Welcome to Kids’ Choice!
Kids’ Choice is a tuition-funded, nonprofit, school-age child care program provided by or on behalf of the Inver Grove Heights Community Schools and South St. Paul Public Schools Community Education departments.

The program offers quality educational, recreational and developmental activities and a stimulating and supervised environment for elementary school-age children. Each child is valued as a unique person capable of worthy ideas and actions. The concerned and caring staff provides a supportive climate to help children develop self-respect and become self-directed and self-disciplined individuals. The Kids’ Choice program focuses on meeting the needs of the children and families in the community.

Kids’ Choice provides:
• creative opportunities
• opportunities for children to choose activities
• recreational activities
• safe, supervised play
• a stimulating environment in a cheerful atmosphere
• warm, caring staff members who instill a feeling of safety and belonging

Kids’ Choice supports values of:
• healthy self-concept
• responsibility for one’s behavior
• respect for others
• spirit of cooperation

Kids’ Choice children participate in the following activities:
• arts and crafts
• science
• group time
• indoor and outdoor physical activity
• reading programs
• self and staff-directed daily activities
• opportunities for individual time, homework and computer work
• bookmobile, library visits (in the summer) and reading programs
• special guests/field trips

Mission Statement
To provide a quality program that fosters a safe, cooperative, caring and creative environment which promotes individual uniqueness, self-esteem, teamwork and respect.
Administration & Funding
Kids’ Choice is governed by the Inver Grove Heights Community Schools and South St. Paul Public Schools District policies and procedures. Kids’ Choice is a self-supporting program; program costs such as staffing, bus transportation, supplies, field trips and special activities are funded with tuition fees paid by parents/guardians. The School Districts provide space, custodial services and access to equipment.

Program Standards
Program standards for Kids’ Choice are adapted from guidelines developed by the Minnesota Department of Education which were reviewed and approved by the District 199 and Special District 6 Boards of Education. Kids’ Choice is staffed with caring people experienced in the fields of elementary education, early childhood education, child development and/or school-age care. Background checks are completed on all employees supervising children. First aid and CPR certification are yearly requirements, and staff development hours/classes related to school-age care are also provided monthly. The Kids’ Choice program follows the state-recommended 1:15 staff-to-child ratio.
Program Options

Before-School Program: 6:30 a.m. - the Start of the School Day
A variety of projects, academically-enriching activities and indoor exercise are offered during this time. Breakfast may be purchased from the District Food Service Program at each school.

After-School Program: End of the School Day - 6 p.m.
This is time for children to unwind, have a nutritious snack and socialize. Children have the opportunity for self-directed and structured indoor and outdoor activities.

Non-School Day Program: 6:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Kids’ Choice operates on days when school is not in session with the exception of set-up days and District holidays. These days are optional and require a special registration of which families are notified. Breakfast is available for a fee, lunch is provided by the families and the program provides a nutritious afternoon snack. Activities include indoor and outdoor play, special guests, field trips and more.

Summer Program: 6:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
The summer program is for students enrolled in South St. Paul Public Schools and Inver Grove Heights Community Schools, as well as students from other districts. Summer opportunities include self-directed and structured activities, a variety of projects and academically-enriching activities, indoor and outdoor exercise, weekly field trips, special guests and more. A nutritious snack is provided by the program. Breakfast and lunch are available at a fee. A special registration is required for the summer program; please note that the summer registration is different than the school-year registration.

Breakfast, Lunch & Snacks

Breakfast
Breakfast is served only on non-school days and during the summer between 8-8:30 a.m. to children registered for the optional breakfast. Children are served juice, cereal, toast and milk. Breakfast during the school year can be purchased through the Districts’ Food Service Programs. Breakfast menus are posted in the Family Area on site.

Lunch
On non-school days, families provide a bag lunch. In the summer, families provide a bag lunch if they are not enrolled in the Lunch Bunch program. Milk or juice is provided by Kids’ Choice. If children bring a beverage for lunch, it must be in an unbreakable container. Kids’ Choice strongly discourages soda. We do not always have access to a refrigerator/freezer, microwave or stove; lunches should be packed accordingly.
Snack
A snack is served every afternoon at all Kids’ Choice programs. A snack may be cookies, vegetables and dip, fruit, etc. Milk or juice is provided by Kids’ Choice. Snack menus are posted in the Family Area on site. Treats may be sent for birthdays and holidays; however, they must be purchased from a commercial supplier.

Transportation
Parents/guardians are responsible for transportation to and from the program site. Transportation for field trips is provided by a contracted busing service.

See Appendix A for District policy 709 - Student Transportation Safety.

Days Closed
Please refer to the Kids’ Choice calendar for days that the program is closed.

Grievances
If you have a grievance regarding the Kids’ Choice program or a staff person, please report it to the site facilitator. Then immediately set up a time to discuss the problem with the staff person involved. If the problem is not resolved, contact the Kids’ Choice coordinator at 651-306-3634. If the problem is still not resolved, contact the Community Education director at 651-306-3601. Please submit all grievances in writing as well as verbally.

Photographs
Photographs, videos and other documentation taken at Kids’ Choice and/or Community Education activities may be submitted to newspapers, used on District Web sites and/or appear in other print and electronic publications. Parents/guardians give consent to use these photos and/or videos at the time of registration. If you wish to change your approval at any time, please submit a written request to the Kids’ Choice office.
**Items From Home**

The sites are fully equipped with age-appropriate games and activities for the children to enjoy. If you decide to allow your child to bring a game or toy from home, please follow the guidelines and policies below:

1. The items must be nonviolent and age appropriate.
2. The item should be marked with the child’s name in permanent marker.
3. Kids’ Choice is not responsible for any damage or loss that may occur. We do not have secure storage for items from home.
4. While we encourage and teach children to share, please talk to your child about sharing items with others who may not treat them with the same respect as they do.
5. If an item becomes a problem, your child will be asked to leave it at home.
6. CDs/iPods are not to be shared with other children in the program. You, as the parent, can decide what music is appropriate for your child to listen to.
7. If your child brings a Nintendo DSI, iPod that can take pictures/videos, camera, cell phone and any other device that has the capability to take pictures/videos, the camera/video camability will not be allowed to be used at Kids’ Choice. This is in congruence with District’s technology use and agreement document 524F1.
   a. If a student is found using their electronic device for photo/video capability the device will be confiscated by the staff until parent/guardian arrives.
   b. Parent/guardian and student will delete images/videos in the presence of staff member.
   c. Further disciplinary actions including suspension and dismissal may result.
   d. Infractions by students will also be referred to legal authorities when appropriate.

- See Appendix A for District policy 506 - Student Discipline
- See Appendix A for District policy 515 - Protection and Provacy of Pupil Records
- See Appendix A for District policy 519 - Interviews of Students by Outside Agencies
- See Appendix A for District policy 524 - Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Policy

During the school year, the Kids’ Choice program and the elementary schools work cooperatively in regards to this matter. Families and program participants should realize that if they are playing with a toy/item from home during school hours, they will be subject to building discipline. In addition to building discipline and according to the Kids’ Choice policy, the participant will not be allowed to bring items from home to the Kids’ Choice program if it becomes an issue during the school day.
Program Locations

**South St. Paul Public Schools**

**Kaposia Education Center**
School-year and summer site  
1225 First Ave. S.  
South St. Paul, MN 55075  
651-288-6879

**Lincoln Center**
School-year and non-school day site  
357 Ninth Ave. N.  
South St. Paul, MN 55075  
651-457-9478

**Inver Grove Heights Community Schools**

**Hilltop Elementary School**
School-year and non-school day site and summer  
3201 68th St. E.  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076  
651-306-7463 (school year)

**Pine Bend Elementary School**
School-year site  
9875 Inver Grove Trail  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076  
651-306-7744

**Salem Hills Elementary School**
School-year site  
5899 Babcock Trail  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077  
651-306-7357

**Inver Grove Heights Middle School**
Summer site  
8167 Cahill Avenue  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076  
651-306-7225

Contact Information

**Kids’ Choice Office**
Family Connections  
1515 Fifth Ave. S.  
South St. Paul, MN 55075  
Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Office Staff Phone Numbers**
Coordinator 651-306-3634  
Coordinator assistant 651-306-3631  
Billing assistant 651-306-3632  
Fax 651-306-3640

**Web Sites**

www.sspsac.tridistrictce.org  
www.ighsspsac.tridistrictce.org

**Online Payment Site**

www.ighsspspay.org
Registration Procedures

Children enrolled in Inver Grove Heights or South St. Paul elementary schools are eligible for enrollment in the Kids’ Choice program. Children entering kindergarten or those attending another school district during the school year are welcome in the summer program.

Enrollment is based on a first-come, first-served basis with priority given to full-time participants. Part-time and variable-schedule spots are limited and only apply to school-year registrations. Children currently enrolled in Kids’ Choice have the first opportunity to enroll for all Kids’ Choice programs. After available spots are filled, children are placed on a waiting list.

School-year, non-school day and summer registration forms are available in the Kids’ Choice main office, in the Family Area at each site and on the Kids’ Choice Web sites. The registration or withdrawal deadline is indicated on the form.

Non-school day registration forms must be received in the office by the deadline date; after the deadline, regardless of attendance or withdrawal, all registered children are billed. Families registering late are placed on a waiting list and charged the higher non-school day rate if space becomes available.

Enrollment Requirements

1. Submit a complete registration form for each new school year and summer program
2. Submit a nonrefundable registration fee for each child for every new school year and summer program
3. Submit authorization from any agency providing sliding fees or county payments
4. Submit above items to the Kids’ Choice office one week prior to child’s first day

Registrations may be mailed to Kids’ Choice, 1515 Fifth Ave. S., South St. Paul, MN 55075 or faxed to 651-306-3640.

Withdrawal/Change of Schedule Notice

Parents/guardians planning to withdraw their child from Kids’ Choice may do so at any time; however, notice must be given in writing or verbally to the office staff two weeks prior to the last day of attendance. Tuition is charged for two weeks from the notification date. If your child care needs change, a child’s daily schedule may be changed to accommodate the request if openings in the program are available. These changes require a two-week notice and are considered a permanent change. The billing is adjusted accordingly. Families are allowed one change per program. A fee is charged if additional changes are needed. Please contact the Kids’ Choice office with changes or withdrawals.
Types of Fees

**Tuition Fee**
For fee information, call the Kids’ Choice office at 651-306-3631. A discount for multiple children from one family in the same program is available.

**Registration Fee**
A non-refundable registration fee is charged to each child enrolling in each new school year and summer program. Children who leave the program and return at a later date are reassessed a registration fee.

**Late Fee**
Parents/guardians arriving after the 6 p.m. closing time, regardless of weather or other circumstances, are assessed a late fee for each child for each 15 minutes, or fraction thereof, that they are late. The Kids’ Choice staff completes an Assessment of Late Fee form indicating the date, time of late arrival and the fee assessed. Parents/guardians are asked to sign the late fee form, and the charge appears on the next billing statement. This is for emergency use only; if used excessively, families will be contacted by the Kids’ Choice office and may be asked to find alternative child care.

**Withdrawal Fee**
Please see page 8 for information on withdrawing from the Kids’ Choice program.

**Change of Schedule Fee**
Please see page 8 for information on changing a Kids’ Choice child care schedule.

**Bag Lunch Fee**
During the summer, Kids’ Choice offers optional Lunch Bunch which allows children to purchase a lunch from the program. Children are also able to bring a bag lunch from home. If a child forgets his or her lunch and the family is not able to bring one, the staff prepares a lunch for the child with food that is available. This is done only in the case of an emergency, and a charge is assessed to your account.

**Extra T-Shirt Fee**
Children are required to wear their current Kids’ Choice T-shirt on all field trips. If your child arrives without his or her T-shirt, one will be given to the child and your account will be assessed the current extra T-shirt fee.
Payments

Payment Procedures

Tuition fees cover a one-month period and are due in advance of the child care service. Tuition statements are mailed or e-mailed by the 25th of each month prior to the month of service. Tuition is due the 15th of each month or the closest working day to the 15th. For example, if the 15th falls on a Saturday, the closest working day is Friday; payments are due in the Kids’ Choice office by 4 p.m. on Friday. If the 15th falls on a Sunday, the closest working day is Monday, and payments are due in the Kids’ Choice office by 4 p.m. on Monday. Tuition must be paid in full by the 15th, or the closest working day to it as outlined above, to avoid a late charge.

Accounts must be at a zero balance by the final working day of the month in order to continue attendance on the first working day of the new month. A reminder is issued to families with an outstanding balance on the 16th or the closest working day to that date each month.

The Kids’ Choice program is tuition funded. Therefore, it is imperative that all fees are paid on time. Accounts are considered delinquent if payment is not made in full by the final working day of the month. Delinquent accounts are turned over to a collection agency and child care is terminated as of the first working day of the new month. School-year and summer program registrations are not accepted if accounts are delinquent in status. These stipulations apply to county co-payments as well.

Cash payments must be made in person at the Kids’ Choice office. Payments by check or money order may be sent by mail or brought to the office. Kids’ Choice also accepts debit and credit card payments in the office, online at www.ighsspspay.org or over the phone. When paying by credit card, the amount shows up on credit card statements as a payment to Community Education. Site staff members are not allowed to take payments on site. For billing questions, please call 651-306-3632.

Payments may be mailed or brought to:
Kids’ Choice
1515 Fifth Ave. S.
South St. Paul, MN 55075

Please note: Re-entry into the program by families previously turned into collections will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In the event that re-entry is granted, all outstanding tuition fees must be paid in full prior to the first day of service. In addition, all new monthly tuition fees must be paid in full prior to the first day of each month of service.
**Dependent Care Reimbursement Accounts**

Families using Dependent Care Reimbursement Accounts through their employers may submit the forms to the office for verification. The forms must be completed, except for the authorization signature, and should accompany payment. Only the actual amount paid is verified. Allow several days for the forms to be completed and returned to you. If you want the form mailed to you, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

**Returned Checks**

Checks returned due to insufficient funds or closed accounts are assessed a service charge. If two non-sufficient funds (NSF) checks are received, all further payments must be made by money order, cash or cashier’s check.

**County and Federal Assistance Programs**

Families participating in child care assistance programs receive bi-weekly billing invoices to sign. These forms must be returned immediately to the office or the charges are placed directly on the family’s account; payment is then the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Fees not covered by County becomes the responsibility of parent/guardian.

**Tuition Refunds & Credits**

Refunds or credits are not given for emergency school closing days or days when children are absent due to illness, vacations, behavior suspensions or delinquent account suspensions. Families are expected to pay for all days for which children are registered. In case of an extended illness of the child, families are not charged after five consecutive days of illness; the office must be notified immediately, and a medical certificate must be sent from a physician indicating that the absence and subsequent consecutive absences are due to the extended illness. Children registered for non-school days receive a refund only if the registration is cancelled prior to the deadline date or if the reserved space is filled by a child from the waiting list.

If your child is registered for Kids’ Choice on an all-site field trip day and he/she does not attend the field trip, refunds are not given. For more information, please see page 17.
Absence
If a child is absent from Kids’ Choice due to illness or vacation, parents/guardians should inform the Kids’ Choice staff by calling the site and leaving a message. The school staff does not inform Kids’ Choice of a child’s absence. If notice is not received, parents/guardians are called to verify the location of their child.

Sign In & Sign Out
For the safety of the children, parents/guardians are required to enter the building with their children in the morning and sign in at the Family Area. The staff assumes responsibility for the children once they are signed in. When picking up their child, the parents/guardians are required to enter the building and sign their child out. Parents/guardians should inform the staff that they are leaving with their child. Please do not ask children to come to a waiting car.

Release of Children
Children are released only to persons listed as authorized to pick up the child, unless staff have been notified otherwise in writing. Children leaving for birthday parties, after-school activities or leaving with another child’s family must have a written note from their parents/guardians. In an emergency situation, a parent must call their child’s site to inform the staff that someone other than the authorized persons will pick up the child. Please inform them that the staff will request a picture ID.
Custody Issues
Often in family situations, a court gives one parent or another certain legal rights. These rights most often delineate custody issues for minor children involved in the family situation. When a court awards sole legal custody, sole physical custody, or creates other specific language that requires Kids’ Choice to limit normal family involvement, Kids’ Choice must have appropriate copies of the court papers. Without such information, Kids’ Choice assumes joint legal custody and joint physical custody. If a situation warrants their involvement, local authorities may be contacted for assistance.

Security Plan for Kids’ Choice Sites
Walkie talkies, attendance sheets and cross-off lists keep staff members aware of where the children are on site at all times.

Safety Drill Procedures
The children and staff of the Kids’ Choice program will participate and record five fire drills, five lock-down drills and one severe weather drill during the school year. Drills will also be conducted during the summer program on a smaller scale.

Procedure for Late Parent
If a child remains at Kids’ Choice after the 6 p.m. closing time, the staff notifies persons listed as authorized to pick up the child. If none of these persons are available or able to come for the child, and if the parent/guardian has not arrived by 7 p.m. or contacted the staff, Dakota County Child Protection/Social Services and local police are called. The child is then turned over to their custody.

Child Abuse/Neglect
Minnesota State Statute mandates all staff working directly with children to report any evidence or suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

- See Appendix A for District policy 414 - Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect, Physical or Sexual Abuse.
**Ill Child**
If a child becomes ill at Kids’ Choice, including having a temperature of over 100° Fahrenheit, vomiting or having diarrhea, parents/guardians are called to come pick up their child. The child is kept in a quiet place and allowed to rest until parents/guardians arrive. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, persons listed as authorized to pick up the child are called. Refunds are not given for days children are absent from Kids’ Choice due to illness, unless it is longer than one week and a doctor’s note is sent to the office.

**Medication**
District policy regarding dispensing medication must be followed.

1. Written parent/guardian permission and written physician orders on the Procedures for Dispensing Medicine form are required.
2. Medication must be in the original prescription bottle.
3. Medication must be accompanied by specific instructions about when and how it should be given.
4. Authorization must be returned to the Kids’ Choice office or site prior to dispensing any medication.

Over-the-counter medication also requires a Procedures for Dispensing Medicine form to be administered. All District policies regarding dispensing medication must be followed. A new authorization is required each year. Procedures for Dispensing Medicine forms are available at each Kids’ Choice site, or your physician may write an authorization stating procedures to dispense the child’s medication.

› See Appendix A for District policy 516 - Procedures for Dispensing Medicine at School.

**Sunscreen & Insect Repellent**
During the summer months, parents/guardians may supply sunscreen and insect repellent; these products are not supplied by the program. Application of sunscreen and/or insect repellent require written permission; parents/guardians given consent to use sunscreen and insect repellent at the time of registration. The Kids’ Choice staff may help your child, but the staff is not responsible for applying any lotion/repellent.

**Insurance**
The School Districts do not carry accident or health insurance for the children. Parents/guardians are responsible for insurance and health coverage for their children.
Weather Conditions
If Inver Grove Heights Community Schools or South St. Paul Public Schools are closed or delayed due to weather conditions, the Kids’ Choice Program makes adjustments to its programming. If school is dismissed early because of weather or maintenance problems, Kids’ Choice is also closed. Early closings are aired on all major local television stations (channels 4, 5, 9 and 11). If school is closed for the day or has a late start and or mid-day cancellation, the Kids’ Choice program adjusts programming as follows:

Before-School Program
School closed: There is no before-school Kids’ Choice.
Late start: Before-school Kids’ Choice will be delayed an equivalent number of hours.

After-School Program
School closed: There is no after-school Kid’s Choice.
Late start: After-school Kids’ Choice is not affected.
Mid-day cancellation: Parents/guardians are responsible for picking up children from school immediately. After-school Kids’ Choice is cancelled.

Please note: Phones in the District may not be in operation in an emergency situation, therefore the staff is not able to call parents/guardians. Listen to your local radio and television stations. If the radio or television announcements do not mention the Kids’ Choice program, the above information still holds true. When school is closed, families are still charged the daily tuition.
**Building Emergencies**

If Inver Grove Heights Community Schools or South St. Paul Public Schools are closed or delayed due to weather conditions or emergency measures, the Kids’ Choice program makes adjustments to its programming. If the emergency situation happens during programming hours, Kids’ Choice adjusts as follows:

- Kids’ Choice buses the children to another open site using District buses. Facilitators are responsible for bringing any paperwork that is needed to the other site so regular programming can continue.
- A note is posted on the entrance door notifying families of the location where the children were transported.
- When possible, Kids’ Choice airs the closing using the same media as Inver Grove Heights and South St. Paul schools during a weather-related school closing.
- The Kids’ Choice site/office staff contacts the families, if possible, and lets them know about the situation and where to pick up their child.

If the emergency situation happens between program hours, Kids’ Choice adjusts as follows:
- Kids’ Choice arranges an alternative site for the program when possible.
- Staff members are notified of the alternative location of the site via the Kids’ Choice calling tree.
- When possible, Kids’ Choice airs the closing using the same media as Inver Grove Heights and South St. Paul schools during a weather-related school closing.
- A note is posted on the entrance door notifying families of the location of the temporary site.

**Accidents & Incidents**

Parents/guardians are informed of any accident/incident involving their child at Kids’ Choice.

- In case of a minor injury, staff members administer first aid and complete an accident/incident report for the parents/guardians to review and sign when they come for their child.
- In case of a serious accident, families are called to take the child for medical attention. An accident/incident report is completed for parents/guardians to review and sign.
- In case of a life threatening emergency, 911 is called. Paramedics determine whether the child needs further treatment or needs to be transported to the hospital. The family is notified immediately.
Field Trip Procedures

Kids’ Choice offers opportunities for children to go off site to a variety of destinations. Children are transported by contracted school buses. A permission form must be signed by the parent/guardian before leaving the site. Kids’ Choice may go on walking field trips; permission for these trips is given at the time of registration.

Child care is not provided on site during all-site field trips because all Kids’ Choice staff members attend field trips with the children; therefore, all children attending Kids’ Choice during the time of a scheduled field trip must attend the field trip. You may also make other child care arrangements during that time; please note that refunds are not given for these days.

Staff Responsibilities

- A Kids’ Choice Program Field Trip Information, Checklist and Buddy Chart is completed and brought along on all field trips.
- Field trip ratios are 1:10 on a typical trip and 1:6 for swimming trips. The destination and type of activity determines the final ratio. Volunteers are not to supervise a group on their own.
- Staff members count their group and perform a verbal roll call before leaving for trips, continuously during the trip and before leaving to return to the site.
- Staff members are with their groups at all times. Children are not allowed to wander from a staff member to use the restroom or buy concessions or gifts.
- Staff members will assist the children in applying sunscreen and bug spray.
- Weather conditions are considered prior to the trip, and necessary adjustments are made which may cause cancellation of the field trip.
- Staff members and children must wear their current Kids’ Choice T-shirt on the field trip. Should a child arrive at the site on a field trip day without their current T-shirt, families will be asked to return home for the T-shirt or have the current extra T-shirt fee assessed to their account for a new Kids’ Choice T-shirt.

› See Appendix A for District policy 610 - Field Trips.
What Families can Expect From Kids’ Choice

- Provide a safe, supervised and inviting environment where children have fun, feel welcome, are safe and develop friendships
- Provide qualified, caring staff who show a genuine respect for children, act as positive role models and promote each child’s self-esteem
- Provide a variety of developmentally appropriate projects and academically enriching activities as well as indoor and outdoor activities and self-directed play
- Continually evaluate the program in relation to the needs of children, families and staff
- Keep families informed through an orientation to the program, flyers, newsletters, updated information boards and informal conversations

See Appendix A for District policy 423 - Employee-Student Relationships.

What Kids’ Choice Expects From Families

Kids’ Choice requires the involvement and cooperation of both the staff and families to help build a quality program. Families’ cooperation is appreciated in the following areas:

- Check the Family Area daily for new information and reminders, and meet all registration deadlines.
- Communicate concerns about your child to the staff. They are there to help.
- Listen to staff members’ concerns about your child’s behavior, and cooperatively work toward an agreeable solution to any problems.
- Talk to the staff or contact the Kids’ Choice office if you have a question, concern, suggestion or compliment. Your input is appreciated!
- Have children dressed appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities. Hats, boots, mittens and snow pants are a must during cold months. Tennis shoes are always needed to participate in gym activities.
- Do not allow children to wear clothing that promotes tobacco/alcohol or that has objectionable language and/or hats to the program. Clothing and accessories of this nature are not allowed at Kids’ Choice.
- Do not allow children to bring toy weapons in order to adhere to School District policy.
- Encourage children to help clean up the toys before they leave Kids’ Choice.
- Address the staff with issues that may involve other children in the program. Families are not to address other children themselves.
- Be prompt in coming for your child(ren). The program closes at 6 p.m.
- Send a bag lunch on non-school days. Please also send a bag lunch during the summer program if your child is not enrolled in Lunch Bunch.
- Inform the staff of any changes in address, phone number or other pertinent information.
- Pay Kids’ Choice tuition promptly.

You are always welcome to volunteer with Kids’ Choice on field trips (entrance fees will be paid by the volunteer and you may need to provide your own transportation) to share your
skills or to come and spend time with your child. Volunteers must be 18 years of age or older. Younger family members not enrolled in the program are not allowed to participate in the field trips. Please follow District policy for visitors/volunteers in the building.

**What Kids’ Choice Expects From Program Participants**
- Respect the rights of others and yourself; “Be safe, respectful, responsible.”
- Be responsible for your actions.
- Know and follow program expectations
- Respect the property of others and the program.
- Use only acceptable language.
- Use only appropriate physical contact.
- Follow the direction of the Kids’ Choice staff.
- Remain with a staff person at all times; ask permission to leave the area.
- Abide by all District policies, including the District Technology Policy.

Since children are supervised in a group/site setting, their behavior is not expected to routinely require one-on-one supervision. Each child is evaluated on an on-going basis as to the program’s ability to meet his or her needs.

- See Appendix A for District policy 524 - Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Policy.
Behavior Guidance

The behavior guidance techniques used by the Kids’ Choice staff center around positive reinforcement, positive role modeling by adults, intervention techniques and redirection. The staff provides the children with guidance that promotes a positive self-concept. The staff helps children find solutions to current situations, understand consequences and develop self-control.

1. If a child is having difficulty, the inappropriate behavior is discussed with the child and action is taken.
2. If the behavior continues, parents/guardians are notified by phone. A Fix-it Plan/Below the Expectation Notice is completed by child/staff. The staff, parents/guardians and child cooperate to solve the problem.
3. If the behavior continues, parents/guardians are called for an in-person conference.
4. If the problem cannot be resolved, parents/guardians are asked to make alternative child care arrangements.

- See Appendix A for District policy 413 - Harassment and Violence.
- See Appendix A for District policy 501 - School Weapons Policy.
- See Appendix A for District policy 502 - Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions and Student’s Person.
- See Appendix A for District policy 504 - Student Dress and Appearance.
- See Appendix A for District policy 506 - Student Discipline.
- See Appendix A for District Policy 514 - Bullying Prohibition.
- See Appendix A for District Policy 519- Interview of Students by Outside Agencies

Below the Expectation Notice

A Below the Expectation Notice is completed when a serious disciplinary problem occurs. Behavior such as violent outbursts, willfully hurting other children, throwing objects, profane language, leaving the room/building/group without permission, threatening behavior, verbal or physical abuse, or the inability to conform to the rules of the program/District are considered serious disciplinary problems.

Dismissal From the Program

Dismissal from the program could result if:

- the staff determines that the program cannot meet the needs of the child.
- the parent/guardian refuses to follow program procedures.
- fees are not paid.
- District policies are not followed.

Depending on the severity of the conduct and in accordance with program and District policies, immediate suspension/expulsion from the program may be warranted.
Appendix A

Summaries of the policies referred to in this handbook are on the following pages. Full policies can be found on the District’s Web site at www.invergrove.k12.mn.us/District_policies. Students and families are expected to be aware of and abide by all of the District’s policies beyond just those mentioned in this handbook. Program participants and their families should pay particular attention to the policies in section 500 which specifically pertain to students.

HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

General Statement of Policy
A. It is the policy of the school district to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence. The school district prohibits any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence.
B. It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of the school district to harass a pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel through conduct or communication of a sexual nature or regarding religion and race as defined by this policy. (For purposes of this policy, school personnel includes school board members, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors or persons subject to the supervision and control of the district.)
C. It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of the school district to inflict, threaten to inflict, or attempt to inflict religious, racial or sexual violence upon any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel.
D. The school district will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

MANDATED REPORTING OF CHILD NEGLECT, PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE

General Statement of Policy
It is the policy of the school district to fully comply with Minn. Stat. § 626.556 requiring school personnel to report suspected child neglect or physical or sexual abuse. It shall be a violation of this
policy for any school personnel to fail to immediately report instances of child neglect, or physical or sexual abuse when the school personnel knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years.

POLICY: 423  
ADOPTED: 05/07/01  
REVISED: 07/14/03  
REVISED: 11/13/06  
REVISED: 01/28/08  
REVISED: 11/22/10

EMPLOYEE-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. This policy applies to all school district employees at all times, whether on or off duty and on or off of school district locations.

B. At all times, students will be treated by teachers and other school district employees with respect, courtesy and consideration and in a professional manner. Each school district employee is expected to exercise good judgment and professionalism in all interpersonal relationships with students. Such relationships must be and remain on a teacher-student basis or an employee-student basis.

C. Teachers must be mindful of their inherent positions of authority and influence over students. Similarly, other school district employees also may hold positions of authority over students of the school district and must be mindful of their authority and influence over students.

D. Sexual relationships between school district employees and students, without regard to the age of the student, are strictly forbidden and may subject the employee to criminal liability.

E. Other actions that violate this policy include, but are not limited to, the following:
   1. Dating students.
   2. Having any interaction/activity of a sexual nature with a student.
   3. Committing or attempting to induce students or others to commit an illegal act or act of immoral conduct which may be harmful to others or bring discredit to the school district.
   4. Supplying alcohol or any illegal substance to a student, allowing a student access to such substances, or failing to take reasonable steps to prevent such access from occurring.

F. School district employees shall, whenever possible, employ safeguards against improper relationships with students and/or claims of such improper relationships.

G. Excessive informal and social involvement with individual students is unprofessional, is not compatible with employee-student relationships, and is inappropriate.

H. School district employees will adhere to applicable standards of ethics and professional conduct in Minnesota law.
SCHOOL WEAPONS POLICY

General Statement of Policy
No student or non-student, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use or distribute a weapon when in a school location except as provided in this policy. The school district will act to enforce this policy and to discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, school employee, volunteer, or member of the public who violates this policy.

SEARCH OF STUDENT LOCKERS, DESKS, PERSONAL POSSESSIONS AND STUDENT’S PERSON

General Statement of Policy
A. Lockers and Personal Possessions Within a Locker
   Pursuant to Minnesota statutes, school lockers are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of lockers provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of lockers may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. The personal possessions of students within a school locker may be searched only when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover evidence of a violation of law or school rules. As soon as practicable after the search of a student’s personal possessions, the school officials must provide notice of the search to students whose lockers were searched unless disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation by police or school officials.

B. Desks
   School desks are the property of the school district. At no time does the school district relinquish its exclusive control of desks provided for the convenience of students. Inspection of the interior of desks may be conducted by school officials for any reason at any time, without notice,
without student consent, and without a search warrant.

C. Personal Possessions and Student’s Person
The personal possessions of students and/or a student’s person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness.

D. It shall be a violation of this policy for students to use lockers and desks for unauthorized purposes or to store contraband. It shall be a violation for students to carry contraband on their person or in their personal possessions.

STUDENT DRESS AND APPEARANCE

General Statement of Policy
A. It is the policy and purpose of this school district to provide students with the basic skills needed in order to be able to interact within a community upon graduation. For a large majority of the student population, part of that interaction will include employment. As places of employment have varying codes relating to appearance and grooming, it is the belief of this school district that this policy will support the educational process of the district. Therefore, students have the responsibility to be dressed and groomed appropriately during the instructional day for school activities. Further, Inver Grove Heights Community Schools views the Student Dress and Appearance Policy as a serious issue and expects parents to promote the observance of this policy.

B. Appropriate clothing and grooming includes, but is not limited to, the following:
1. Clothing appropriate for the weather.
2. Clothing and/or grooming that does not create a health or safety hazard.
3. Clothing and/or grooming appropriate for the activity (i.e., physical education or the classroom).

C. The following guidelines are established for students K-12:
1. Shorts, skorts, skirts and dresses must be no shorter than the tip of the student’s pinkie finger when his/her extended arm is by his/her side (while in a normal standing position).
2. Sleeveless shirts (with a minimum of a ½ inch strap) blouses and dresses (with a minimum of a ½ inch strap) must come up to two inches below the armpit. All shirts and blouses must go past the waistband and be able to overlap the top of pants/skirts, covering the back, with no cutouts or see through material or elements with no midriff visible while in standing position. Shirts or blouses with excessive low-cut fronts are inappropriate.
3. All undergarments are to be covered and not exposed due to rips, tears or other modifications of the clothing.
4. Clothing or accessories bearing a message (in whatever language) that is lewd, vulgar or obscene including Big Johnson T-shirts, Co-ed Naked T-shirts and Playboy Bunny insignia clothing are not to be worn at any school sponsored activity.
5. Apparel or accessories promoting products or activities that are illegal for use by minors are not to be worn at any school sponsored activity regardless of the age of the student.
6. Objectionable apparel, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, words, objects or pictures on clothing or jewelry communicating a message that is racist, sexist, or otherwise derogatory to a protected minority group, evidences gang membership or affiliation, or approves, advances or provokes any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and/or violence against other individuals as defined in district Policy 413 are deemed unacceptable at any school sponsored activity.
7. Any apparel or footwear that would damage school property is not to be worn.

D. Hats, caps, rags, sweatbands, or bandannas are not to be worn in the building during student instructional hours and need to be appropriately stored while at school (i.e., placed in lockers) except with the approval of the building principal (i.e., student undergoing chemotherapy; medical situations, sincerely held religious or cultural belief). (Note: This does not refer to Physical Education classes, when held outside, where the use of hats or sweatbands would be appropriate.)

E. Outer wear (i.e., letter jackets, coats, parkas) will not be worn in the buildings during student instructional hours, except when a student is in the process of entering or exiting a building (i.e., recess, field trip preparation, etc.).

F. Large, long and/or heavy chains and/or studded/spiked accessories are prohibited, as these can constitute a safety hazard. These items will be confiscated until the end of the school day.

G. It is not the intention of this policy to abridge the rights of students to express political, religious, philosophical, or similar opinions by wearing apparel on which such messages are stated. Such messages are acceptable as long as they are not lewd, vulgar, obscene, defamatory, profane or do not advocate violence or harassment against others.

H. “Gang,” as defined in this policy, means any ongoing organization, association or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of one or more criminal acts, which has an identifiable name or identifying sign or symbol, and whose members individually or collectively engage in or whose members engaged in a pattern of criminal gang activity. “Pattern of gang activity” means the commission, attempt to commit, conspiring to commit, or solicitation of two or more criminal acts, provided the criminal acts were committed on separate dates or by two or more persons who are members of or belong to the same criminal street gang.
DISTRIBUTION OF NON-SCHOOL-SPONSORED MATERIALS ON SCHOOL
PREMISES BY STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES

General Statement of Policy

A. The school district recognizes that students and employees have the right to express themselves on school property. This protection includes the right to distribute, at a reasonable time and place and in a reasonable manner, non-school sponsored material.

B. To protect First Amendment rights, while at the same time preserving the integrity of the educational objectives and responsibilities of the school district, the school board adopts the following regulations and procedures regarding distribution of non-school-sponsored material on school property and at school activities.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

General Statement of Policy

The school board recognizes that individual responsibility and mutual respect are essential components of the educational process. The school board further recognizes that the nurturance of the maturing process for each student is of primary importance and is closely linked with the balance that must be maintained between authority and self-discipline as the individual progresses from a child’s dependence on authority to the more mature behavior of self-control.

All students are entitled to learn and develop in a setting which promotes respect of self, others and property. Proper positive discipline can only result from an environment which provides options and stresses student self-direction, decision-making and responsibility. Schools can function effectively only with internal discipline based on mutual understanding of rights and responsibilities. Further, it is the intention of the School Board to support parent participation in addressing proper discipline.

Students must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner that maintains a climate in which learning can take place. Overall decorum affects student attitudes and influences student behavior. Proper student conduct is necessary to facilitate the education process and to create an atmosphere conducive to high student achievement.
Although this policy emphasizes the development of self-discipline, it is recognized that there are instances when it will be necessary to administer disciplinary measures. It is the position of the school district that a fair and equitable district-wide student discipline policy will contribute to the quality of the student’s educational experience. This discipline policy is adopted in accordance with and subject to the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minn. Stat. §§ 121A.40 through 121A.56. In view of the foregoing and in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 121A.61, the school board, with the participation of school district administrators, teachers, employees, students, parents and community members and such other individuals and organizations as appropriate, has developed this policy which governs student conduct and applies to all students of the school district.

POLICY: 514
ADOPTED: 05/17/05
REVISED: 09/25/06
REVISED: 09/10/07
REVISED: 07/14/08

BULLYING PROHIBITION

General Statement of Policy

A. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school district property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student’s act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school district or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or employees. The misuse of technology including, but not limited to, teasing, intimidating, defaming, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district by sending or posting e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings, including blogs, also may constitute an act of bullying regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off school district property and/or with or without the use of school district resources.

B. No administrator, teacher, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.

C. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.

D. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.

E. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.

F. A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with school district’s policies and procedures. The school district may take into account the following factors:
   1. The developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved;
   2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
   3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge. Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school district property and events and/or termination of services and/or contracts.

The school district will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

POLICY: 515
ADOPTED: 10/15/01
REVISED: 05/17/05
REVISED: 08/21/06
REVISED: 08/13/07
REVISED: 10/27/08
REVIEVED: 03/23/09

PROTECTION AND PRIVACY OF PUPIL RECORDS

General Statement of Policy
The following procedures and policies regarding the protection and privacy of parents and students are adopted by the school district, pursuant to the requirements of 20 U.S.C. §1232g, et seq., (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) 34 C.F.R. Part 99 and consistent with the requirements of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. Ch. 13 and Minn. Rules Parts. 1205.0100-1205.2000.

POLICY: 516
ADOPTED: 02/19/02
REVISED: 02/03/03
REVISED: 05/17/05
REVISED: 03/06/06
REVISED: 09/22/08

PROCEDURES FOR DISPENSING MEDICINE AT SCHOOL

General Statement of Policy
The school district acknowledges that some students may require prescribed drugs or medication during the school day. The school district’s licensed school nurse, trained health clerk, principal, or teacher will administer prescribed medications; prescription and over-the-counter, in accordance with law and school district procedures.
INTERVIEWS OF STUDENTS BY OUTSIDE AGENCIES

General Statement of Policy
A. Generally, students may not be interviewed during the school day by persons other than a student’s parents, school district officials, employees and/or agents, except as otherwise provided by law and/or this policy.
B. Requests from law enforcement officers and those other than a student’s parents, school district officials, employees and/or agents to interview students shall be made through the principal’s office. Upon receiving a request, it shall be the responsibility of the principal to determine whether the request will be granted. Prior to granting a request, the principal shall attempt to contact the student’s parents to inform them of the request, except where otherwise prohibited by law.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND SAFETY POLICY

General Statement of Policy
District 199 considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives when making decisions regarding student and employee access to the School District technology system and the Internet, including digital communications. Electronic and digital information research skills are fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the School District systems and to the Internet enables students and employees to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while engaging with people around the world.

District 199 expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school district technology systems and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and professional goals consistent with the mission of the School District and school policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user’s private personal account on another system may not be acceptable on the District limited-purpose network and should not be presumed to be.

Use of the District’s network/Internet resources is intended only for educational and informational purposes, such as research, professional development, instruction, collaborative education projects,
and dissemination of District information. Use of network/Internet resources must support the district curriculum and enhance student learning opportunities and/or support accurate and appropriate communication of District information. Instructional Materials Selection and Production Policy and prescribe the identification process for instructional materials, including electronic resources.

FIELD TRIPS

General Statement of Policy
It is the general expectation of the school board that all student trips will be well planned, conducted in an orderly manner and safe environment, and will relate directly to the objectives of the class or activity for which the trip is requested.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Conduct on School Buses
A. Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to follow the same behavioral standards while riding school buses as are expected on school property or at school activities, functions or events. All school rules are in effect while a student is riding the bus or at the bus stop.

1. Rules on the Bus.
   a. Immediately follow the directions of the driver.
   b. Sit in your seat facing forward with legs forward.
   c. Talk quietly and use appropriate language.
   d. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
   e. Keep your arms, legs and belongings to yourself.
   f. No fighting, harassment, intimidation, horseplay, or bullying.
   g. Do not throw any object.
   h. No eating, drinking or use of tobacco or drugs.
   i. Do not bring any weapons, look-alike weapons, or dangerous objects on the school bus.
   j. Do not damage the school bus.
   k. On regular bus routes (not to include co-curricular, extracurricular, field trips, or
competitions) skateboards, rollerblades, sleds, ice skates, hockey sticks or lacrosse sticks will not be allowed.

2. Vandalism/Bus Damage
   a. Students damaging school buses will be responsible for the damages. Failure to pay such damages (or make arrangements to pay) within two weeks may result in the loss of bus privileges until damages are paid.
Inver Grove Heights Community Schools

Kids’ Choice School-Age Care

Family Connections
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