



**St. Joseph County**  
**ADULT EDUCATION**

STAFF HANDBOOK

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## **Program Overview**

St. Joseph County Adult Education recognizes that today's workplace presents numerous opportunities and challenges for adults. Employers need workers with strong basic skills and the ability to adapt to change. Today's families are faced with multiple responsibilities as they address their children's educational needs as well as their own. Special populations, such as the homeless and incarcerated, must deal with additional challenges as they strive to lead safe and productive lives.

St. Joseph County Adult Education builds skills for success by providing adults with the opportunity to acquire and improve the functional skills necessary to enhance the quality of their lives as workers, family members, and citizens. These programs play a vital role in fostering productive employment, effective citizenship, personal and family growth, self-esteem, and dignity for adult learners.

### **St. Joseph County Adult Education Mission Statement:**

The mission of the St. Joseph County Adult Education Program is to ensure that all students attain the highest level of academic achievement and to provide assistance to ensure you are a contributing member of society. The educational goals of Adult Education students include achieving a personal dream, learning to read, getting a better job, gaining access to post-secondary education, setting a good example for their children, and gaining citizenship, among others. We accomplish this through the delivery of personalized instruction utilizing a relevant curriculum, assisting you with the tools leading to a personal growth with self-investment equity, and a measurable education gain; all done while in a positive, inviting environment with the support of vital community resources.

# **St. Joseph County Adult Education Staff**

## **Welcome!**

**MiChelle DeVries**  
**Sturgis Site Administrator**  
**Career Navigator St. Joe Co. Adult Ed**  
**107 W West Street**  
**Sturgis, MI 49091**  
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**Theresa Hambright**  
**Three Rivers Site Administrator**  
**Social Worker**  
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**Three Rivers, MI 49093**  
**269-279-9581**  
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**email: [thambright@trschoools.org](mailto:thambright@trschoools.org)**

**Juanita Miller**  
**Centreville Site Administrator**  
**190 Hogan Street**  
**Centreville, MI 49032**  
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**Cell: 269-221-4447**  
**Email: [jmiller@cpschoools.org](mailto:jmiller@cpschoools.org)**

## **Instructors**

Tyson Dilts-HSD/GED	(260) 316-0253
Maria Hahn-ESL	(269) 718-7337
Kayla Herman-GED	
Megan Lippert-SPED	(517) 317-7690
Olivia Oberc-HSD	(517) 974-3877
Kristina Vasquez-HSD	
Dennisse Vega-ESL	(269) 823-2217
Mike Yonge-HSD/GED	(269) 279-1151

## **Educational Assistants**

Lourdes Avila-ESL	(269) 689-3083
Kayla Trejo-EA	(574) 350-5511

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

In Compliance with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1977, it is the policy of St. Joseph County Adult Education that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any program, activity, service or in employment.

## **EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY**

It is the policy of St. Joseph County Adult Education to provide an equal education opportunity for all students. Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer listed below:

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy 2260 & 2260.01. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The compliance Officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

For information, contact:       Nicole Airgood, Assistant Superintendent  
107 W. West Street  
Sturgis, MI 49091  
269-659-1500

## **Service Area**

Must be a resident of St. Joseph county or neighboring counties in Michigan and Indiana. The ability to attend, required testing and program of enrollment will determine your residency eligibility.

## **Age Requirements**

Any individual, 18 years of age by July 1 of the current school year is eligible to apply for admission to adult education. In certain circumstances, there may be exceptions to this rule, detailed eligibility requirements differ by program type.

## **Programs Offered**

The St. Joseph County Adult Education offers a wide range of programs:

- A. Adult Basic Education (ABE)- Instruction provided to adults who function below the ninth grade equivalent level in language arts and/or mathematics. ABE can also help with preparing for the Accuplacer college entrance exam.
- B. General Education Diploma (GED)-Adults aged 16 and older without a high school credential wanting to earn their high school equivalency certificate. Instruction to enable successful completion is designed to prepare participants to pass the GED tests in Language Arts Writing, Language Arts Reading, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics.
- C. High School Diploma Program (HSD)- Instruction designed to fulfill the requirements for a high school diploma. This 17 or 19 Credit MMC Diploma covers all the core subjects: Math, Science, English, Social Studies and 3-5 other credits required by the state and local school board. Students will complete courses as needed using the online program Odysseyware. Teacher-led classroom times are also available for those students needing one-on-one instructional support.
- D. Labor Employment related/Employer Workforce Readiness

- Job-related skill development to secure employment or to achieve an upgrade in employment.
  - Adult Career Pathways advising.
  - Integrated Education and Training (IET) which accelerates students into career pathways in high demand occupations.
  - The basic skills necessary to perform in entry-level occupations or the skills necessary to adapt to technological advances in the workplace.
  - Instruction in job-or employment-related mathematics, reading, and communication skills.
  - Employability skills instruction.
  - Educational counseling and referral services.
- E. English as a Second Language-ESL)- These classes are for anyone for whom English is not your primary language. The classes assist students in improving their ability to speak, listen to, read and write English. ESL helps students work on communication skills needed for work, at home and in day to day activities including US Citizenship Preparation and Civics classes.

### **Student Profile**

Defining adult learners is challenging because a "one-size fits all" definition does not apply. Our students' ages range from sixteen years old to senior citizens, and they possess a myriad of educational levels and experiences. There are different paths our students can take to complete their educational goals. When a new student comes to the Adult Learning Center, he or she is interviewed to determine what program or combination of programs will best meet his or her needs and abilities.

### **Assessment**

Students are tested as required by the Michigan Adult Education. These standardized tests identify existing skill levels, appropriate instruction, and academic gains. The State of Michigan has mandated that adult education students continue to demonstrate improved skills

through improved reading, mathematics, and language scores, and course completion. All staff are required to complete annual training in order to proctor assessment tests.

### **Attendance Policy**

REGULAR ATTENDANCE and WORKING IN THE PROGRAM IS EXPECTED and is proven to be the most successful means of course completion. Self-motivation and discipline are important in order to complete courses and make progress toward completion. Students are required to sign in and sign out each time they attend class. This sign in sheet is a legal document; falsifying the time could result in being dropped from the program. All students are responsible for their own attendance. Because this is an adult education environment, staff is not responsible for students entering the classroom nor are they responsible for students remaining in the classroom. Attendance time is recorded in 1-hour increments. Attendance sheets should be signed and returned to the AE office on a daily basis.

### **Dress and Grooming Code**

The Board of Education believes that staff members are an important and integral part of the District. Also, since the support staff is highly-visible staff to the students, the professional staff, and the public, the Board believes the support staff should at all times be well dressed and groomed. Support staff members who understand this precept and adhere to it enlarge the importance of their task, present an image of dignity, and encourage respect.

The Board retains the authority to specify the following dress and grooming guidelines for support staff. When assigned to District duty, all support staff members shall:

- A. be physically clean, neat, and well groomed;
- B. dress in a manner consistent with their support responsibilities; dress in a manner that communicates to others a pride in personal appearance;
- C. dress in a manner that does not cause damage to District property;



D. be groomed in such a way that their dress or hair style does not disrupt the educational process or cause a health or safety hazard.

## **Graduation**

Each year at the end of second semester, a graduation ceremony is held to celebrate the accomplishments of the students successfully completing requirements for a high school diploma or GED. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to celebrate with their families, friends and teachers. It is our belief that the event should serve as a final highlight of a student's participation in the program and is truly student-centered. ***Attendance at Commencement is expected by staff.*** To be eligible, all requirements must be completed by the last day of scheduled Adult Education classes for graduates. Diplomas are awarded to students at the commencement ceremony. For those students who do not participate in commencement, the diploma may be picked up in the office by the student only.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is not permitted in the building at any time. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

## **Student Academic Files**

Adult student records and participation in our programs is considered confidential information. Adult education staff can share information when it is for a legitimate educational purpose only. Confidential information may only be shared in order to serve the student, and with their written permission. A file is maintained on each student and may be reviewed at any time by the student if the student is over the age of 18. FERPA laws apply to student information that is considered "private" and cannot be shared with anyone who is not designated on a release of confidential information form that has been signed by the student.

## **Childcare**

On-site childcare is available for evening classes for children of participants in all programs. We provided free childcare for two important reasons:

1. So that parents can attend classes without having to arrange for babysitting, and
2. For children to have a good learning experience while their parents are in classes.

Childcare space is limited and the staff is concerned about the health, safety, and teaching of the children. Therefore, children can attend childcare only if they meet these guidelines:

1. A parent or legal guardian is attending class on campus.
2. The child is not sick with a communicable disease.
3. The parent has completed an information form for the childcare staff to use.

## **Parking and Building access**

Parking is available at all locations. Entrance to the Sturgis building is via your employee badge at the North Street entrance.

## **Emergencies and School Closings**

During inclement weather, please listen to your radio or TV for school closings or shortened days. We will follow the closing or delays as the entire school district.

- Listen to local radio. WBET-Sturgis, WTHD-LaGrange, WLKM-Three Rivers, WKFR, WRKR, WKMI-Kalamazoo and Battle Creek.
- Check TV Stations. WWMT(CBS)-Kalamazoo, DU(NBC)-South Bend, WOOD(NBC)-Grand Rapids, WOTV(ABC)- Battle Creek, WXSP and CW7 West Michigan for all the latest information.

Unfortunately, emergencies do occur from time-to-time in our schools and in the community that could result in a lockdown or other action. During such matters, the safety and well-being of our students, employees and staff is our primary concern. While we value informing you of any emergency as soon as possible, our first responders

strongly request that we not release any public statement until there is an all clear. This serves two primary purposes:

1. It allows all of our people to work with the first responders to ensure the safety of our students and employees and
2. In the early stages of the emergency we may not have all of the necessary facts to share with you and we do not want to release misinformation. In this day of social media and cell phones, we realize you may hear about an event before you hear from us. Unfortunately, we can't control the dissemination of all information. However, we have extensive plans in place, work very closely with our first responders, and always put safety first.

### **Payroll and Timecard Directions**

- Hourly staff will use the Skyward system for payroll. Access to Skyward can be done on the time clock in the SCC mailroom or by using the Skyward app on your smartphone. Please clock in no sooner than 10 minutes prior to your scheduled time and clock out no later than 10 minutes post your scheduled time.  
\*Note: Available hours vary by program.
- Teaching staff will need to fill out a timesheet biweekly per the annual payroll calendar. Please be sure to turn the completed timesheets into payroll no later than the Monday following the pay period. If you do forget to submit your time card, it can be accepted for the next submission date. \*Note: Available hours vary by program.

### **Evaluation**

1. Adult Ed programs are evaluated by students up to twice per year. Survey forms are distributed by teachers, completed anonymously and returned to the teacher. Teachers are encouraged to review the results and modify their practices accordingly.
2. Staff is evaluated once per year by AE Director and/or Administrator.

## **Follow-up**

The Talent Investment Agency (TIA) requires all state and federally funded adult education providers to conduct post-program follow-up as required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA). Staff in each program will be required to participate in the follow-up process. Required follow-up notices will be reported to each program on a monthly basis. Upon completion, they will need to be returned to the AE Administrator for entry in the MAERS.

## **Staff Meetings**

All staff members are expected to attend the opening staff meeting, usually held on an evening during the week before classes begin. Important information about programs and policies for the new year are shared at this annual meeting. Regular staff meetings are held as needed and are indicated via a google calendar invite. All staff meetings are paid time.

## **Acceptable Use Policy**

Technology has fundamentally altered the ways in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred in society. As a result, educators are continually adapting their means and methods of instruction, and the way they approach student learning, to incorporate the vast, diverse, and unique resources available through the Internet. The Board of Education provides Technology and Information Resources (as defined by Bylaw 0100) to support the educational and professional needs of its staff and students. The Board provides staff with access to the Internet for limited educational purposes only and utilizes online educational services/apps to enhance the instruction delivered to its students and to facilitate the staff's work. The District's computer network and Internet system does not serve as a public access service or a public forum, and the Board imposes reasonable restrictions on its use consistent with its limited educational purpose. The Board regulates the use of District Technology and Information Resources by principles consistent with applicable local, State, and Federal laws, and the District's educational mission. This policy and its related administrative guidelines and any applicable employment contracts and collective bargaining agreements govern the staffs' use

of the District’s Technology and Information Resources and staff’s personal communication devices when they are connected to the District’s computer network, Internet connection and/or online educational services/apps, or when used while the staff member is on Board-owned property or at a Board- sponsored activity (see Policy 7530.02).

**Complaint Process**

If you are unable to resolve your concern or question after consulting with the AE Administrator, you should schedule an appointment with the principal. Call the office and leave a message with the secretary “that you would like to speak with or schedule an appointment with the principal.” If you are unable to resolve your concern or question after your appointment with the principal, you can call the superintendent’s office and your complaint will be forwarded to the appropriate official. If your complaint is still unresolved after working with the appropriate official, you have the right to request a Board hearing.

# Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have received access to an electronic copy of the St. Joseph County Adult Education Staff Handbook. I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand the handbook and the information contained within it. Please see the Public School’s website for a complete listing and definition of all Board Policies and Guidelines.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_