food service personnel. Snacks should be nutritious i.e. fruit, crackers and cheese etc. Please do not send soda or juice boxes. These drinks create stains that are difficult to get out of the carpet. Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle. All

snacks must be in accordance with the Wellness Policy. Ask your teacher about peanut or other allergies within the classroom.

Truancy

School age students (7 to 18 years) are expected to attend school. Unexcused absences may result in a truancy petition. We will monitor attendance closely and report truancy as mandated by state law. We work collaboratively with County agencies to assist resolving issues that result in truancy petitions. If a student has five or more absences in the first quarter, eight or more absences in the first and second quarter combined, ten absences in the first, second and third quarter combined, and/or eleven absences in the first, second, third and fourth quarter combined parents will receive a letter home reminding them of the attendance policy. If the excessive absences continue, parents will be required to hand in a doctor's excuse for each absence. After three unexcused absence a county referral will be made for truancy.

Volunteers

We anticipate having many volunteers working in the building. We need to complete background checks on anyone directly interacting with our students in school and register them for safety purposes. All volunteers must be trained prior to beginning work in the classroom. Volunteers will be expected to comply with school policies and procedures and maintain expectations of the school and classroom. When a volunteer comes to school to work, s/he must sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's badge which will visibly identify them to staff and students. Please contact Lowell Haagenson for volunteer opportunities. We ask that each family volunteer at least 30 hours per school year. Volunteers under the age of 18 must be supervised by an adult.

If you see someone in the building that is not wearing a visitor's badge, ask him/her to report to the office immediately to obtain one.

Weapons – Zero Tolerance

In accordance with state and federal laws, weapons of any kind are strictly forbidden in all school buildings, on all school grounds and busses. Under this policy, look-alikes (including toy guns, squirt guns, toy knives, etc.) may be considered to be weapons. Students may not have paring knives in their school lunches. Students must be instructed not to bring any of these objects on the bus or to school.

With a zero tolerance posture, a student in possession of a weapon in the school building, on school grounds, on a school bus or at a school function, shall be immediately suspended and further consequences will be determined by the Director in consultation with parents and the local police department.

Withdrawal or Transfer

The following procedure is established for students withdrawing from school:

1. As soon as you know that a child is being withdrawn, notify the school office of the last day of attendance.
2. The student must pay for any lost library books, food service and turn in any school books to his/her teacher.
3. Parents will be asked to fill out a withdrawal form and exit survey.
4. The student or parent must remove all of the student's personal property from the school.
5. When the school receives formal notification of the student's enrollment in another school, his/her records will be forwarded to that school, providing the parent has signed a statement authorizing transfer of these records.