

# SSD/Maplewood- Richmond Heights

## APRIL 2024

Dear MRH Families,

We hope you had a fantastic spring break filled with relaxation, adventure, and cherished memories. As we dive back into the swing of things, we wanted to extend a warm welcome back to our school community!



April is here, and it's shaping up to be an exciting and busy month ahead. We have a plethora of engaging activities, events, and learning opportunities planned for your children. April promises to be a month of growth and discovery.

We encourage you to stay connected with us through our communication channels to stay updated on all the happenings this month. Remember, your involvement and support play a crucial role in your students's educational journey, and we value your partnership immensely.

Welcome back, and let's make April an amazing month of learning and fun!

In Partnership,

*Emily*

Emily Kresyman Ed. S

Maplewood Richmond Heights Director of Special Education

*created with the support of AI technology*

APRIL 8th- MRH-SSD PAC meeting 6:30-7:30pm Research and Design Center  
APRIL 9th- Community Conversations 7-8pm @ Schlafly Bottleworks  
APRIL 10th- ACT day @ MRH High School for 11th grade students  
APRIL 18th- Board of Education Meeting 7pm Research and Design Center  
APRIL 26th- Professional Development Day (no school for students)  
APRIL 29th- NO SCHOOL



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## Summer Learning Opportunities

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### Summer Programming / Overview

If you are the parent of a child who will be entering Kindergarten in fall 2024, I strongly encourage you to consider enrolling your child in Summer Journey. We have noticed that when these young students meet their teachers, fellow students, and our staff during the summer, they are eager to return in the fall and find that "first day of school" experience to be a positive one.

[mrhschools.net](http://mrhschools.net)

### STL County Library

Did you know that the St. Louis County Library offers more than just books? They offer a whole host of events at each of their locations throughout the County. Visit their [events webpage](#) today and discover what interests you!



### Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis

Discover the what, why and how behind the incredible work we get to do every day for individuals with disabilities. Download our latest newsletters and area guides to learn more about the Recreation Council of Greater St. Louis and ways you can get involved with programs or events.

IT'S ARRIVED. [2024 Summer Guide](#) can now be viewed and printed.

Plus, check out these resources:

The Field Trip Database

- [Online Summer Program Listing](#)



## Miriam Summer Camp Taking Registrations

[Registration is open for the 2024 Miriam School and Learning Center's academic and therapeutic summer camps!](#) Individualized instruction, research-based interventions, and certified/licensed professionals will ensure your child builds confidence and skills in reading, writing, speech, or social/emotional development

## Learn More about SEF's Kid-to-Camp Program

SEF's [Kid-to-Camp](#) program provides financial assistance to families of children served by Special School District so they can attend camps. Funds are awarded based on financial need and student benefit. Learn more about SEF's camp options, including day and overnight camps for winter, spring, and summer breaks. Applications are accepted year-round. Apply early - some camps have limited open spots.



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# Health and Wellness

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Summer break is just around the corner. Thankfully St. Louis offers many opportunities for families to get out and about together. [Explore St. Louis](#) has a robust directory of local museums and galleries. Get out and see what St. Louis has to offer.



## FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER and CAASTLC

The **Community Action Agency of St. Louis County (CAASTLC)** will be available at the SSD Family Resource Hub (located inside North Tech High School) on Friday, April 5th, from 10 AM-2 PM to provide information and access to many of their programs, including the Low-Income Home Energy Program (LIHEAP) and Water Assistance Program (LIWAP).

**Family Resource Hub** is open most Tuesdays and Fridays of the month (closed for Spring Break). The Hub offers a **satellite food pantry** to aide families with immediate food needs. FACE staff will also support families with questions about community resources and provide internet access to aid the completion of applications for various services. Please contact FACE to set an appointment.



## FAMILY CAFE



### Family Cafe Event

Come to the April Family Cafe! **April 11, 6-8 PM** - Join FACE at North Technical High School (1700 Derhake Road, Florissant, 63033) for the **Family Cafe**. These events are hosted by families for families. They provide parents and caregivers a safe and welcoming space to connect and learn from each other. They are centered on the Strengthening Families Five Protective Factors: Resilience, Relationships, Knowledge, Support, and Communication.

[Register today!](#)

### Virtual Open House

Are you new to Special School District, or do you just want to learn more about our amazing organization? Join FACE for a **Virtual Open House** on Thursday, April 18th, at 6 PM. Families can receive an introduction to the services and resources available through SSD. Join the Zoom meeting [here](#).

### Future Leaders

**FUTURE LEADERS WANTED!** Would you like to become more involved in the special education process? Family Leadership Institute offers participants a comprehensive set of opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge in various areas related to education, family engagement, and collaboration. Sign up today for the **Family Leadership Institute** (FLI). FLI will be held April 17th, 24th and May 1st from 5:30-8pm. Click [here](#) to find out more and to register.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## 2023-24 - SECOND SEMESTER



### JANUARY

- 3 Students Return
- 5 Hub Huddle: CAASTLC
- 24 Lunch and Learn with Mizzou PAWS (Inclusive Post-Secondary Options)

### FEBRUARY

- 1 Virtual Open House
- 2 Hub Huddle: CAASTLC
- 7 Virtual Workshop: Behavioral Strategies in the Home & Community, Part 2
- 8 Family Cafe
- 8 American Sign Language, Class 1
- 15 American Sign Language, Class 2
- 22 American Sign Language, Class 3
- 24 Family Academy
- 28 Lunch & Learn with Alternative to Guardianship
- 29 American Sign Language, Class 4

### MARCH

- 1 Hub Huddle: Dpt. of Vocational Rehabilitation & CAASTLC
- 7 American Sign Language, Class 5
- 14 Family Cafe
- 14 American Sign Language, Class 6
- 28 American Sign Language, Make-Up Session

### APRIL

- 2 Virtual Workshop: 10 Steps to Effective Advocacy
- 5 Hub Huddle: Higher Education Consortium & CAASTLC
- 11 Family Cafe
- 17 Family Leadership Institute - Day 1
- 18 Virtual Open House
- 24 Lunch and Learn with St. Louis Arc's Next Program - Helping Youth Prepare for What's Next
- 24 Family Leadership Institute - Day 2

### MAY

- 1 Family Leadership Institute - Day 3
- 3 Hub Huddle: CAASTLC
- 7 Virtual Workshop: Self-Care Isn't Selfish
- 23 Last Day of School for SSD



### READY TO REGISTER?

Registration is required for most of these offerings. To join in on the fun, scan the QR code or visit [www.ssdmo.org/FACEEvents](http://www.ssdmo.org/FACEEvents)

### NEED MORE RESOURCES?

The Family Toolkit helps families of students receiving special education services navigate SSD supports and services. [www.ssdmo.org/FamilyToolkit](http://www.ssdmo.org/FamilyToolkit)



Exciting news! The FACE second-semester calendar of events is now available. Packed with enriching activities, it aims to strengthen family/school partnerships. You can access the calendar [here](#). Mark your calendars and join us—your participation is key to fostering a positive and engaging school community.

Want to learn more about opportunities for families in our district? Sign up on our [website](#) for the new FACE-to-face newsletter from SSD's Family and Community Engagement Division. Scroll to the bottom of the page, look to the right-hand corner, and share your name and email address to stay up to date on our events.



### Follow SSD on Instagram!

SSD launched a new Instagram account in October and would love for you to follow. The District will be sharing photos and updates from all across the District, including our students and staff in partner districts. Follow us to stay connected and see what we are up to: [www.instagram.com/ssdstlco/](https://www.instagram.com/ssdstlco/)



### 10 Steps of Self Advocacy

April 2, 6 PM - Join FACE for a live webinar: **10 Steps to Self Advocacy**. This workshop provides an easy-to-use format that will guide families in using strategies to build positive interactions and collaborative teams. [Register today!](#)

### Practical Advice for Families

Does your student have a new Autism diagnosis or are you interested in learning more about Autism and how to best support student learning in the home environment? Join FACE on April 5th at 6pm as one of SSD's own Autism Effective Practice Specialists gives practical advice and information. To learn more and to register for this event [click here](#).

### Self-Care: Toilet Training

FACE along with SSD's Behavior Analysts are hosting a workshop about toilet training on April 10th at 6:30. You can learn strategies to break down toilet training skills and gather resources to help your student's success. To learn more and to register for this event, [click here](#).

### Come to the April Family Cafe!

April 11, 6-8 PM - Join FACE at North Technical High School (1700 Derhake Road, Florissant, 63033) for the **Family Cafe**. These events are hosted by families for families. They provide parents and caregivers a safe and welcoming space to connect and learn from each other. They are centered on the Strengthening Families Five Protective Factors: Resilience, Relationships, Knowledge, Support, and Communication. [Register today!](#)



### Lunch and Learn with the St. Louis Arc's

FACE is hosting a **Lunch and Learn with the St. Louis Arc's NEXT** program on Wednesday, April 24th, at 11:30 AM. St. Louis Arc's Next transition program provides focused, impactful supports for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities as they prepare for their future. Next provides various programs which support individuals navigate what is next in their lives. The support offered in Next is centered on what is needed by the individual. Through skill building, goal development, and social activities, young adults are able to identify and work toward their goals. From an extra nudge in the right direction to classes that teach living skills, we will help you identify what's Next. Lunch and Learns are held virtually through YouTube Live. To access the video, please visit the [SSD YouTube channel](#).

# SSD and MRH PAC Information

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## PAC Families, Summer is around the corner!

Greetings PAC Family! It can be overwhelming figuring out school, insurance, future planning, not to mention what to make for dinner, all while parenting our beautiful kids who require extra attention. We're here to help you navigate the confusing waters of the disability world with our PAC meeting presentations. We want to help you now so your child's future is bright.



Check out our upcoming meeting topics below. Note: Our PAC meetings are always held on the second Wednesday of the month, 7-9 PM, August through May (except March):

- May 8, 2024: Mark your calendars for our in-person celebration at SSD Central office! We are working to make it a one-stop shopping experience that will hook you up with integral resources for your child all in one place.

Come join your PAC family and get that help you haven't had time to ask for. There was no March SSD PAC meeting. Please join us for our [April 10 Zoom meeting](#).

Best,

Rebecca Flieg

President, [SSD Parents Advisory Council](#)

## PAC Documents: Please see below for updated meeting information.

- [SSD PAC Agenda for 2/14/24](#)
- [February 2024 PAC Meeting Presentation](#)
- [Meeting Recording for 2/14/24](#)
- [January 2024 Meeting Minutes](#)
- [January 2024 PAC Meeting Presentation](#)



## MRH Parent Advisory Council

The MRH Parent Advisory Council offers an opportunity to connect with other parents of students with disabilities and to learn about topics of interest. Please contact MRH parent [Mrs. Kim Gifford](#) if you are interested in participating.

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Special Education Foundation (SEF)

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## First Annual Starfish Awards

SEF is excited to celebrate the SSD community! [Click here](#) for all the details on our First Annual Starfish Awards, celebrating those in the SSD community who go above and beyond to make a difference!

We recently sent out a press release we would appreciate you sharing with those who know someone deserving of this award. We are taking nominations through March 31 and are thrilled to be holding this event at the new CITYPARK soccer stadium on June 13 - join us on the pitch!

The Starfish Award is reserved for individuals who have brought about significant change through seemingly small yet deeply meaningful actions. Ideal candidates for this honor exhibit the following qualities:

- Consistently demonstrates unwavering compassion and kindness.
- Leaves a remarkable imprint on the lives of students and families within the Special School District and the 22 partner districts in St. Louis County.
- Offers vital support during challenging circumstances.
- Their actions generate a ripple effect of positivity, creating a nurturing environment for all.

While nominees need not be exclusively educators, they should be individuals within the SSD community and the partner districts who have positively influenced those they serve.

For more information about the Starfish Awards and [sponsorship opportunities](#), please visit [starfishawards.org](http://starfishawards.org) or contact Jill Salinas at [jill@sef-stl.org](mailto:jill@sef-stl.org).

Thank you in advance for sharing and for your nominations! Help SEF identify those star individuals who need to be recognized!

Read the [full press release attached](#).



### Gift of Sound

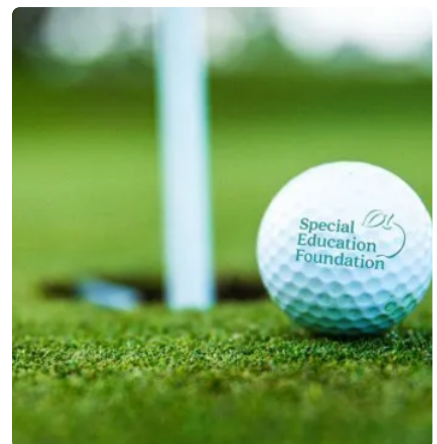
The need for financial assistance is growing at an alarming rate for those with audiology needs. Since hearing aids, hearing molds, audiological equipment, and/or repairs are not always covered by insurance or tax dollars, we need your help more than ever before!

Funds will be used to purchase hearing aids, earmolds, repairs, and all things audiological. On

## Special Education Foundation

### GRANT WINNERS!

The Special Education Foundation helps support SSD teachers to implement their creative project ideas with our [Classroom Innovation Grant](#) program. We are excited to announce that we will be funding \$65,000 for 89 teacher projects for the 2024-2025 school year. See the list of winners [here](#).



### SEF Golf and Giving

Join SEF for Golf and Giving this October! The [22nd Annual Dan McLaughlin Charity Golf Tournament and Auction](#) is back and better than ever! Set to return at the prestigious Norwood Hills Country Club on October 14th, 2024, this event



behalf of the students and parents we serve, know that your generosity and support are greatly appreciated. Thank you for helping SEF provide more children with the gift of sound. **Donations accepted through April 5, 2024**

<https://sef-stl.org/fundraising/arbeiter-donation.html>

promises a day filled with excitement, camaraderie, and the joy of giving back—all in support of the Special Education Foundation's mission to support students with disabilities in St. Louis County. [Sponsorship and golf registration](#) are now open as well as opportunities to volunteer. Come be a part of this great cause!

## Let's Talk!

Let's Talk is an open invitation from Special School District (SSD) to tell us what's on your mind. Let's Talk is an easy way to submit feedback at your convenience directly to the SSD staff member who can help.

### Additional Resources

- [SSD Parent Advisory Council](#)
- [SSD Partner District - Maplewood-Richmond Heights](#)
- [Academic and Related Services Toolkit](#)

[Click Here to read "Honoring Our History, Shaping Our Future" MRH Strategic Plan](#)



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Director of Special Education

Contact



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