

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

**STUDENT 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!**

The administration and staff extend a welcome to St. Joseph County Adult Education students. Because your education is important to us, you can be assured of respect, encouragement, and friendship at St. Joseph County Adult Education classes. We want to help you accomplish your goals.

**MiChelle DeVries**  
**Sturgis Site Administrator**  
**Career Navigator St. Joe Co. Adult Ed**  
**107 W West Street**  
**Sturgis, MI 49091**  
**269-659-1540**  
**Cell: 269-689-8826**  
**email: [mdevries@sturgisps.org](mailto:mdevries@sturgisps.org)**

**Theresa Hambright**  
**Three Rivers Site Administrator**  
**Social Worker**  
**416 Washington St**  
**Three Rivers, MI 49093**  
**269-279-9581**  
**Phone: 269-279-9581**  
**Cell: 269-330-5532**  
**email: [thambright@trschoools.org](mailto:thambright@trschoools.org)**

**Juanita Miller**  
**Centreville Site Administrator**  
**190 Hogan Street**  
**Centreville, MI 49032**  
**Phone: 269-467-5210 (21217)**  
**Cell: 269-221-4447**  
**Email: [jmiller@cpschools.org](mailto:jmiller@cpschools.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

## **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 you signed in or out 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 once they enter the classroom.

Attendance time is recorded in 1-hour increments. You must work at least one hour in order to have any time applied to your attendance record. DSS, court-appointed, or SSI-appointed students must meet those agency or department requirements. You will be required to sign a release of information for that agency/department. St. Joseph County Adult Education regularly reports your attendance & grades to these agencies. Letters of enrollment or attendance will be given only after a student's attendance reaches 12 hours.

## **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.

## **Residence Requirements**

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.

## **Assessment**

Students are tested as required by Michigan Adult Education. 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.

## ***Dress and Grooming Code***

Student apparel should be decent and within the following guidelines:

- Students should wear their attire in an appropriate manner (i.e., clothing should not draw undue attention to the student, no underwear showing, or revealing attire).
- Hair shall be neat and clean.
- Footwear is required on all students (by state law).
- Clothing displaying obscene or questionable printing is not to be worn.
- Non-prescription dark glasses are not to be worn.
- It is assumed that members of the student body will show courtesy toward their fellow students by being neat and clean during school hours.
- Staff members have the final say as to the appropriateness of attire.

## **Registration Process**

Enrollment requires a meeting with the Site Administrator, completing a registration form, presenting photo ID and proof of residency, completion of basic skills placement testing , and verification from a transferring school (if applicable). Students are tested as required by 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.

## **Counseling and Guidance Services**

A Career Navigator is available to assist students with academic and career concerns. Students enrolled in the high school completion program are encouraged to meet with an advisor to review all earned credits. An educational plan for graduation will be developed for each student. The advisor is located in the Sturgis Adult Education Office Room #217.

Students experiencing problems that interfere with their program of learning, success, or personal well-being are encouraged to seek advice and support from the Adult Education office.

## Programs Offered

- **High School Completion:** Instruction designed to fulfill the requirements for a MMC Diploma covers all the core subjects: Math, Science, English, Social Studies and three 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.
- **High School Equivalency or GED:** Students wanting to earn their high school equivalency certificate prepare using the online program Odysseyware. Instruction to enable successful completion is designed to prepare participants to pass the computerized GED tests in Language Arts Writing, Language Arts Reading, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics. GED tests will provide a universally recognized high school equivalency credential and measure high school level knowledge and skills for those who have not earned a diploma. Teacher-led classroom times are also available for those students needing one-on-one instructional support. The staff is available to help students arrange to take the GED examinations. Students interested in taking the GED must prepare by completing guided study and practice tests. Students may earn discounted GED testing fee rates by enrolling, attending a minimum of 40 hours during the Fall and Winter periods, and demonstrating proficiency on practice tests. Testing fees for those not enrolled or not in good standing are \$43.50 per test for all four tests.
- **Adult Basic Education:** Improve skills in reading, math, and language. Instruction provided to adults who function below the ninth grade equivalent level in language arts and/or mathematics.
- **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.



## Coursework

HSD Classwork is available in the form of online courses via Odysseyware @sturgispsd.owschools.com, direct instruction with a teacher, and bookwork.

## Grading System

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
E	Failure (59 and below)
I	Incomplete
NC	No Credit
CR	Credit

Any class begun can be continued the following semester/year if sufficient progress has been made.

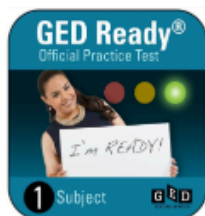
## Testing for Credit



If you have previously enrolled in a class and did not receive credit for this class, it will be entered as CRx with a pass threshold of 60%.



**Take the final exam in any class and score at least a 75% to earn**



**Score 145+ on a CED Ready and earn 1 credit in that subject area.**

You can attempt to test out of **any** class, regardless of progress in class. For example: You can test out of a class you have started. You can test out of a class you have not started. You can test out of a class you have failed.

There are **no limits** to the number of classes you can test out of; however, you can only attempt each class one time per class per semester.

If you do not pass the test out attempt you will be entered into the class as a CRx class.

## Graduation Requirement

A minimum of (19) credits is required for high school diploma graduation. For most courses, one half (1/2) credit is given per subject. Students must complete ALL course work and demonstrate proficiency to receive credit.

<b>Michigan Merit Curriculum High School Graduation Requirements</b>	
<b>MATHEMATICS - 4 Credits</b>	
Algebra I Algebra II	Geometry One math course in final year of high school
<b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS - 4 Credits</b>	
English Language Arts 9 English Language Arts 10	English Language Arts 11 English Language Arts 12
<b>SCIENCE - 3 Credits</b>	
Biology Physics or Chemistry	One additional science credit
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES - 3 Credits</b>	
.5 credit in Civics U.S. History and Geography	.5 credit in Economics World History and Geography
<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION &amp; HEALTH - 1 Credit</b>	
<b>VISUAL, PERFORMING AND APPLIED ARTS - 1 Credit</b>	
<b>ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE</b> Course, Learning or Integrated Learning Experience	
<b>LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH - 2 Credits</b> In grades 9-12; OR an equivalent learning experience in grades K-12 effective for students entering third grade in 2006 (Class 2016)	

## 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. It is our belief that the event should serve as a final highlight of a student's participation in the program. **Attendance at Commencement is expected.** To be eligible, all requirements must be completed by the last day of scheduled Adult Education classes for graduating seniors. If you have not completed all of your work and haven't earned credit for the work completed by the last day of school for seniors, you will not be able to participate in commencement exercises. Diplomas are awarded the week after graduation by coming in and picking them up in person at the SCC office.

## **Complaint Process**

If you are unable to resolve your concern or question after consulting with the teacher 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.

## **Guests**

No guests are allowed in the building or on the grounds except with prior consent of a staff member. Only registered students are permitted in class.

## **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**

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 access any student file.

## **Student Parking**

Student parking is available at each location. No loitering or reckless driving will be permitted and could be grounds for dismissal.

## **School Closing and Delay**

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.

- Sign up for PowerSchool Announcements! Please call 659-1565 if you are not receiving a call.
- 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.

## **Emergencies**

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.

## **Fire, Lock down and Tornado Drills**

The school complies with all safety laws and will conduct fire and tornado drills in accordance with State law. Instruction on how to proceed during these drills will be provided to students by their teachers. Teachers are responsible for the safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building.

## **Student Conduct**

All students are expected to conduct themselves with respect towards Adult Education staff and fellow students. Students are also expected to comply with the rules and regulations and conduct themselves with respect toward staff and patrons. Behavior that is noisy, disrespectful, disruptive, illegal, or bothersome to other students, patrons, and/or staff constitutes adequate grounds for immediate dismissal. Staff will take appropriate measures to maintain a positive learning environment for all.

## **Bullying and Harassment**

“Bullying” is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, or physical acts, including cyber bullying. “Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics, cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location. “Intimidation/Menacing” includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with a person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

The District shall provide, and all administrators, school employees, contracted employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students will undertake annual training on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying and other aggressive Behavior. Bullying is intentional behavior initiated by one or more students directed toward other(s). Any student that believes she/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to the teacher, the principal or may report it directly to the Assistant Superintendent. All reports of bullying will be investigated.

## **Cheating/Plagiarism**

Includes but is not limited to intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; copying from another student's work; representing material prepared by another as one's own work; allowing others to copy from or use work not their own.

## **Fighting**

Defined as physical contact in which two or more parties are active participants, which does or could cause bodily harm. Physical contact refers to but is not limited to hitting, shoving, pushing, tripping,

pinching, or spitting. Physical assault is different from fighting because it does not involve at least two active participants. Macing a person is viewed as an assault.

### **Forgery of School Documents**

Defined as a student writing someone else's name without their permission and will be referred to the director.

### **Incitement**

Promoting a disagreement or conflict between others, which could result in a disruption of the school processes; this includes, but is not limited to, making accusations or threats, repeating or transmitting gossip or rumors or encouraging either physically, verbally or in writing a conflict which could result in a disruption.)

### **Indecent Exposure**

Violation of this will include police contact and referral to the director.

### **Possession of Illegal Substances**

This includes alcohol, drugs, and tobacco products-this includes but is not limited to being in possession of, using, or distributing these substances---"use of tobacco product" means any of the following:

- 1) the carrying by a person of a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe, or other lighted smoking device
- 2) the inhaling or chewing of a tobacco product
- 3) the placing of a tobacco product within a person's mouth
- 4) the use of smoking of electric, "vapor," or other substitute forms of cigarettes, clove cigarettes, or other lighted smoking devices for burning tobacco or any other substance)

St. Joseph County Adult Education is a DRUG FREE ZONE!

### **Possession of a Weapon**

"Weapon" means any object which, in the manner in which it is used, is intended to be used, or is represented, is capable of inflicting serious bodily harm or property damage, as well as endangering the health and safety of persons. Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever, including air and gas powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons, ammunition, and

explosives. This policy shall also encompass such actions as look-alike items, false fire alarms, bomb threats, or intentional calls to falsely report a dangerous condition.

### **Vandalism**

Significant misuse/destruction/defacing school property and/or personal property caused by the result of inappropriate behavior. All consequences include full payment of labor and replacement costs of applicable restitution and possible police contact.

### **Summary**

The primary objectives of requiring appropriate student behavior and self-discipline is to produce a positive and safe learning atmosphere in which there will be no interruption of the teaching-learning environment.

- Regulations covered in this handbook are in effect at school or at any school approved activity on or off school property
- Any student who is under suspension will not be allowed to attend or participate in any school activity. Any student who has excessive incidents of restriction may also not be allowed to attend or participate in any school activity.
- Administration may convene a Code of Conduct Hearing whenever, in his/her judgment, the documented behavior pattern seriousness of the offense is opposed to the process of formal education within St. Joseph County Adult Education.

### **Acceptable Use Policy**

The use of the St. Joseph County Adult Education network is a privilege, not a right. Students who fail to comply with the Schools' policies and guidelines while using the network may lose the privilege to access the network. Students may also lose the privilege to use equipment provided by the School or to bring their own computerized devices to school.

### **Laptops and Personal Computing Devices**

Students are responsible for the proper care of technology equipment at all times, whether on or off Schools' property, including any costs

associated with repairing or replacing the equipment if a student is deemed negligent of reasonable care.

## Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have received access to an electronic copy of the 2023-2024 Adult Education Student Handbook. I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and understand the handbook and the information contained within it.

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

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