PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

It is the policy of the West Allegheny School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, marital or parental status, national origin, age or handicap in its employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments, Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Section 504 Regulations of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Section 204 Regulations of the 1984 Carl D. Perkins Act or any applicable federal statute.

For information regarding program services, activities and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons or for inquiries regarding civil rights compliance contact: Office of the Superintendent, P.O. Box 55, 100 Bruno Lane, Imperial, PA 15126, (724) 695-5210 or Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, DC 20201.

Reviewed and Revised
Summer, 2012

MISSION STATEMENT

OUR MISSION

The mission of the West Allegheny School District, a leader in quality education, is to ensure that each student acquires the necessary knowledge and skills to be a responsible citizen, prepared for life-long learning and employment; this is accomplished by providing meaningful and personally challenging learning experiences within a safe, nurturing environment in partnership with family and community.

OUR VISION

The West Allegheny School District will create a learning environment in which students maximize their potential and achieve success in a cooperative partnership with students, parents, staff, administration; and community through a positive, supportive, caring climate which promotes the dignity of all individuals.

SHARED VALUES

- Quality education is essential to sustain our democratic society.
- Education benefits people throughout their lives.
- Every person is valuable and worthy of respect.
- All people can and want to learn.
- Quality education is a shared responsibility among students, family, school and community.
- Higher expectations lead to higher performance.
- Family support provides a strong foundation for individual learning.
- Each individual is unique and capable of reaching higher levels of performance given the proper conditions.

ALMA MATER

Alma Mater, WEST ALLEGHENY,
Scarlet and gray are true.
To thee, we raise our loyal voices,
To echo our lifetime thru,
Thy guiding hand and spirit
Has kept our love for thee.
The hours and days that were spent here
Will linger thru the years

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Policy 103 Discrimination – Title IX Sexual Harassment Affecting Students
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CV5KAT507EA8

Policy 117 Homebound Instruction
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CV5KD7507EF4

Policy 130 Homework
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CV5KDX507F10

Policy 204 Attendance
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QEN66DB3C

Policy 218 Student Discipline
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QFR66DB68

Policy 218.1 Weapons
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QFT66DB6C

Policy 218.2 Terroristic Threats
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QFV66DB6E

Policy 220 Student Expression-Dissemination of Materials
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QG366DB73

Policy 221 Dress and Grooming
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QG866DB77

Policy 222 Tobacco and Vaping Products
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QGA66DB79

Policy 226 Searches
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QGG66DB7F

Policy 227 Controlled Substances-Paraphernalia
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QGJ66DB81

Policy 236.1 Threat Assessment
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QH866DB97

Policy 237 Electronic Devices
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QHA66DB9A

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Policy 247 Hazing
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Policy 249 Bullying-Cyberbullying
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QHM66DBA5

Policy 250 Student Recruitment
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Policy 251 Students Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care and Other Educational Instability
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CX6QHV66DBAB

Policy 810.2 Transportation – Video/Audio Recording
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=DBEQHU6947A1

Policy 815 Acceptable Use of the Internet, Computer and Network Resources
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=DBEQJ86947AD

Policy 815.1 Use of Artificial Intelligence in Education
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=DBEQJA6947B0

Policy 819 Suicide Awareness, Prevention, and Response
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=DBEQJG6947B7

Dear Students and Families of West Allegheny High School,

On behalf of our high school administration, faculty, and staff, it is our privilege to welcome you to the 2026-2027 school year! We are excited about the opportunities to engage with everyone this school year. We believe that our work together will create a positive school culture and provide students and families with the best opportunities for success while maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment. Together, we can embrace learning while creating great experiences and positive memories for students as they prepare for a viable post-secondary plan focused on 21st Century careers and/or post-secondary education. The WAHS handbook has been updated to meet this vision as well as the current needs of our school community.

To assist in this journey, the handbook includes valuable information to provide tools for student success. Please read this handbook as you will be responsible for the content as it pertains to the policies and procedures throughout the district.

By students understanding the importance of **"safety"** in a school system, we will ensure **"respectful"** interactions occur between all our stakeholders. To maintain a focused, engaging, and present environment, personal devices and non-instructional tools must be **"silent and away all day"**. To ensure maximum learning time and a connected community, cell phones and personal electronics should not be visible or used at any point during the school day—this includes class periods, hallway transitions, lunch periods, and study halls. Additionally, students reporting to school **"on time, every time,"** will ensure that instruction is maximized throughout the school year. Student **"accountability"** will be paramount in the days ahead as we ensure each student arrives to school **"ready to learn."** Having the support of our families, students, and staff towards these common expectations for academic behavior is imperative for student success. Thank you for your support in this area as we help our students **"SOAR"** to their full potential. As always, please reach out to the high school administrative team for assistance or if you have any questions.

Every student at West Allegheny High School can accomplish remarkable things every day. It is our collective goal to foster an environment full of promise that allows all who are involved to have a year filled with personal and academic growth. We look forward to partnering with you on this journey and celebrating achievements. We look forward to a wonderful school year ahead!

Sincerely,

Cheryl McHone
Dr. Cheryl McHone, Lead Principal

Katharine Roche
Dr. Katharine Roche, Director of Academic Innovation and Special Projects

Angel Washington
Ms. Angel Washington, Assistant Principal

Jim Young
Mr. Jim Young, Assistant Principal

Vladimir St. Surin
Dr. Vladimir St. Surin, Director of Athletics

Matthew McBurney
Mr. Matthew McBurney, Dean of Student Learning and WAVA Coordinator

WEST ALLEGHENY HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent.....Dr. Jerri Lynn Lippert
Assistant Superintendent of Schools ..... Dr. Christopher Shattuck
Assistant to the Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction ..... Dr. Shana Nelson
Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education & Student Services..... Dr. Lynn Utchell
Lead Principal ..... Dr. Cheryl McHone
Director of Academic Innovation & Special Projects ..... Dr. Katharine Roche
Assistant Principal..... Ms. Angel Washington
Assistant Principal..... Mr. Jim Young
Dean of Student Learning & WAVA Coordinator ..... Mr. Matthew McBurney

MAIN OFFICE
724-695-7368

Secretary to the Principals .....Mrs. Dawn Hoffmann
Front Office and ECIHSA Clerk .....Mrs. Monica Heyl
Front Office Clerk..... Ms. Christie Macek

GUIDANCE OFFICE
724-695-5250

Guidance Counselors.....Ms. Lynn Birnie
Mrs. Sophia Mooney
Mrs. Amanda Pegher
Mrs. Brooke Prohaska
Mr. Alan Puglia
Guidance Secretary ..... Mrs. Kristin Cook
Attendance Clerk .....Mrs. Betsy Weber

ATHLETIC OFFICE
724-695-5247

Director of Athletics..... Dr. Vladimir St. Surin
Assistant Director of Athletics .....Mr. David Schoppe
Athletic Clerk..... Ms. Christine Chiodo

SCHOOL NURSE
724-695-5256

Nurse ..... Ms. Barb Lecker

WEST ALLEGHENY HIGH SCHOOL FACULTY

Business, Computer & Information Tech.
Chris Lucas
Dan Marshall
Lisa Monzo

Engineering & Technology Education
Shawn Dugan
Ron Neurohr

English Language Arts
Kimberly Brands
Lynn Ann DeBor
Rebecca Duch
Mike Frankowski*
Jennifer Jones
Tammy Kester*
Vincent Kimball
Amy Krek*
Kim Patterson
Jennifer Rogers*
Amanda Spada
Allison Vaupel

English Language Learners (ELL)
Kim Patterson

Family & Consumer Sciences
Jennifer Cook
Sara Ferko
Kristin Persing

Guidance
Lynn Birnie
Sophia Mooney
Amanda Pegher
Brooke Prohaska
Alan Puglia

Health & PE
Andy Barry
Jim D'Amico
Dana McCaskey
Mindi McFate
Scott Meehan

JROTC
Lt. Col. Michael Mahoney
GySgt. Robert Rainis

Mathematics
Krissy Bennett*
Angela Brutt
Bryan Cornell*
Bob Coulter
Karen Horwatt
Tammy Kester*
Matt McBurney
Samantha Petrick
Jennifer Rogers*
Mark Slagel
Rick Smith
Mike Vattimo

Nurse
Barb Lecker

Performing Arts
TJ Fox
Anna Goss
Terisa Sharlow

Science
Rachel Ermine
Jim Hamilton
Suzanne Lambert
Steve Nicola
Dave Schoppe
Amy Schweinsberg
Emily Wagner
Bob Yost

Social Studies
Chris Bielecki
Angela Burnett
Rich Druga
Matt Kropf
Kateri Meinert
Dan Prevade

Speech & Language
Krista Dapper

Visual Arts
Mike Short
Leah Shuck

World Languages
Anita Berich – **ASL**
Colleen Hollihan – **Spanish**
Michelle Matoney – **Spanish**
Bridget Jones - **German**

* Special Education

West Allegheny High School
2026-27 Calendar

2026		
August 25	Tuesday	First Day of School for Students
September 7	Monday	NO SCHOOL – Labor Day
September 15	Tuesday	Open House
October 12	Monday	NO SCHOOL – Teacher Inservice
October 29	Thursday	NO SCHOOL – Clerical/Teacher Conference
October 30	Friday	NO SCHOOL – Teacher Conference
November 25	Wednesday	½ Day Dismissal – PM Clerical
November 26-30	Thursday – Monday	NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Break
December 23	Wednesday	½ Day Dismissal – PM Clerical
December 24-31	Thursday – Thursday	NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
2027		
January 1	Friday	NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
January 18	Monday	NO SCHOOL – Clerical/ Teacher Inservice
February 12	Friday	½ Day Dismissal – PM Inservice
February 15	Monday	NO SCHOOL – Inservice/Teacher Conference
March 25	Thursday	½ Day Dismissal – PM Clerical
March 26-April 2	Friday – Friday	NO SCHOOL – Spring Break
May 31	Monday	NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day
June 3	Thursday	Last Day Students Grade 12 – Commencement
June 4	Friday	½ Day Dismissal – Last Day for students K-11 Commencement Rain Date

½ Day Dismissal Time
11:25 AM (Secondary)
12:20 PM (Elementary)

Parkway West Career & Technology Center
2026-27 Calendar

2026		
August 19	Wednesday	First Day of School for Students
September 7	Monday	NO SCHOOL – Labor Day
October 12	Monday	NO SCHOOL
November 3	Tuesday	NO SCHOOL – Act 80 Day / Parent Conferences
November 25-30	Wednesday – Monday	NO SCHOOL – Thanksgiving Break
December 22	Monday	NO SCHOOL – Teacher Inservice
December 22-31	Wednesday – Thursday	NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
2027		
January 1	Friday	NO SCHOOL – Winter Break
January 18	Monday	NO SCHOOL – Martin Luther King Day
January 22	Friday	NO SCHOOL – Career Exploration Day
January 29	Friday	NO SCHOOL – Career Exploration Day
February 15	Monday	NO SCHOOL – President's Day
March 2	Tuesday	Open House - PM
March 25-29	Thursday-Monday	NO SCHOOL – Spring Break
May 26	Wednesday	Last Day of School

WEST ALLEGHENY HIGH SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULES

Regular Bell Schedule	
Period 1	7:35 - 8:20
Period 2	8:24 - 9:08
Period 3	9:12 - 9:56
Period 4 (Lunch)	10:00 - 10:43
Period 5 (Lunch)	10:46 - 11:29
Period 6 (Lunch)	11:32 - 12:15
Period 7 (Lunch)	12:18 - 1:01
Period 8	1:04 - 1:47
Period 9	1:51 - 2:35

AM Parkway students will return to the Media Center at 10:25

PM Parkway bus will leave at 11:20 (Cafe dismissal at 11:20; Class dismissal at 11:17)

Activity Bell Schedules			
Advisory Period (AM)		**Pep Assembly Period (PM)**	
Period 1	7:35 - 8:15	Period 1	7:35 - 8:21
Period 2	8:18 - 8:58	Period 2	8:24 - 9:09
Advisory Period	9:01 - 9:31	Period 3	9:12 - 9:57
Period 3	9:34 - 10:14	Period 4 (Lunch)	10:00 - 10:35
Period 4 (Lunch)	10:17 - 10:57	Period 5 (Lunch)	10:38 - 11:13
Period 5 (Lunch)	11:00 - 11:40	Period 6 (Lunch)	11:16 - 11:51
Period 6 (Lunch)	11:44 - 12:24	Period 7 (Lunch)	11:54 - 12:29
Period 7 (Lunch)	12:28 - 1:08	Period 8	12:32 - 1:07
Period 8	1:12 - 1:52	Period 9	1:10 - 1:45
Period 9	1:55 - 2:35	Activity	1:48 - 2:35

AM Parkway students will attend Advisory 4th Period

PM Parkway bus will leave at 11:20 (Cafe dismissal at 11:20; Class dismissal at 11:17)

AM Parkway students will return to the Media Center at 10:25

PM Parkway students will report directly to the busses at 11:17

1/2 Day Bell Schedule		2-hour Delay Bell Schedule	
Period 1	7:35 - 8:06	Period 1	9:35 - 10:06
Period 2	8:09 - 8:40	Period 2	10:09 - 10:40
Period 3	8:43 - 9:13	Period 5 (Lunch)	10:43 - 11:14
Period 4 (Lunch)	9:16 - 9:46	Period 4 (Lunch)	11:17 - 11:47
Period 5 (Lunch)	9:49 - 10:19	Period 6 (Lunch)	11:51 - 12:21
Period 6 (Lunch)	10:22 - 10:52	Period 7 (Lunch)	12:24 - 12:54
Period 7 (Lunch)	10:55 - 11:25	Period 3	12:57 - 1:27
		Period 8	1:30 - 2:01
		Period 9	2:04 - 2:35

AM Parkway students will report to their 6th period upon return

PM Parkway students will report to Study Hall until 11:17

AM Parkway students will report to the Media Center for 4th Period

PM Parkway students will miss their 3rd and 4th Period

Revised August 2026

ATTENDANCE

Daily Attendance Expectations

Students are expected to:

- Attend school every day unless absent for a lawful reason.
- Arrive at school and each class on time.
- Remain in school for the entire instructional day unless approved for an early dismissal.
- Complete all assignments missed due to an absence.

Parents/guardians are expected to communicate with the school regarding student absences and submit appropriate documentation in a timely manner.

Attendance

- Students may begin entering the building at 7:00 AM.
- All students with a 1st period class should be in the building by **7:30 AM**.
- Students who are not in their 1st period class by 7:35 AM must report to the main office to sign in.
- Students leaving school before the end of the instructional day must sign out through the main office with parent/guardian approval.

Reporting an Absence

If a student is absent, arrives late, or leaves early, an written excuse must be submitted within five (5) school days of the student's return. If an excuse is not received within five (5) school days, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

Excuses may be:

- Submitted in writing to the main office
- Emailed by a parent/guardian to the attendance clerk (bweber@westasd.org)
- Accompanied by a medical excuse from a licensed healthcare provider when applicable

Parents/guardians may excuse up to eight (8) cumulative days during the school year with a written or electronic note.

Beginning with the ninth (9th) cumulative absence, all additional absences due to illness must be verified by a licensed healthcare provider to be considered excused. Absences without the required documentation will be recorded as unexcused and will lead to truancy procedures.

Unexcused Absences

Students and families are encouraged to work collaboratively with school staff throughout this process to address barriers to attendance and improve student success. In accordance with Pennsylvania Compulsory Attendance Law, the following process outlined will be implemented:

Three (3) Unexcused Absences	The student is considered truant. Written notification will be sent to the parent/guardian, and the school may schedule a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC). Student assigned to RISE.
Six (6) Unexcused Absences	The school will conduct or offer a School Attendance Improvement Conference and develop an Attendance Improvement Plan. Student assigned to RISE.
Additional Unexcused Absences	The student is considered habitually truant. After the School Attendance Improvement Plan has been completed, the district will file a citation with the Magisterial District Judge in accordance with Pennsylvania compulsory attendance law. Student assigned to RISE.

Tardiness to School

Students not in their 1st period by 7:35 AM must sign in through the office and will be issued a tardy slip to report to class. Failure to sign in will result in an illegal/unexcused absence for the entire day.

Parents/guardians may excuse up to eight (8) tardies with a written or electronic note. Once a student accumulates eight (8) parent-excused tardies, a medical excuse will be required.

Consequences for accumulated tardies will result in the following:

3rd Unexcused Tardy	Student assigned to RISE
Each Two (2) Subsequent Offenses	After-school detention or in-school suspension Detention will continue to be assigned for each two (2) subsequent, unexcused tardy
5th Unexcused Tardy	Activity Restriction

Additional offenses will follow progressive discipline in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Early Dismissal

Students requesting an early dismissal must submit a written request from a parent/guardian to the office or email the attendance clerk (bweber@westasd.org). Students who have an early dismissal are required to sign out in the office before leaving the building. *You are strongly encouraged to schedule appointments after school hours to the greatest extent possible.*

Attendance for Extracurricular Activities

Students must be in attendance by **8:00 AM** to participate in all extracurricular activities, including practices, competitions, programs, and/or meetings.

The **only exception** to the 8:00 AM arrival time is for documented medical appointments which require written verification from a healthcare provider or if a student is scheduled for a late arrival. If a student is scheduled for a late arrival, they must arrive to school prior to their assigned start time or provide medical documentation.

Without prior permission from administration and/or a medical excuse, students are not permitted to leave school early and return for extracurricular activities.

Student Driver Attendance Expectations

Driving to school is a privilege extended to students who demonstrate responsible behavior and positive school attendance. All student drivers must adhere to the district attendance policy.

Attendance violations will result in the following consequences:

Tardiness

3rd Unexcused Tardy	Warning for suspension of parking privileges
4th Unexcused Tardy	One-week suspension of parking privileges
5th Unexcused Tardy	Two-week suspension of parking privileges
6th Unexcused Tardy	Parking privileges revoked for the remainder of the school year

Absences

3rd Unexcused Absence	Warning for suspension of parking privileges
4th Unexcused Absence	One-week suspension of parking privileges
5th Unexcused Absence	Two-week suspension of parking privileges and after-school detention
6th Unexcused Absence	Parking privileges revoked for the remainder of the school year and parent conference

Additional offenses will follow progressive discipline in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct. Students whose parking privileges are revoked are not eligible for a refund of their parking permit fee.

Timeline for Making Up Missed Work Due to an Absence

If a student misses one or more days of class due to either excused or unexcused absences, the number of days they will be given to turn in missing work is equal to the number of days they were absent plus one additional day unless other arrangements are made with the teacher(s). This timeline does not include absences that resulted from a class being skipped, in which case the student is given a zero “0” for any assignment missed.

ATTENDANCE AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH HYBRID SCHEDULES

Students who operate on a hybrid schedule may have the opportunity to begin their school day during a period other than first or leave the building before the last period of the day. Students arriving after first period are expected to sign in at the front office daily, or they will be marked as having an unexcused absence for the day. Hybrid students are expected to arrive at the front office ten minutes before the start of their first class of the day. Students arriving late will be marked as tardy and face consequences that are outlined in the district Attendance Policy. Hybrid students who leave prior to school dismissal must sign out at the front office, or they will be considered to have left the building without permission and receive consequences aligned to the Student Code of Conduct.

ATTENDANCE FOR PARKWAY WEST CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER, CCBC AVIATION ACADEMY, AND ROSEDALE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

All students attending one of these programs must follow the school calendar and Attendance Policy of the institution. Students attending one of these institutions must report to the designated area of their program.

Students attending one of these institutions will be dismissed from West Allegheny at 11:20 A.M. Students will sign out in the cafeteria and board the bus outside of the cafeteria. Students driving to one of these institutions must sign in and out through the main office. All students must be on time to their respective session(s).

ATTENDANCE - POLICY 204

Purpose

The Board recognizes that attendance is an important factor in educational success, and supports a comprehensive approach to identify and address attendance issues.[1]

Authority

The Board requires the attendance of all students during the days and hours that school is in session, except that temporary student absences may be excused by authorized district staff in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, Board policy and administrative regulations.[2][3][4][5][6][7]

Definitions

Compulsory school age shall mean the period of a student's life from the time the student's person in parental relation elects to have the student enter school, which shall be no later than six (6) years of age, until the student reaches eighteen (18) years of age. The term does not include a student who holds a certificate of graduation from a regularly accredited, licensed, registered or approved high school.[8][9]

Habitually truant shall mean six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year by a student subject to compulsory school attendance.[8]

Truant shall mean having incurred three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year by a student subject to compulsory school attendance.[8]

Person in parental relation shall mean a:[8]

1. Custodial biological or adoptive parent.
2. Noncustodial biological or adoptive parent.
3. Guardian of the person of a student.
4. Person with whom a student lives and who is acting in a parental role of a student.

This term shall not include any county agency or person acting as an agent of the county agency in the jurisdiction of a dependent child as defined by law.[10]

School-based or **community-based attendance improvement program** shall mean a program designed to improve school attendance by seeking to identify and address the underlying reasons for a student's absences. The term may include an educational assignment in an alternative education program, provided the program does not include a program for disruptive youth established pursuant to Article XIX-C of the Pennsylvania Public School Code.[8]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify students, persons in parental relation, staff, local children and youth agency and local magisterial district judges about the district's attendance policy by publishing such policy in student handbooks and newsletters, on the district website and through other efficient communication methods.[1][11]

The Superintendent shall require the signature of the person in parental relation confirming that the policy has been reviewed and that the person in parental relation understands the compulsory school attendance requirements.

The Superintendent or designee, in coordination with the building principal, Attendance Officer, Home and School Visitor, and Student Services Representative shall be responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations for the attendance of students:

1. Govern the maintenance of attendance records in accordance with law.[12][13]
2. Detail the process for submission of requests and excuses for student absences.
3. Detail the process for written notices, School Attendance Improvement Conferences, School Attendance Improvement Plans, and referrals to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, the local children and youth agency, or the appropriate magisterial district judge.
4. Clarify the district's responsibility for collaboration with nonpublic schools in the enforcement of compulsory school attendance requirements.
5. Ensure that students legally absent have an opportunity to make up work.

Guidelines

Compulsory School Attendance Requirements

All students of compulsory school age who reside in the district shall be subject to the compulsory school attendance requirements.[2]

A student shall be considered in attendance if present at any place where school is in session by authority of the Board; the student is receiving approved tutorial instruction, or health or therapeutic services; the student is engaged in an approved and properly supervised independent study, work-study, dual enrollment, or career education program; the student is receiving approved homebound instruction; or the student's placement is instruction in the home.[2][5][14][15][16][17][18][19]

The following students shall be excused from the requirements of attendance at district schools, upon request and with the required approval:

1. On certification by a physician or submission of other satisfactory evidence and on approval of the Department of Education, children who are unable to attend school or apply themselves to study for mental, physical or other reasons that preclude regular attendance.[3][4][20]
2. Students enrolled in nonpublic or private schools in which the subjects and activities prescribed by law are taught.[2][21]
3. Students attending college who are also enrolled part-time in district schools.[22]
4. Students attending a home education program or private tutoring in accordance with law.[2][18][23][24][25][26]
5. Students fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) years of age whose enrollment in private trade or business schools has been approved.[2]
6. Students fifteen (15) years of age, as well as students fourteen (14) years of age who have completed the highest elementary grade, engaged in farm work or private domestic service under duly issued permits.[4]
7. Students sixteen (16) years of age regularly engaged in useful and lawful employment during the school session and holding a valid employment certificate. Regularly engaged means thirty-five (35) or more hours per week of employment.[4][15]

Excused/Lawful Absence

For purposes of this policy, the following conditions or situations constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:

1. Illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated district staff during school hours for health-related reasons.[3][6]
2. Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth or territory.[3]
3. Quarantine.

4. Family emergency.
5. Recovery from accident.
6. Required court attendance.
7. Death in family.
8. Participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countywide 4-H, FFA or combined 4-H and FFA group, upon prior written request.[1][3]
9. Participation in a musical performance in conjunction with a national veterans' organization or incorporated unit, as defined in law, for an event or funeral.[3]
    a. The national veterans' organization or incorporated unit must provide the student with a signed excuse, which shall include the date, location, and time of the event or funeral.
    b. The student shall furnish the signed excuse to the district prior to being excused from school.
10. Observance of a religious holiday observed by a bona fide religious group, upon prior written request from the person in parental relation.[27]
11. Nonschool-sponsored educational tours or trips, if the following conditions are met:[3][28]
    a. The person in parental relation submits the required documentation for excusal prior to the absence, within the appropriate timeframe.
    b. The student's participation has been approved by the Superintendent or designee.
    c. The adult directing and supervising the tour or trip is acceptable to the person in parental relation and the Superintendent.
    d. Educational trips are to equal no more than five (5) days in a school year. International educational trips may be given consideration for up to ten (10) days in a school year. In addition, trips shall not be approved during state standardized testing periods. Trips shall also not be approved for any student who has incurred ten (10) or more absences. Domestic trips extending beyond five (5) days requires special approval from the Superintendent or designee.
12. College or postsecondary institution visit, with prior approval.
13. Other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause a student's absence, as well as circumstances related to homelessness, foster care and other forms of educational instability.[3][6][29]

The district may limit the number and duration of nonschool-sponsored educational tours or trips and college or postsecondary institution visits for which excused absences may be granted to a student during the school year.

Temporary Excusals –

The following students may be temporarily excused from the requirements of attendance at district schools:

1. Students receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in the district's curricula from a properly qualified tutor approved by the Superintendent, when the excusal does not interfere with the student's regular program of studies.[2][14][18]

2. Students participating in a religious instruction program, if the following conditions are met:[27][30]

    a. The person in parental relation submits a written request for excusal. The request shall identify and describe the instruction, and the dates and hours of instruction.

    b. The student shall not miss more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year in order to attend classes for religious instruction.

    c. Following each absence, the person in parental relation shall submit a statement attesting that the student attended the instruction, and the dates and hours of attendance.

3. School age children unable to attend school upon recommendation of the school physician and a psychiatrist or school psychologist, or both, and with approval of the Secretary of Education.[20]

Parental Notice of Absence –

Absences shall be treated as unexcused until the district receives a written excuse explaining the absence, to be submitted within five (5) days of the absence.

A maximum of eight (8) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond eight (8) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts.

Unexcused/Unlawful Absence

For purposes of this policy, absences which do not meet the criteria indicated above shall be permanently considered unexcused.

An out-of-school suspension may not be considered an unexcused absence.[8]

Parental Notification –

District staff shall provide prompt notice to the person in parental relation upon each incident of unexcused absence.

Enforcement of Compulsory Attendance Requirements

Student is Truant –

When a student has been absent for three (3) days during the current school year without a lawful excuse, district staff shall provide notice to the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student within ten (10) school days of the student's third unexcused absence.[31]

The notice shall:[31]

1. Be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the person in parental relation;
2. Include a description of the consequences if the student becomes habitually truant; and
3. When transmitted to a person who is not the biological or adoptive parent, also be provided to the student's biological or adoptive parent, if the parent's mailing address is on file with the school and the parent is not precluded from receiving the information by court order.

The notice may include the offer of a School Attendance Improvement Conference.[31]

If the student incurs additional unexcused absences after issuance of the notice and a School Attendance Improvement Conference was not previously held, district staff shall offer a School Attendance Improvement Conference.[31]

School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) –

District staff shall notify the person in parental relation in writing and by telephone of the date and time of the SAIC.[31]

The purpose of the SAIC is to examine the student's absences and reasons for the absences in an effort to improve attendance with or without additional services.[8]

The following individuals shall be invited to the SAIC:[8]

1. The student.
2. The student's person in parental relation.
3. Other individuals identified by the person in parental relation who may be a resource.
4. Appropriate school personnel.
5. Recommended service providers.

Neither the student nor the person in parental relation shall be required to participate, and the SAIC shall occur even if the person in parental relation declines to participate or fails to attend the scheduled conference.[31]

The outcome of the SAIC shall be documented in a written School Attendance Improvement Plan. The Plan shall be retained in the student's file. A copy of the Plan shall be provided to the person in parental relation, the student and appropriate district staff.[31]

The district may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until the scheduled SAIC has been held and the student has incurred six (6) or more days of unexcused absences.[31]

Student is Habitually Truant –

When a student under fifteen (15) years of age is habitually truant, district staff:[32]

1. Shall refer the student to:
    a) A school-based or community-based attendance improvement program;
    b) The local children and youth agency.
2. May file a citation in the office of the appropriate magisterial district judge against the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.[32]

When a student fifteen (15) years of age or older is habitually truant, district staff shall:[32]

1. Refer the student to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program; or
2. File a citation in the office of the appropriate magisterial district judge against the student or the person in parental relation who resides in the same household as the student.

District staff may refer a student who is fifteen (15) years of age or older to the local children and youth agency, if the student continues to incur additional unexcused absences after being referred to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program, or if the student refuses to participate in such program.[32]

Regardless of age, when district staff refer a habitually truant student to the local children and youth agency or file a citation with the appropriate magisterial district judge, district staff shall provide verification that the school held a SAIC.[32]

Filing a Citation –

A citation shall be filed in the office of the appropriate magisterial district judge whose jurisdiction includes the school in which the student is or should be enrolled, against the student or person in parental relation to the student.[33]

Additional citations for subsequent violations of the compulsory school attendance requirements may only be filed against a student or person in parental relation in accordance with the specific provisions of the law.[33]

Special Needs and Accommodations

If a truant or habitually truant student may qualify as a student with a disability, and require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education shall be notified and shall take action to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[16][34][35][36]

For students with disabilities who are truant or habitually truant, the appropriate team shall be notified and shall address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[16][34][36]

Discipline

The district shall not expel or impose out-of-school suspension, disciplinary reassignment or transfer for truant behavior.[31]

REINVESTING IN SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT (R.I.S.E.)

To support our students who demonstrate chronically absent and/or tardy behaviors, the district will be implementing an after-school program for qualifying students. Qualifying students would be assigned to the program as a diversion program prior to being mandated to attend the program by the local Magistrate. Students missing three or more unexcused absences and/or tardies will begin to be assigned to the program for two or more sessions. The R.I.S.E. program will be operated at each school for 90 minutes at the conclusion of the school day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The program will be facilitated by our teachers to support recovery of learning loss caused by missing instructional time. Qualifying students would be assigned to the program as a diversion program prior to being mandated to attend the program by the local Magistrate. Students missing three or more unexcused absences and/or tardies will begin to be assigned to the program for two or more sessions. The R.I.S.E. program will be operated at each school for 90 minutes at the conclusion of the school day on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The program will be facilitated by our teachers to support recovery of learning loss caused by missed school.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

Each school building in the district is staffed by a School Resource Officer (SRO) in partnership with the police department located in its corresponding township. School Resource Officers are specially trained to provide safety and response to each school building. Duties of the SRO include hosting informational sessions on various health and safety related topics, delinquency prevention, school security, and law enforcement, when necessary.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONFERENCE

Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school with any questions or concerns regarding their student. Initial concerns regarding a student's academic progress in a class should be made to the student's teacher or counselor. Appointments for conferences with teachers, counselors, or principals may be made via phone or email or by contacting the student's teacher or counselor. Contact information for all staff members can be found on the district website.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

A student who is experiencing issues with mental health, substance abuse, attendance, or other areas of concern may benefit from the Student Assistance Program (SAP). It is the intent of SAP to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. Upon receiving a referral, the team will gather relevant information, organize the details gathered and make possible recommendations. If you would like more information about the Student Assistance Program or would like to receive free, confidential assistance, please contact the Guidance office. Further information on SAP as well as paperwork to refer a student to SAP can be found on the district website.

FAMILYLINKS

Familylinks provides services for students who are experiencing issues with mental health, developmental disabilities, addictions, abuse, behavioral problems, illnesses, and other life challenges. In partnership with the West Allegheny School District, *Familylinks* employs therapists who host individual student sessions during the school day to provide students with access to therapeutic services. Please contact the Guidance office if you would like more information on *Familylinks* or to request an outpatient referral form.

THERAPY DOG PROGRAM

West Allegheny's certified therapy dogs will be present in district schools beginning this school year. Therapy dog visits are intended to provide students with a calm, positive, and supportive experience during the school day. These visits may help promote academic growth, social-emotional wellness, engagement, and a sense of comfort for students.

Therapy dog interactions will be supervised by school staff and the dog's trained handler; the dog will remain under the handler's control at all times, and student interaction with the dog is voluntary.

Students will be reminded of appropriate expectations when therapy dogs are present, including using calm bodies and voices, asking before petting, and following adult directions.

Parents/Guardians may choose to notify the principal if they do not wish for their child/ren to have direct interaction with therapy dogs due to allergies, fears, personal preferences, or other reasons. Staff will make reasonable efforts to ensure that the child/ren does/do not participate in planned therapy dog interactions. Therapy dogs may still be present in common areas or program spaces at designated times, and incidental visual exposure may occur.

PARENT INFORMATION NOTICE

Confidentiality and Notice for Directory

The West Allegheny School District protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding all students including students with disabilities, children thought to have disabilities, protected handicapped students (if not protected by IDEA or Pennsylvania's Special Education Regulations) and children who are identified as gifted, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws, policies and regulations.

"Education Records" means those records that are directly related to the student, including stored in computers, through media, and on videotape, which are maintained by an educational agency or a party acting for the agency. "Educational Agency," for purpose of this notice, means the local school district, and/or the AIU. For all students, the educational agency maintains education records that include, but are not limited to:

- Personal Identifiable Information-Confidential information that includes, but is not limited to the student's name, name of parent/guardians and other family members, the address of the student or student's family, and personal information or personal characteristics which would make the student's identity easily traceable.

- Directory Information – Information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study (secondary students), participation in officially-recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, information for the annual yearbook, graduation programs, honor rolls, playbills, etc., and the name of the most previous educational agency or institution attended,

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords to parent/guardians, and to students over 18 years of age, certain rights with respect to students' education records. They are:

1. Parent/guardians (or students over 18 years of age) have the right to inspect and review the student's education record. The school district will comply with the request to inspect and review education records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP or due process hearing, but in no case more than 45 days after the request has been made. Requests should be submitted in writing (indicating the records the parent/guardians wish to inspect) to the school principal or other appropriate school official. Parent/guardians have the right to a response from the school district to a reasonable written request for explanations and interpretations of the records. Parent/guardians have the right to request copies of the records. While the district cannot charge a fee to search for or retrieve information, it may charge a copying fee, as long as it does not effectively prevent the parent/guardians from exercising their right to inspect and review the records. Parent/guardians have the right to appoint a representative to inspect and review their child's records. If an education record contains information on more than one child, parent/guardians (or students over 18 years of age) have the right only to inspect and review the information related to the specific child.

2. If the parent/guardians (or a student over 18 years of age) thinks information in an education record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of the child, an amendment of the record may be requested. Requests should be made in writing and clearly identify the part of the record requested to be changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The school district will decide whether or not to amend the record and will notify the parent/guardians (or student over 18), in writing, of its decision. If the school district refuses to amend the record, it will notify the parent/guardians (or students over 18) of their right to a hearing to challenge the disputed information. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardians or student (if 18 or older) when notified of the right to a hearing.

The school district will inform parent/guardians (or students over 18) when personally identifiable information is no longer needed to provide educational services to a child. Such information must be destroyed at the request of the parent/guardian (or student over 18). Parent/guardians (or students over 18) have a right to receive a copy of the material to be destroyed; however, a permanent record of the student's name, address, and telephone number, his or her grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed may be maintained without time limitations. "Destruction" of records means physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers from information, so that the information is no longer personally identifiable. The school district will provide, upon request, a listing of the types and locations of education records maintained, the school officials responsible for these records, and the school personnel authorized to see personally identifiable information. Such personnel receive training and instruction regarding confidentiality. The school district keeps records of parties obtaining access to education records, including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

3. Parent/guardians (or students over 18) have the right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. "Consent" means: the parent(s)/guardian(s) [or students over 18] have [has] been fully informed regarding the activity requiring consent, in the native language or other mode of communication; they understand and agree in writing to the activities; and, they understand that the consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. Information may be disclosed without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A "school official" is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a person serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Directory information as defined above, may be released without parent/guardian consent. Parent/guardians have the right to refuse to permit an agency to designate or release any or all of the above information as directory information. Upon request, the district discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The school district is required by the National Defense Authorization Act (Pub.L. No 107-107) to provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as provided to postsecondary institutions or to prospective employers; and shall provide students' names, addresses, and telephone listings to military recruiters, when requested, unless a parent/guardian has opted out of providing such information in writing to the school principal.

5. Parent/guardians (or students over 18) have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605.

Students' special education and gifted records are maintained at the WASD Office. The complete records are kept for a period of five (5) years after completion of the student's program or the student's graduation from high school.

Special education and gifted records that will be destroyed following the five (5) year period are all IEP's or GIEP's with the exception of the initial and final IEP or GIEP. Parent/guardians of students and students who graduated or left this school prior to the 2019-2020 school year are hereby notified that if they wish for a copy of any "IEP or GIEP" information before it is deleted/destroyed, they must make that request to the special education department (724-695-5221) by November 1, 2025. The scheduled destruction date of this information is December 1, 2025.

HIPPA

The West Allegheny School District maintains the privacy of protected health information of all students in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). A copy of the HASD Notice of Privacy Practices may be obtained at the District Administration Office.

Student Rights Regarding Surveys

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parent/guardians and students who are 18 or emancipated minors ("eligible students") certain rights regarding the District's conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent/guardian;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as lawyers, doctors or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent/guardians; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and opportunity to opt out of:

- Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the District or its agent, and necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or and physical exam or screening permitted or requested under state law; and activities including collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

- Protected information surveys of students;
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the referenced marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and

Board policy has been developed regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Parent/guardians and eligible students will be notified of activities and afforded an opportunity to opt a student out of participation.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The West Allegheny School District will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, sex, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Employees and participants who have an inquiry or complaint of harassment or discrimination or who need information about accommodations for handicapped persons should contact the Superintendent at 724-695-5221.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

Public Law 107-111, better known as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), is one of the most comprehensive education reform plans ever passed by the U.S. Congress. The document can be viewed in its entirety at http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02/107-110.pdf. Additional information concerning NCLB is available at http://www.nclb.gov/.

NCLB § 1111 (h)(6)(A) requires that the school district annually inform parent/guardians regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers. Each teacher employed by the West Allegheny School District has been issued a certificate of instruction from the Pennsylvania Department of Education meeting all state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.

Public Notice on Screening and Evaluation

Each school district, along with other public agencies in the Commonwealth, must establish and implement procedures to identify, locate, and evaluate all children who need special education programs and services because of the child's disability. This notice is to help find these children, offer assistance, and describe the parent's rights with regard to confidentiality of information that will be obtained during this process.

Child Find refers to activities undertaken by public education agencies to identify, locate, and evaluate children residing in the State, including children attending private schools, who are suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, and determine the child's need for special education and related services. The purpose is to locate these children so that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) can be made available. The types of disabilities that if found to cause a child to need services are autism, deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, mental retardation, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment due to chronic or acute health problems, specific learning disabilities, speech or language, traumatic brain injury and visual impairment including blindness; and in the case of a child that is of preschool age, developmental delay.

The West Allegheny School District uses the following procedures for locating, identifying, and evaluating special needs of school-aged students requiring special programs or services. These procedures as required by law are as follows:

The district, as prescribed by Section 1402 of the School Code routinely conducts health screenings for kindergarten (K) through 12th grade students and new students without history of recent exams: Hearing acuity (Gr. K-3, 7 and 11 and any student with a known history of hearing loss), Visual acuity (annually), Dental Screenings (Gr. 1, 3, 7 & 11), Physical Exams (Gr. 1, 6, & 11), Scoliosis Screening (Gr. 6 & 7) and Speech and language screening (annually).

Classroom teachers, MTSS Team, and school counselors on an ongoing basis informally assess gross motor and fine motor skills, academic skills, and social and emotional skills. Specified needs from all of these screening sources are noted within the student's folder.

Parents/guardians with concerns regarding their child may contact building principals at any time to request a screening or evaluation of their child. Communication with parents/guardians of a student with disabilities and/or of gifted students shall be in English or the native language of the parent and student.

Screening information will be used by the MTSS Team and the school counselors within the student's school to meet his/her specific needs or to document the need for further evaluation. If it is determined that a student needs additional services, the MTSS Team and/or the school counselors will implement accommodations appropriate to student's needs. The parents/guardians are members of the MTSS Team. If a student does not make progress with MTSS Team involvement and or services provided through the school counselors, parents/guardians will be asked to give written permission for further evaluation. This process is called Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE). The parents/guardians are members of the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT).

If it is determined that a student may possibly be mentally gifted, the student's records will be reviewed, and the respective school counselor will gather information from the student's parents/guardians and teachers. If the data supports a need, parents will be asked to give written permission for further evaluation. This process is called Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GME). The parents/guardians are members of the Gifted Multidisciplinary Team (GMT).

After Multidisciplinary Evaluation or Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation is completed, an Evaluation Report (ER) or a Gifted Written Report (GWR) will be compiled and will include specific recommendations for the types of interventions and/or acceleration and enrichment necessary to deal with the student's specified needs. If an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is recommended by the MDE, the parents/guardians are invited to participate in a meeting where the results of the Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE) or Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GME) will be discussed and an Individual Education Program (IEP) or a Gifted Individual Education Program (GIEP) will be developed for specialized services for the student.

When the Evaluation Report (ER) or Gifted Written Report (GWR) is completed, copies are sent to the parent/guardian of the student along with a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) or a Notice of Recommended Assignment (NORA) with which they may agree or disagree. If parents/guardians disagree with the program recommendation, the issue may be taken to mediation or a due process hearing.

Information about parent/guardian rights, mediation or due process procedures, specific special education services and programs and gifted education services and program offered by the district; and the district's educational records policy are available upon request from the building principal. A parent/guardian may request that the district initiate a screening or evaluation of their child's specified needs at any time by contacting the building principal. Further information about these procedures may be obtained by calling the Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services at 724-695-5221.

All information collected as part of an individual student referral or evaluation is treated in a confidential manner and does not become a part of the student's permanent record file.

Special Education Programs for Students with Disabilities and Gifted Students

The West Allegheny School District operates programs for students with disabilities and gifted students in accordance with Chapter 14 and Chapter 16.

The West Allegheny School District provides a free, appropriate public education to students with disabilities or mental giftedness according to state and federal rules. To be eligible, the child must:

- Be of school age.
- Have a disability or mental giftedness *and* be in need of specially designed instruction.
- Meet eligibility criteria for one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities as set forth in the Pennsylvania State Standards: autism, deaf-blindness, blindness, visual impairment, emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, other health impairment, traumatic brain injury, speech/ language impairment, orthopedic impairment, hearing impairment, deafness, multiple disabilities or mental retardation. Services designed to meet the needs of eligible disabled students include:
    - The annual development of an individualized education program (IEP or Gifted IEP).
    - A triennial multidisciplinary re-evaluation for students with disabilities (except for those students with an intellectual disability where evaluation remains biennial).
    - A range of supports for students from itinerant level to supplemental level to full time level special education support within the school district or placement in a full-time special education disabilities class outside of the regular school.

The extent of special education services for disabled or mentally gifted students and the location for the delivery of such services are determined by the parents and the district staff at the IEP/GIEP team meeting and are based on the student's identified needs and abilities, chronological age and the level of intensity of the specified intervention. The school district also provides related services, such as transportation, physical therapy, occupational therapy and assistive technology if they are required to enable the student with disabilities to derive educational benefits.

Prior to initiation of services, parents of a student with disabilities are presented a "Notice of Recommended Educational Placement/Prior Written Notice" (NOREP) and parents of a mentally gifted student with a "Notice of Recommended Assignment" (NORA) with which they agree or disagree. If parents agree to the program outlined by the multidisciplinary team and the parent signs either the NOREP or NORA, then the program is implemented for their child. If parents disagree with the program being recommended, they have the right to request IEP facilitation, mediation and/or a due process hearing. Parents are issued their "Procedural Safeguards" which outlines in detail their legal rights as a parent of a child identified as having a disability or considered mental gifted.

Printed information regarding available special education services and programs and procedural safeguards as they pertain to special education is available in the office of each building and at the Central Administration Office. For answers to specific questions about special education services, the screening or evaluation process, or any other information, please call the Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services at 724-695-5221.

Services for Students in Nonpublic Schools

Public school education may be accessible to resident students attending nonpublic schools on a dual enrollment basis in a special education program operated in a public school. A multidisciplinary evaluation which determines the child's eligibility for services must be conducted and, if eligible, an individualized education program plan (IEP) is developed. Parents of nonpublic school students who suspect that their child is disabled and in need of special education may request a multidisciplinary evaluation of their child through a written request to the building principal or the Coordinator of Pupil Personnel Services.

Services for Preschool Children

Act 212, the Early Intervention Services System Act, entitles all preschool children with disabilities to appropriate early intervention services. Young children experiencing development delays or physical or mental disabilities are eligible for early intervention services. The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare is responsible for providing services to infants and toddlers, which is defined as children from birth through 2 years of age. Contact The Alliance for Infants and Toddlers, Hough Building 2nd Floor, 2801 Custer Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15227 at 412-885-6000. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing services to preschool age children from ages 3 through 5. For more information, please contact the Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3/Preschool Early Intervention Program, 475 East Waterfront Drive, Homestead, PA 15120 at 412-394-5736.

Protected Handicapped Students Public Notice

In compliance with state and federal law, Chapter 15 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, West Allegheny School District will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family those related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities.

The services and protections for a Protected Handicapped Student are distinct from those that apply to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs. In order to qualify as a Protected Handicapped Student, the child must be of an age when public education is offered in his/her school district and with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to any aspect of the school program.

The school principal, teachers, or the parent/guardian(s) can refer students to be considered as protected handicapped student. Referrals are made to the school counselor. If the school district 504 team determines that the student is eligible, a Service Agreement will be developed. The principal and the school counselor will make arrangements to implement the Service Agreement. The Service Agreement will be reviewed annually with the parent/guardians and with the school team for either termination or revision.

For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services to protected handicapped students, contact the building principal or Section 504 Coordinator (724-695-5221).

Surrogate Parent

The school district has the responsibility of developing a surrogate parent program for school age handicapped children residing in the West Allegheny School District. The District must see that any handicapped student who is either a ward of the state or whose parent or guardian is unknown or unavailable has a surrogate parent. The surrogate parent acts in place of the parent/guardian in matters concerning the student's educational programs/services. The role of the surrogate parent is voluntary, and training is provided regarding the role of a surrogate parent.

Homeless Children and Youth Act

On July 22, 1987 the Stuart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act became public law. This was the first comprehensive federal law dealing with the problems of homelessness in America. This act was recently included in the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act and it is now called the McKinney-Vento Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001, (Public Law 107-110) Subtitle B and covers the Education for Homeless Children and Youths (Sections 721-726).

The district recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational programs and services provided to other district students. The district makes efforts to identify homeless children within the district, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.

Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular and nighttime residence, which include the following conditions:

- Sharing the housing of other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship.
- Living in motels, hotels, or camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations.
- Living in emergency, transitional, domestic violence shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals.
- Awaiting foster care placement.
- Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings.
- Living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples.
- Living as run-away children.
- Abandoned or forced out of homes by parent/guardians/guardians or caretakers.
- Living as school age unwed mothers in houses for unwed mothers if they have no other living accommodations.

For more information regarding the McKinney-Vento Education Assistance Improvement Act of 2001 please contact the district’s Homeless Liaison at 724-695-5221.

Migrant Student Education

The West Allegheny School District provides that foreign students who do not possess an F-1 Visa and reside in the West Allegheny School District with parents, guardians, or individuals gratuitously caring for them are considered residents of the school district and are entitled to the same school rights and privileges available to resident students. For more information regarding Migrant Student Education, contact the district’s Migrant Education Coordinator at 724-695-5221.

Mode of Communication

If a person does not understand any part of this notice, they should request an explanation by contacting the Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services at 724-695-5221.The school district will arrange for an interpreter for parent/guardians with limited English proficiency. If a parent/guardian is deaf or blind or has no written language, the school district will arrange for communication of this notice in the mode normally used by the parent/guardian (e.g., sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

STUDENT ID CARD

Students will receive a new ID at the start of the school year. Students must have their ID card with them at all times. Student ID cards must be shown to purchase lunch and to attend other school events such as Homecoming and Prom. Replacement ID cards can be requested in the main office for a $5.00 fee. Please allow at least two days for the completion of the request.

HALL PASSES

No student shall be in the hall during regular class time without a hall pass issued by the teacher in charge of the student during that time. This includes trips to the restroom, library, office, and any place other than the room to which the student has been assigned. Passage shall be by the shortest and quickest feasible route without stopovers at other points or without disrupting other classrooms. All students must request a pass by asking their teacher for permission to leave and entering the request in SmartPass. Hall passes will not be given for a student to miss a credit bearing class unless approved by a school counselor or administrator.

RESTROOM PRIVILEGES

Restrooms are to be used only for the purpose intended. Any other usage such as smoking/vaping, loitering, meeting other students, or hiding from school personnel will be disciplined under the Student Code of Conduct. At no time is more than one student permitted to be in the same stall at the same time.

- Students will use only the restroom on the floor where they are located nearest to their scheduled class.
- You are to go to the restroom between periods. If an emergency necessitates your using the restroom during a class, you are to use the following procedures:
    a. Ask the teacher's permission.
    b. Follow sign out procedure set up by the teacher.
- Keep the restrooms clean. Show respect for others who may wish to use the facility. Never place anything in a commode that could clog it. Examples: paper towels or any type of cloth or hard substance.
- If the dispensers are out of paper, please notify the office or a teacher.
- Report any damage to the office or teacher immediately.
- Do not assume that a teacher must honor every request. In cases where a student takes advantage, a request may be denied.

NURSE'S OFFICE

A student becoming ill during the school day should report to the nurse's office or main office. All students reporting to the nurse's office must have a pass. If there is a necessity to go home, the nurse will inform the parent. When the nurse is not available, students are to report to the high school office.

- The nurse is NOT permitted to administer any medication without proper medical documentation
- Loitering in the nurse's room is prohibited.
- If a student leaves without permission, the student will be considered truant.
- If a student is injured, they must report to the nurse's office to complete an accident report form.

THE CAFETERIA

In order to provide for efficient cafeteria operation, the following rules must be observed:

- Students without ID's during lunch will be placed in the back of the line.
- Follow entrance and dismissal procedures.
- Keep the cafeteria lines orderly.
- Talk in a normal voice.
- Empty all debris from trays into the appropriate garbage/recycling cans.
- Keep tables, chairs, and floors clean. Pick up and clean up any food you drop or spill.
- Students are responsible for paying for their food. Students will be prosecuted under Student Code of Conduct if items are taken and not paid for.
- Respect all cafeteria staff.
- Always report to the cafeteria during your assigned lunch period.
- No food or drink is to be ordered from outside vendors; food delivery services are prohibited.
- Students are to remain in the cafeteria when finished eating for the remainder of the lunch period.
- Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during lunch or to purchase lunch.

Students violating cafeteria rules and regulations will receive discipline as aligned to the Student Code of Conduct.

Students must present their school ID to the cafeteria staff when purchasing items. Students who do not have their IDs will report to the end of the line. A new student ID may be purchased in the main office for $5.00.

STUDY HALLS

Study halls are primarily for study. Disruptive behavior will not be permitted. Study hall teachers may issue passes (unless otherwise designated by the office) to the high school office, guidance counselor's office, and to the restroom. Students desiring to see a teacher other than their study hall teacher must have previously obtained a pass via SmartPass from that teacher. The student is to remain with that teacher for the entire period.

LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The West Allegheny High School Library Media Center is a resource for students to support their work in the classroom as well as to ensure they are, both educationally and personally, effective users of 21st Century ideas and information.

- Students will follow the District's Technology Acceptable Use policy when using technology in the Library Media Center.
- Students are expected to act responsibly, appropriate and respectfully, as outline in the Student Code of Conduct while in the Library Media Center.
- Students who choose not to adhere to the District's Student Code of Conduct and Technology Acceptable Use Policy may be asked to leave the Library Media Center and/or face disciplinary action according to the West Allegheny High Student Code of Conduct.

STUDENT LOCKERS

Students will be assigned a locker upon request. To request a locker, please contact your school counselor. We encourage students not to put items of value in the locker. The school cannot be responsible for lost, misplaced, or stolen articles. You must keep your locker clean. Writing and stickers are not permitted on or inside of the lockers.

The locker assigned to you is the property of the West Allegheny School District. Your expectation of privacy in the locker is very limited. You may anticipate frequent announced and unannounced locker checks and searches by the administration. You will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law for contraband found in the locker.

LOST AND FOUND

Students who find items of value such as cell phones, ear buds, jewelry, wallets, etc., should take them to the office. All other items should be put on the shelves in the cafeteria. Articles not claimed in a timely manner may be discarded.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the proper care and return of all Chromebooks, books, supplies, and furniture supplied by the school. Students should not mark school furniture, walls, ceiling, floors, or equipment with pen, pencil, paint, or any other instrument. Do not tamper with fire alarms, fire extinguishers, or any electrical systems. Anyone who loses or destroys school property, or who creates a hazard to the safety of our students, will be referred to the proper law enforcement agency, will be required to pay restitution, and will be disciplined under the Student Code of Conduct.

FIRE / EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS DRILLS

A successful emergency drill is governed by these few fundamental rules:

1. When the alarm is heard, the students are to follow the teacher's directives, move quickly and quietly without talking, running, or pushing to the designated area your instructor specifies. The teacher will lead the group and it is mandatory that students from each area stay as a group.

2. Gaps in drill lines are to be kept closed. Students are not to loiter in order to be with friends.

3. In the case of a fire drill, students in the office, restrooms, hallways or other common areas are to vacate the building as quickly as possible.

4. In the case of a lockdown or evacuation preparation drill, students in the office, restrooms, hallways or other common areas are to move to the nearest safe space e.g. classroom, office.

5. During a drill, a stairway may be closed to simulate conditions that could happen during an actual emergency. If your teacher finds your regular exit blocked, they will direct you to the nearest available exit.

6. Each teacher is to have the exit procedure for their room posted near the door.

7. Teachers will give specific instructions concerning procedures in their areas.

VISITORS

West Allegheny School District utilizes the Raptor Visitor Management System. The system is intended to maximize operational efficiency which aligns with Priority 3 of our Framework for Excellence: Financial Responsibility and Operational Efficiency, *Ensure Effectiveness of Crisis-Safety Response and Emergency Operations Plan.* Raptor verifies the identity of visitors, checks their status against national and local databases, and issues photo identification. These precautions are yet another layer used to ensure the safety of our students and staff.

When entering a District school/office, all visitors must present a valid state or government-issued ID, which will be scanned into the Raptor system. Upon reading the information, Raptor will check the national database to identify sex offenders and a District database for individuals involved in Protection from Abuse (PFA) and custody orders. It is important to note that the Raptor System only scans the visitor's name, date of birth and photo that additional visitor data from the driver's license is not gathered nor is the system connected to any other system such as the Department of Motor Vehicles. Therefore, any other information connected to the visitor's driver's license is not accessible to any of the users. Once entry is approved, Raptor will issue an ID badge. This photo ID should be visible throughout the visit and should be returned to the office when the visitor leaves.

Due to school safety, student visitors from other schools or West Allegheny graduates are NOT PERMITTED.

ACADEMIC FIELD TRIPS / ENGAGED TIME FOR A STUDENT ACTIVITY

Students attending an academic field trip are expected to adhere to the behavior guidelines within the Student Code of Conduct. Students are not permitted to leave the field trip with an unauthorized individual at any time. Students must ride the district provided transportation both to and from the destination.

Certain classes and/or extracurricular activities occasionally require student engagement during normal school hours, requiring a student to miss their regularly scheduled class(es). Absences that occur due to Engaged Time for a Student Activity in a class or school related activity will be excused.

Students are expected to meet academic, behavior, and attendance standards to attend field trips and activities occurring during the school day. Specifically, students that request to attend academic field trips and are failing a class must get permission from the teacher whose class the student is failing.

Additionally, all students requesting to be released from their scheduled class must arrange to **make-up any academic work** with the teacher prior to missing the class. It is the responsibility of the student to make such arrangements, and all arrangements must be made prior to the student attending the activity. Students will follow the **Timeline for Making Up Missed Work** as previously outlined. Failure to do so will result in the student not receiving credit for the work/class missed.

REQUEST FOR HOMEWORK

In the case of a missed class or class periods, homework may be available on Canvas and/or through contacting the teacher. In the case of an extended absence of three (3) days or more, the high school office may be contacted to assist in the request and collection of student homework as needed. *Please allow 24 hours for instructional materials to be compiled.*

For District Policy 130 Homework, please click the link below.
https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/westall/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CV5KDX507F10

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION - POLICY 117

Authority

The district shall provide homebound instruction to students confined to home or hospital for physical disability, illness, injury, urgent reasons, or when such confinement is recommended for psychological or psychiatric reasons. The period of homebound instruction for an individual shall not exceed three (3) months.[1][2]

Delegation of Responsibility

Application for homebound instruction shall certify the nature of the illness or disability, state the probable duration of the confinement, and be approved by the Superintendent or designee.[1][2]

The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures to safeguard the privacy of each child placed on homebound instruction.The Superintendent or designee may request approval from the Department of Education to extend the period of homebound instruction for an individual, which shall be re-evaluated every three (3) months.[1]

Guidelines

The district shall provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least ten (10) school days. Exceptions may be approved by the Superintendent or designee.

The program of homebound instruction provided to each student shall be in accordance with the standards established by the state.

The district reserves the right to withhold homebound instruction when any one (1) of the following occurs:

1. The instructor's presence in the place of a student's confinement presents a hazard or danger to the health of the teacher.
2. A parent/guardian or other adult in authority is not present with the student during the hours of instruction.
3. The condition of the student precludes any benefit from such instruction.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If your contact information has changed, including email, phone number, emergency contacts, etc., please inform the office or Guidance Department. A change of address must go through the Guidance Office Secretary and requires proof of residency.

WORK PERMIT

A work permit may be obtained at the main office. The completed application, including a parent and/or guardian signature, should be returned to the office clerk for final processing. A copy of the birth certificate is not necessary if filed with West Allegheny High School. Please allow 48 hours for completion of the work permit.

STUDENT INSURANCE

The school district has authorized an insurance agency to provide student accident insurance at a reasonable rate.

24-Hour Coverage (Accident Only) – This plan provides around the clock coverage to your child 24 hours a day, while in school, at home, or away. Coverage is provided from the effective date of the insured student's coverage for which premium has been received to the opening of the next school term. This coverage includes all interscholastic sports ***excluding*** high school football.

School Time Coverage (Accident Only) – This plan provides coverage to your child while on school premises, during school hours/days, attending school sponsored and supervised activities including travel directly without interruption between the student's residence and school/activity with transportation furnished by the school. Coverage is provided from the effective date of the insured student's coverage for which premium has been received to the end of the regular school year. This coverage includes all interscholastic sports ***excluding*** high school football.

The school district provides accident coverage for all field trips.

Any time a student is injured in class or a school event, an accident form must be filed with the office or nurse.

For more information or for an application, please contact the main office.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

You are required to participate in physical education classes. If you have an illness or injury that prohibits you from participating in physical education classes for an extended period of time, you should bring a doctor's excuse to the attendance office. This excuse should tell the nature of injury or illness and the length of time you will need to be excused from physical education classes. A copy of the medical excuse will be given to your teacher.

It is required that you have a change of clothes when participating in physical education classes. Instructors may suggest the type of clothing that is appropriate to the activities for any unit. These suggestions will be based on safety. West Allegheny School District is not responsible for lost or stolen items. All valuables should be secured and not left unattended.

STUDENT DRIVERS AND PASSENGERS

- All sections of the Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle Code will be enforced. This includes all applicable laws pertaining to holding a junior driver's license, including the limitation on passengers for the first six months of having a license.

- The student driver will be issued a parking permit to be displayed from the rearview mirror. This permit may be used by the student driver for any properly registered vehicle. Multiple vehicles must be registered by the student on the application. **The cost of the permit is $25.00**. ***A student requesting replacement of a lost permit will be charged $15.00***.

- Seniors and Juniors will be given priority for parking permits. Should any space(s) remain, consideration will then be given to Sophomores. A waitlist will be created once parking permits are sold out.

- Students who are on the waitlist for a parking permit must be in good standing regarding academics, attendance, and behavior in order to obtain a parking permit should one become available.

- Student drivers/passengers may not return to their vehicles during the school day without being accompanied by a school staff member.

- Early dismissals must be registered in the high school office and the student must sign out appropriately***. Any student leaving school grounds without authorization is subject to disciplinary consequences outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.***

- A minimum of the following disciplinary action may result if any of the above rules are violated:

First Violation:	One (1) week suspension of driving privileges
Second Violation:	Two (2) week suspension of driving privileges; parent meeting
Third Violation:	Permanent revocation of driving privileges

- Student drivers can begin entering the building at 7:00 AM and MUST be in their first period class by 7:35 AM. Students who follow a hybrid schedule should arrive on campus no earlier than 10 minutes prior to their first class. Consequences for accumulated tardies to school will result in the following:

Three Tardies:	Suspension Warning
Four Tardies:	One (1) week driving suspension; parent meeting
Five Tardies:	Two (2) week driving suspension
Six Tardies:	Permanent suspension of driving privileges; return parking permit to the office

- All student drivers must adhere to the district attendance policy. Consequences for accumulated unexcused absences for students driving to school will result in the following:

Three Unexcused absences:	One (1) week driving suspension
Four Unexcused absences:	Two (2) week driving suspension; after school detention; parent meeting
Five Unexcused absences:	Permanent suspension of driving privileges; return parking permit to the office

- Student drivers will follow the flow of traffic based on the directions of the parking lot officials located outside. The student parking lot is open parking for permitted drivers except for Grad Pads. Grad Pads are assigned, and only the assigned student should park there. **Student drivers ARE NOT permitted to park in another student driver's spot, by the gymnasium, tennis courts, or in the staff parking lot.** If a student parks in a spot that is not designated for them, they are liable to have their vehicle removed from the spot, have their driving privileges suspended or revoked, and face disciplinary action. If another vehicle is in a driver's designated spot, the driver should notify the office to receive further instructions.

- Students driving to school without a permit, or while under suspension of privileges, will be assigned additional consequences according to the Code of Conduct and may lose driving privileges for the remainder of the school year.

- During the fall season, part of the student parking lot may be used for extracurricular activities. Any student who is staying after school and has a parking spot in the following ranges (spots 1-18, 85-101, and 174-205) will be required to move their vehicle to the other side of the lot so the area remains open.

***Note*: Any student who has their parking privileges revoked for the school year is not eligible for a refund on the cost of the parking permit.**

SENIOR GRAD PADS

Seniors have the opportunity to paint their own parking spot and turn it into something that represents who they are and what they love for the current school year. Only currently enrolled high school seniors in good behavioral standing are eligible to participate.

1. Seniors must be eligible/approved for a parking permit for the current academic year.
2. Seniors will be assigned a specific parking space and can only paint that space. Space will be issued when parking application and fee payments are submitted.
3. Students who lose parking privileges due to violations of the Student Driver and Passenger Regulations could be subject to revocation of painted parking spot.
4. Parking spot painting will take place at designated times only.
5. Students should bring their own paint and supplies. Latex, water-based outdoor paint only is permitted. No sealants or primers are permitted.
6. Students must complete the Grad Pad section of the Permit Application.
7. All designs must be submitted for approval to an administrator and must adhere to the following guidelines.
    a. Final approval is required before painting may begin.
    b. Designs must be school-appropriate and reflect a positive school environment.
    c. No profanity, vulgarity, hate speech, discriminatory images, or offensive language.
    d. No sexually explicit or suggestive imagery.
    e. No promotion of illegal activities or gang-related imagery/symbols.
    f. No political or religious messages, affiliations, campaigning, or endorsements.
    g. No advertisements for commercial products or services.
8. All designs must be flat and contained within the assigned parking space lines. All parking lines must remain visible.
9. Any damage to school property or the property of others (e.g., painting on curbs, adjacent spaces, buildings, cars) resulting from the painting process will be the financial responsibility of the student and their parents/guardians.
10. If designs are found to violate guidelines *after* approval the painting must be immediately altered or removed at the student's expense.
11. Once painted, designs cannot be altered.

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

The West Allegheny School District Administration recognizes that safety is paramount in transportation. The administration is committed to working with the Board of Education, parents, students, principals, drivers and staff to maintain a safe and orderly environment. The following guidelines are in place to ensure positive and safe passage to and from school and school sponsored events.

Transportation to and from school is a privilege. Abuse of this privilege may result in loss of transportation to and from school. When you lose your transportation privileges, you cannot ride a bus owned by the Monark Bus Company and contracted by the West Allegheny School District during the time of the suspension.

Video camera systems with audio capability are installed on Monark Transportation School Buses. The information from these tapes can be used to determine disciplinary action. The cameras on buses and vans are to help ensure the safety of all students and staff.

Students receiving special education services will be subject to the same disciplinary procedures, including suspensions from riding the bus as regular education students unless otherwise noted in the student's IEP. The IEP will be reviewed to be sure that there are not any special circumstances that would warrant alternative forms of discipline, especially when a bus suspension is under consideration.

It is to be understood that in the event of a bus suspension, the student is still required to attend school and any absence during the bus suspension without a valid written excuse will result in school officials following the standard school truancy process.

Students are only permitted to ride their assigned bus transportation to and from school. Riding a bus home with another student will only be permitted in cases of significant emergency and must be pre-approved by a school administrator. Students who attempt to ride another student's bus without pre-approval from a school administrator will be subject to disciplinary action outlined in the Code of Conduct.

Delay of Closing of School

The Transportation Department could be impacted by several variables during the winter weather season. The main factor for a delay or cancellation decision is weather conditions, but other factors do play a part.

The following are the steps that the department uses to make a recommendation for a delay or cancellation:

1. Weather conditions and local radar are monitored to determine the time and duration of snowfall. The temperature and wind chill are also considered.
2. Early morning checks of the roads are conducted. Typically starting at 4:00 AM, a sampling of township and state roads are driven to check road conditions.
3. Township and state road crews' status of snow removal and road treatment is monitored to determine what the road conditions will be like during student pickup hours.

The Superintendent makes the decision to delay or cancel school based on the data collected in the previous stated steps. Students and staff are notified via Skylert, the district's mass phone notification system. Additionally, local media outlets are notified and the West Allegheny Website and Facebook accounts are updated.

The following are expectations all bus drivers are expected to follow in operating a bus in the West Allegheny School District:

1. Drivers will greet all students as they enter and exit the bus in a pleasant and welcoming manner.
2. Drivers will assign all students an area or seat on the bus and set expectations for students to sit in assigned seats or areas.
3. Drivers will maintain focus on student safety and not engage in distracting behavior including but not limited to cell phone usage.

4. Drivers will maintain open lines of communication with teachers, administrators and the Monark Transportation administration in regards to the safety, security, and behavior of all students.
5. Drivers will act in a professional manner at all times when interacting with students, parents, staff members and administrators.

The following are expectations all administrators are expected to follow in supporting the safe operations of district transportation:

1. Administrators and/or their designees will reinforce seating arrangements on all buses.
2. Administrators and/or their designees will enforce all school and school bus safety rules when made aware of a violation.
3. Administrators and/or their designees will maintain open lines of communication with bus drivers, Monark Transportation administration and District Office Administration in regards to transportation related issues.
4. Administrators and/or their designees will request and review video from any bus violation that reaches level three or higher in the transportation guidelines and expectations.

The following are five expectations all students are expected to adhere to during transportation to and from school:

1. Students will sit in their assigned area or seat and face forward at all times. No standing is permitted while the bus is in motion.
2. Students will keep hands, feet and personal belongings to themselves and out of the bus aisle.
3. Students will wait their turn to enter and exit the bus at the stop for which they are assigned.
4. Students will use appropriate language, tone and volume when speaking on the bus.
5. Students will be respectful of all other students and the driver while on the bus and at the bus stop.
6. Students will not eat or drink on the bus.
7. Students will not play loud or distracting music on the bus.

Parents can contribute to the efficient and safe transportation of their children in the following ways:

1. Ensure that students are at their designated bus stop at least five minutes prior to bus arrival time. Drivers are not required to wait for children as all children further down the route would then be forced to wait that much longer.
2. Ensure students stay off the roadway at all times while waiting for the bus.
3. Ensure students cross in front of the bus when crossing the road or highway.
4. Ensure students wait until the bus has come to a complete stop and red lights are flashing before attempting to enter or leave the bus.
5. Ensure special items and projects are transported by parents to school rather than on the bus due to space and safety consideration.
6. Ensure students do not chase after a bus.
7. Ensure students are orderly while awaiting the bus.
8. Ensure that the bus stop is safe and maintained.
9. Ensure that if driving students to the bus stop you do not interfere with the traffic pattern of the bus.

The district stance is that all students should ride their assigned bus to and from school.

*NOTE: In case of the need for an **emergency** bus change, a note from a parent must be submitted to the office for approval. **This does not guarantee that approval will be granted.** If approval is given, the student will receive a bus pass to give to the bus driver. Students must submit the note to the office first thing in the morning in order to arrange for this change.*

Misbehaviors and interventions are categorized across four levels based on seriousness/frequency of occurrence.

L e v e l I – Bus Discipline

Level I offenses include minor misbehaviors on the part of the student, which are disruptive and impede or interfere with the orderly and safe operation of the school bus. These misbehaviors are expected to be addressed by the bus driver who observes the incident but may require the intervention of an administrator. An accurate record of the offense, corrective and intervention supports, and disciplinary action must be maintained by the bus driver. Repeated instances of Level I behavior, despite redirection or intervention, may constitute a violation at a higher level with referral to the appropriate building administrator.

Examples of Level I Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Disrespectful actions or language towards peers, adults, and/or property
- Inappropriate and/or profane language or gesture not directed at others
- Not following bus driver directions
- Inappropriate tone or volume when speaking on the bus (yelling and screaming)
- Standing up or moving seat-to-seat
- Unauthorized use of electronic devices
- Distracting loud music or noises
- Eating or drinking on the bus
- Leaving trash on the bus
- Students seated out of assigned area

Examples of Level I Consequences Including but not Limited to:

- Verbal redirection
- Special assigned seat
- Referral to building administration
- Timely parent notification (by phone & documented in writing)
- Behavior contract

L e v e l II – Bus Discipline

Level II offenses are misbehaviors whose frequency or seriousness disrupt the safe operation of the school bus. These infractions can result from the continuation of Level I misbehaviors and/or include new offenses. The consequences are serious enough to require disciplinary action taken by administrative personnel.

Examples of Level II Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Repeated Level I Violations or Level I with aggravating circumstances
- Verbal/non-verbal flagrant disrespect toward bus drivers or other students
- Agitating/instigating comments between students
- Horseplay
- Use of obscene language/gestures toward others
- Pushing, shoving or tripping other students in line
- Intentionally distracting the bus driver
- Inappropriate misuse of technology (videotaping other students)
- Intentionally boarding an unassigned bus
- Exiting the bus at an unassigned stop

Examples of Level II Consequences Including but not Limited to:

- Verbal redirection
- Special assigned seat
- Referral to building administration
- Detention
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- 1-3 day Bus Suspension
- Parent notification and possible conference
- Referral to SAP
- Withdrawal of privileges and/or participation in school activities
- Written reprimand
- Behavior contract

L e v e l III – Bus Discipline

Level III offenses are acts whose frequency or seriousness impact the safety of students and staff and are directed against persons or properties. These misbehaviors could endanger the health and safety the individual or other individuals.

Examples of Level III Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Repeated Level II Violations or Level II with aggravating circumstances
- Vandalism (Less than $100) or Petty theft (less than $100)
- Disorderly conduct
- Major disruption on the bus caused by the use of smoke/stink bombs, fireworks, etc.
- Fighting, harassment, threatening comments, simple assault, hazing
- Act or acts of discrimination and/or intimidating behaviors intended to demean another person
- Bullying/Cyber-bullying
- Sexual misconduct, indecent exposure
- Sexual harassment
- Possession of pornography or other illegal material, sexting
- Use/possession of drugs and or alcohol, look-alikes, and/or paraphernalia (non-distribution amount)
- Use/possession of tobacco and/or related products, look alike products (2nd offense)
- Throwing items out of the bus window
- Throwing items at other people on the bus
- Hanging out the bus window

Examples of Level III Consequences Including but not Limited to:

- Up to a 10 day bus suspension
- Up to 10 day suspension
- Law enforcement/charges
- Due Process
- Restitution
- Referral to SAP
- Parent Conference
- Activity Restriction (examples include: school sponsored trips, dances, commencement, etc.)

L e v e l IV – Bus Discipline

Level IV offenses pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of others. These criminal acts always require administrative actions and may require the removal of the student from district transportation and /or school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities and possible action by the West Allegheny School Board.

Examples of Level IV Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Repeated Level III Violations or Level III with aggravating circumstances
- Possession of a weapon or look-alike weapon of any kind on school property including school sponsored events and transportation to or from school
- Arson or attempted arson
- Tampering with security/safety equipment and/or driving instruments
- Terroristic threats or acts

- Commission of a criminal felony on the school bus
- Aggravated assault or sexual assault
- Distribution of pornography (including but not limited to child pornography)
- Distribution and/or intent to sell drugs, alcohol, paraphernalia, or look-alike substances
- Vandalism and/or theft over $100
- Possession/use of explosive devices

Examples of Level IV Consequences Including but not Limited to:

- Removal from district transportation
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Alternative Education Placement
- Restitution
- Expulsion
- Superintendent's hearing
- School Board of Directors' hearing
- Involvement of law enforcement with potential for criminal charges
- Applicable Level III consequences
- Activity restriction (examples include: school sponsored trips, dances, commencement exercises, etc.)

TRANSPORTATION VIDEO/AUDIO RECORDING - POLICY 810.2

Purpose

The use of video and audio recording equipment supports efforts to maintain discipline and to ensure the safety and security of all students, staff, contractors and others being transported on district-owned, operated, or contracted school buses or school vehicles.

Definitions

School bus means a motor vehicle that is designed to carry eleven (11) passengers or more, including the driver, and is used for the transportation of preprimary, primary or secondary school students to or from public, private or parochial schools or events related to such schools or school-related activities.[1]

School vehicle means a motor vehicle, except a motorcycle, designed for carrying no more than ten (10) passengers, including the driver, and used for the transportation of preprimary, primary or secondary school students while registered by or under contract to the school district. The term includes vehicles having chartered, group and party rights under the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and used for the transportation of school children.[1]

Authority

The Board authorizes the use of video and audio recording on school buses and school vehicles for safety, disciplinary and security purposes.[2]

The Board prohibits the use of audio recording on any school bus or school vehicle that is not being used for a school-related purpose.[2]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee to ensure that:

1. Each school bus and school vehicle that is equipped with video and audio recording equipment contains a clearly posted notice informing drivers and passengers of the potential for video and audio recording.[2]
2. This policy is posted on the district's publicly accessible website.[2][3]
3. Each school year, this policy is included in the student handbook and in any other district publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct.[2]

Guidelines

The district shall comply with the provisions of federal and state laws and regulations regarding student record requirements as applicable to the district's use and disclosure of recordings. Recordings considered part of a student's educational record shall be maintained in accordance with established student record procedures governing access, review and disclosure of student records.[4][5]

STOPFINDER

West Allegheny is excited to introduce Stopfinder, a new transportation communication platform designed to provide families with greater visibility into their child/ren's bus transportation.

By using Stopfinder, parents can actively monitor their child/ren's transportation routes, receive real-time updates about bus arrivals and delays, and access important transportation information directly from their mobile device. The app also includes convenient communication features that allow the Transportation Department to quickly share notifications and service updates, helping families stay informed throughout the school year.

In addition to the Stopfinder app notifications, Parents/Guardians will continue to receive email notifications. Parents/Guardians should download the Stopfinder app to monitor bus route information and receive notifications.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF INTERNET, COMPUTERS, AND NETWORK RESOURCES - POLICY 815

Purpose

The Board supports use of the computers, Internet and other network resources in the district's instructional and operational programs in order to facilitate learning, teaching and daily operations through interpersonal communications and access to information, research and collaboration.

The district provides students, staff and other authorized individuals with access to the district's computers, electronic communication systems and network, which includes Internet access, whether wired or wireless, or by any other means.

For instructional purposes, the use of network facilities shall be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the district as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities and developmental levels of students.

Definitions

Child pornography - under federal law, is any visual depiction, including any photograph, film, video, picture or computer or computer-generated image or picture, whether made or produced by electronic, mechanical or other means, of sexually explicit conduct, where:[1]

1. The production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;

2. Such visual depiction is a digital image, computer image or computer-generated image that is, or is indistinguishable from, that of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or

3. Such visual depiction has been created, adapted or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

Child pornography - under state law, is any book, magazine, pamphlet, slide, photograph, film, videotape, computer depiction or other material depicting a child under the age of eighteen (18) years engaging in a prohibited sexual act or in the simulation of such act.[2]

Computer - for purposes of this policy, district computers include any electronic device owned or leased by the district that has the capability to create, play or edit text, audio and video data; transmit or receive messages, text, data or images; operate software or online applications; or provide a wired or wireless connection to the Internet.

The term harmful to minors is defined under both federal and state law.

Harmful to minors - under federal law, is any picture, image, graphic image file or other visual depiction that:[3][4]

1. Taken as a whole, with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or excretion;

2. Depicts, describes or represents in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or lewd exhibition of the genitals; and

3. Taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value as to minors.

Harmful to minors - under state law, is any depiction or representation in whatever form, of nudity, sexual conduct, sexual excitement or sadomasochistic abuse, when it:[5]

1. Predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful or morbid interest of minors;

2. Is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable for minors; and

3. Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, educational or scientific value for minors.

Obscene - any material or performance, if:[5]

1. The average person applying contemporary community standards would find that the subject matter taken as a whole appeals to the prurient interest;

2. The subject matter depicts or describes in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct described in the law to be obscene; and

3. The subject matter, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, educational or scientific value.

Technology protection measure - a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography or harmful to minors.[4]

Authority

The availability of access to electronic information does not imply endorsement by the district of the content, nor does the district guarantee the accuracy of information received. The district shall not be responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged or unavailable when using the network or for any information that is retrieved via the Internet.

The district shall not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet or other network resources.

The Board declares that district Internet, computer and network use is a privilege, not a right. The district's computer and network resources are the property of the district. Users shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, delete, access, receive or display on or over the district's Internet, computers or network resources, including personal files. The district reserves the right to monitor, track and log network access and use on district computers and network resources; monitor fileserver space and file storage utilization by district users; or deny access to prevent unauthorized, inappropriate or illegal activity and may revoke access privileges and/or administer appropriate disciplinary action. The district shall cooperate to the extent legally required with the Internet Service Provider (ISP), local, state and federal officials in any investigation concerning or related to the misuse of the district's Internet, computers and network resources.[6][7][8]

The Board requires all users to fully comply with this policy and to immediately report any violations or suspicious activities to the building principal or designee.

The Board establishes the following list, but not limited to, subject areas as inappropriate matter, in addition to those stated in law and defined in this policy, which shall not be accessed by minors:[4]

1. Hate speech.[9][10]
2. Pornography, Lewd, vulgar or profane.
3. Threatening.[11][12]
4. Harassing or discriminatory.[9][10][13]
5. Bullying.[14]
6. (Consisting of/Relating to) Weapons.[15]
7. Terroristic.[16]
8. Controlled substances and paraphernalia.[17]

The district reserves the right to restrict access to any Internet sites or network functions it deems inappropriate through established Board policy, or the use of software and/or online server blocking/filtering. Specifically, the district operates and enforces a technology protection measure(s) that blocks or filters access to inappropriate matter by minors on its computers and network resources used and accessible to adults and students. The technology protection measure shall be enforced during use of computers and network resources with Internet access.[3][4][18]

Upon request by students or staff, the Superintendent or designee shall expedite a review and may authorize the adjustment of technology protection measures to enable access to material that is blocked or filtered but is not prohibited by this policy.[18]

Upon request by students or staff, building administrators may authorize the temporary adjustment of technology protection measures to enable access for bona fide research or for other lawful purposes. Written permission from the parent/guardian is required prior to adjusting Internet blocking/filtering for a student's use. If a request for temporary adjustment of technology protection measures is denied, the requesting student or staff member may appeal the denial to the Superintendent or designee for expedited review.[3][19]

Delegation of Responsibility

The district shall make every effort to ensure that this resource is used responsibly by students and staff.

The district shall inform staff, students, parents/guardians and other users about this policy through employee and student handbooks, posting on the district website and by other appropriate methods. A copy of this policy shall be provided to parents/guardians annually.[18]

Users of district networks or district-owned equipment shall, prior to being given access or being issued equipment, sign technology device agreements acknowledging awareness of the provisions of this policy and awareness that the district uses monitoring systems to monitor and detect inappropriate use.

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for recommending technology and developing procedures used to determine whether the district's computers and network resources are being used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The procedures shall include but not be limited to:[3][4][20]

1. Utilizing a technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access for minors and adults to certain visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, harmful to minors with respect to use by minors or determined inappropriate for use by minors by the Board.

2. Maintaining and securing a usage log.

3. Monitoring online activities of minors on district computers and network resources.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement procedures that ensure students are educated on network etiquette and other appropriate online behavior, including:[4]

1. Interaction with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms.
2. Cyberbullying awareness and response.[14][21]

Guidelines

District computers and network accounts shall be used only by the authorized user of the computer or account for its approved purpose. Network users shall respect the privacy of other users on the system.

Safety

It is the district's goal to protect users of the network from harassment and unwanted or unsolicited electronic communications. Any network user who receives threatening or unwelcome electronic communications or inadvertently visits or accesses an inappropriate site shall report such immediately to a teacher, building administrator or other appropriate school staff. Network users shall not reveal personal information to other users on the network or Internet, including chat rooms, email, social networking websites, etc.

Internet safety measures shall effectively address the following:[4][20]

1. Control of access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web.
2. Safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, social networking websites and other forms of direct electronic communications.
3. Prevention of unauthorized online access by minors, including hacking and other unlawful activities.
4. Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors.[22][23][24]
5. Restriction of minors' access to materials harmful to them or which have been designated as inappropriate matter in Board policy.

Prohibitions

Users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner in accordance with Board policy, accepted rules of network etiquette and federal and state law and regulations. Specifically, the following are prohibited uses of district computers and/or network resources:

1. Facilitating illegal activity.
2. Commercial or for-profit purposes.
3. Nonwork or nonschool related work.
4. Product advertisement.
5. Bullying/Cyberbullying.[14][21]
6. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, harassment and offensive or inflammatory communication.[9][10][14][25]
7. Unauthorized or illegal installation, distribution, reproduction or use of copyrighted materials.[26]
8. Accessing, sending, receiving, transferring, viewing, sharing or downloading obscene, pornographic, lewd or otherwise illegal materials, images or photographs.[27]
9. Access by students and minors to material that is harmful to minors or is determined inappropriate for minors in accordance with Board policy.
10. Vulgar language or profanity.
11. Transmission of material that a reasonable person would know to be offensive or objectionable to recipients.
12. Intentional obtaining or modifying of files, passwords and data belonging to other users.
13. Impersonation of another user, anonymity and pseudonyms.
14. Fraudulent copying, communications or modification of materials in violation of copyright laws.[26]
15. Loading or accessing unauthorized games, programs, files, software, or other electronic media.
16. Disruption of the work of other users.
17. Destruction, modification, abuse or unauthorized access to network hardware, software, systems and files.
18. Accessing the Internet, district computers or other network resources without authorization.
19. Disabling, adjusting or bypassing the Internet blocking/filtering technology protection measure(s) without authorization.
20. Accessing, sending, receiving, transferring, viewing, sharing, deleting or downloading confidential information without authorization.
21. Controlled substances and paraphernalia.[17]

Security

System security is protected through the use of passwords and/or encryption and district security procedures. Failure to adequately protect passwords could result in unauthorized access to personal or district files. To protect the integrity of the system, these guidelines shall be followed:[24][28][29]

1. Employees, students and other authorized users shall not reveal their passwords to another individual.
2. Users are not to use a computer that has been logged in under another user.
3. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computers or network systems may be denied access to the district's computers and network resources.

Copyright

The illegal use of copyrighted materials is prohibited. Any data uploaded to or downloaded from the network or Internet shall be subject to fair use guidelines and applicable laws and regulations.[26][30]

District Website

The district shall establish and maintain a website and shall develop and modify its web pages to present information about the district under the direction of the Superintendent or designee. All authorized users publishing content on the district website shall receive appropriate training and comply with this and other applicable district policies.

Users shall not copy or download information from the district website and disseminate such information on unauthorized web pages without authorization from the building principal.

Accessibility –

District staff who maintain district websites and web pages shall post content which is accessible to individuals with disabilities, to the same extent that it is available to other users, based on the needs of the individuals and limitations of the platform. This shall include, but is not limited to:[9][10][13][31][32][33]

1. Including alternate text descriptions or captions for images.
2. Including captions for video content.
3. Avoiding text that is posted as an image or conveyed using only color cues.
4. Creating links and attachments in formats that are accessible to screen readers and other assistive technology, and may be accessed through keyboard or speech navigation.
5. Formatting text so that it is accessible to screen readers and other assistive technology, and may be accessed through keyboard or speech navigation.

All district websites shall contain clear contact information that may be used by members of the public to request accommodations or assistance.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use

Users of district computers and network resources shall be responsible for damages to the equipment, systems, platforms and software resulting from deliberate or willful acts.[18]

Illegal use of the district computers and network resources; intentional deletion or damage to files or data belonging to others; copyright violations; and theft of services shall be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution.

General rules and Board policies for behavior and communications apply when using the district computers, network resources and Internet, in addition to the stipulations of this policy.

Vandalism shall result in loss of access privileges, disciplinary action and/or referral to legal authorities. **Vandalism** is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy any district technology device and/or data of another user, the district, the Internet or other networks; this includes but is not limited to uploading or creating computer viruses.

Failure to comply with this policy or inappropriate use of the Internet, district network or computers shall result in usage restrictions, loss of access privileges, disciplinary action and/or referral to legal authorities.[6][7][8]

TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION

Chromebooks

Our high school is proud to offer 1-1 technology for our students. All students in grades 9-12 will be assigned a Chromebook and charger. This device will travel back and forth with students and should be charged nightly. It is the responsibility of each student to maintain the condition of their Chromebook and charger. Chromebooks should remain free of stickers and/or other decorative accents. These devices are only used for school purposes, and families are encouraged to purchase device insurance to protect the investment in case of loss or damage. However, this insurance DOES NOT insure lost chargers. Replacement chargers will be issued to the student, and an invoice will be sent to the family. If there is a malfunction or issue to the Chromebook or charger, it can be taken to the school's technology help desk for repair. You can also email tech support at: wahelpdesk@westasd.org. Please note that any Intentional Computer/Equipment Damage will result in the following:

First Offense, Damage < than $100: Restitution, 1 day In-School Suspension

First Offense, Damage > than $100: Restitution, 2 days In-School Suspension

Second Offense: Restitution, 1-3 days Out-of-School Suspension, 30 Day Activity Restriction

Third Offense: Restitution; 5 days of Out-of-School Suspension, Activity Restriction

***** As with any policy violation, any mitigating and/or aggravating circumstances may alter the consequence for each violation in alignment with the Code of Conduct.***

Canvas

The West Allegheny School District utilizes Canvas as its Learning Management System (LMS). Students will have access to their teacher's class content and materials in this online portal. Communication from administrators, student services, and other departments is also communicated through Canvas, and students should be checking for notifications daily. Parents also have the opportunity to view materials and coursework, including grades, through the interactive platform. Students will have direct access to Canvas via their school issued Chromebook.

PowerSchool

The West Allegheny School District utilizes PowerSchool as its student information system (SIS). PowerSchool is the tool that we use to release schedules, report cards, and other notifications for each nine-week marking period. Parents can access their student's information through their PowerSchool account.

MySchoolBucks

Families have the opportunity to create an online account with MySchoolBucks to easily pay for school-related expenses (other than food served in the cafeteria) through an online account, rather than by cash or check.

FamilyID

FamilyID is a secure platform where parents/guardians can store their child's information to easily enroll in school-related activities. Data stored on FamilyID is saved and can be auto filled so information does not need to be entered repeatedly.

Securly

Parents/Guardians will have access to Securly Home as a tool to monitor student use of District-issued devices. This access is intended to support the partnership between families and the District in promoting responsible technology use and ensuring safety and security while students are using_ District technology resources. Parents/Guardians can use Securly Home to check their child/ren's internet history and set parental controls, such as usage hours, when the device is not at school. Parents/Guardians should contact school administration if they recognize any inappropriate use or concerning patterns.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES - POLICY 237

Purpose

The Board adopts this policy in order to support an educational environment that is orderly, safe and secure for district students and employees, while also recognizing that electronic devices may provide a positive contribution when used for educational purposes.

Definition

Electronic devices shall include all but not limited to, devices that can take photographs; record, play or edit audio or video data; store, transmit or receive calls, messages, text, data or images; operate online applications; or provide a wireless, unfiltered connection to the Internet, and the like.

Authority

Authorized Use of Electronic Devices

Principals, in consultation with the Superintendent and in compliance with Board policy, administrative regulations and rules, are authorized to determine the extent of the use of electronic devices within their buildings and programs, on district property, and/or while students are attending school-sponsored activities. Use of electronic devices at the elementary level may be different than at the middle school and/or high school levels or may be different between programs. Building principals shall establish rules and notify students, staff and parents/guardians of all applicable rules for use of electronic devices within their buildings and programs.

The Board prohibits use of electronic devices in locker rooms, bathrooms, health suites and other changing areas at any time.

The district shall not be liable for the loss, damage or misuse of any electronic device.

Electronic Images and Photograph

The Board prohibits the taking, storing, disseminating, transferring, viewing, or sharing of obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or other means, including but not limited to texting and emailing.

Because such violations may constitute a crime under state and/or federal law, the district may report such conduct to state and/or federal law enforcement agencies.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify students, parents/guardians and employees about the Board's electronic device policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

Guidelines

Violations of this policy by a student shall result in disciplinary action and may result in confiscation of the electronic device.[1][2][3]

PROCEDURES FOR PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (PEDs)

The District is initiating an Away For The Day approach for all cell phones and other personal electronic devices to include tablets, gaming devices, smart watches, AI glasses, and other emerging technologies. This is a shift from last year, where High school students were allowed to use their cell phones during hallway transitions, lunch and study halls. This commitment is grounded in a shared responsibility to create learning environments where students can be fully present and engaged in meaningful instruction, as well as pending Pennsylvania legislation to prohibit cell phones in schools. (House Bill 1814)

All personal electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, ear pods, smart watches, tablets, etc. must always be silenced and kept in lockers or a teacher-designated area. All personal electronic devices must be **"Silenced and Away All Day"**. Personal electronic devices cannot be used in the hallways, common areas, or cafeteria. West Allegheny is not responsible for any loss or damage to PED's brought to school.

Improper use and/or unauthorized possession of personal electronic devices will result in the following consequences:

First Offense: The PED will be confiscated by a teacher, and the student will pick-up the PED in the office at the end of the day. The teacher will notify the parent and administration.

Second Offense: The PED will be confiscated by a teacher, and the parent will pick-up the PED in the office at the end of the day. The student will serve an after-school detention.

Third Offense: The PED will be confiscated by a teacher, and the parent will pick-up the PED in the office at the end of the day. The student will serve one day of ISS

Additional Offenses: Additional offenses will follow progressive discipline in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

******As with any policy violation, any mitigating and/or aggravating circumstances may alter the consequence for each violation in alignment with the Code of Conduct.***

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

West Allegheny prides itself on being proactive and innovative with respect to evolving technologies. As such, the district recently passed an Artificial Intelligence Policy, 815.1, that provides guidelines for the appropriate use of AI to enhance teaching and learning. In order to assist students and parents in understanding how the district supports AI use to enhance instruction and learning, please visit the AI ecosystem on our website. The AI webpage includes responsible use guidelines, academic integrity, approved AI apps, frequently asked questions and answers about AI, district approved AI resources and more.

While students have the option to use generative AI tools, submitting work generated by AI or using AI outside of the defined parameters is an Academic Integrity violation, and consequences will be issued as outlined in the Academic Integrity section of this Parent-Student Handbook.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION - POLICY 815.1

Purpose

The Board's purpose of implementing a policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI) is to ensure the ethical and responsible use of AI technologies to enhance teaching, learning, and administrative processes while safeguarding student privacy and data security. By establishing clear guidelines and procedures, this policy aims to promote transparency and accountability, while fostering a safe learning and working environment.

Definition

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems and algorithms that mimic human cognitive functions, such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making. AI encompasses a broad spectrum of techniques and methodologies, including machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, and robotics, aimed at creating intelligent systems capable of performing tasks autonomously or with minimal human intervention.

Authority

The Board directs that the use of AI in the educational environment shall be limited to approved educational purposes and shall comply with applicable state and federal laws, regulations, Board policies, administrative regulations and school rules including, but not limited to, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), as well as Board policies related to acceptable use of computers and network resources, student and staff conduct, copyright protections, student records, personnel records, bullying and cyberbullying, nondiscrimination and harassment, data security and staff and student expression.

[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8][9][10][11][12][13][14][15][16][17] [18][19][20][21][22][23][24][25][26]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy and may delegate to his/her designee(s) the right to enforce this policy. AI tools and resources used in district schools and programs shall be evaluated and authorized on an ongoing basis for age-appropriateness, bias, privacy protections, accessibility standards and data security.[8][9][10][26][27] The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to address student safety measures and to determine whether AI tools and resources are being used for purposes prohibited by law, Board policy or for accessing sexually explicit materials.[2][24][28][29][30][31][32] The district solicitor, in coordination with the Director of Information Technology, shall evaluate new and existing vendor contracts, collective bargaining agreements and related agreements for impacts related to district use of AI.[33][34]

Guidelines

Instruction on AI Tools

The Board directs that students at all grade levels receive age-appropriate instruction on the proper use of AI tools, encompassing fundamental principles such as the necessity of proper human supervision, critical thinking, and skepticism regarding accuracy. Such instruction should aim to empower students with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the increasingly prevalent presence of AI technologies in their academic and personal lives. By fostering a culture of responsible and informed use, students will be better equipped to navigate AI tools effectively while understanding their limitations and ethical implications.

CIPA Compliance

The Director of Technology shall ensure that the district's internet content and message filters prevent users from accessing any AI website, tool, or application that is capable of generating obscene or pornographic material on both school district owned devices and on the school provided internet.[2][32]

FERPA Compliance

All teachers, administrators, and staff are required to adhere strictly to the regulations outlined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) when utilizing any AI resources.[5] The district prohibits the use of the personally identifiable information of students while using AI websites, tools, or applications that have not been pre-approved by the Director of Technology or his/her designee. The Director of Technology shall establish a process by which teachers and administrators can request the approval of new AI resources. The vetting process shall include a review of the tool's privacy policy, data handling practices, and compliance with FERPA. The Director of Technology or designee shall maintain a list of all such approved resources.

Academic Honesty

The Board recognizes the capacity of AI to complete many student assignments. In doing so, AI has the potential to upend traditional academic honesty and plagiarism standards.[23]

It is the responsibility of all teachers to provide students with notice of whether AI use is permitted on a particular assignment or project. Teachers should use the following scale [i] for guidance:

[i] Adapted from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and its work adapting the work of Dr. Leon Furze, Dr. Mike Perkins, Dr. Jasper Roe PHEA, and Dr. Jason Mcvaugh.

0	No AI Use	The assignment is completed independently without the assistance of AI	No disclosure required.
1	AI-Assisted Idea Generation	AI is used for brainstorming and generating ideas only.	No disclosure required
2	AI-Assisted Editing	AI is used to edit or refine student work, but not to generate content.	Student must disclose how AI was used.
3	AI for Specified Task Completion	AI is used to complete certain elements of a task or part of a project with human oversight and evaluation of all AI generated content.	Student must disclose how AI was used.
4	Full AI Use with Human Oversight	AI may be used throughout the assignment. The student is responsible for providing human oversight and evaluating the AI generated content.	Student must disclose how AI was used.

Having received such notice from a teacher, any student who violates these standards is subject to discipline including detention, suspension, or expulsion depending on the nature of the violation.

AI Use In Operations

The Superintendent or designee shall establish protocols to verify the accuracy and reliability of the output from AI tools prior to the use of such tools for budgeting, payroll, financial or population forecasting, HR analytics, and similar operational tasks.

While AI tools may be used to assist in HR processes so long as the protocols above are in place, the Board directs that final decision-making regarding employee evaluations, promotions, and hiring be human decisions and not solely by AI technology to ensure fairness, equity, and compliance with anti-discrimination laws.

Professional Development

The Board directs the Superintendent to provide regular professional development training for administrators, teachers, and staff on the ethical and appropriate use of AI in school. The training should equip educators, administrators, and staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate AI tools into

their roles in the district while also addressing data privacy, legal compliance, and ethical considerations.[35]

Ethical Considerations

The district's technology protection measures shall be enforced during use of AI on district computers and network resources.[24] The district prohibits the use of AI in making decisions regarding employee recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, transfer, evaluation, demotion or dismissal.[10]

STUDENT DISCIPLINE - POLICY 218

Purpose

The Board recognizes that student conduct is closely related to learning. An effective educational program requires a safe and orderly school environment.

Authority

The Board shall establish fair, reasonable and nondiscriminatory rules and regulations regarding the conduct of all students in the district.[1][2][3][4][5]

The Board shall adopt a Code of Student Conduct to govern student discipline, and students shall not be subject to disciplinary action because of race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin or handicap/disability. Each student must adhere to Board policies and the Code of Student Conduct governing student discipline.[1][2][4][5][6][7][8]

The Board prohibits the use of corporal punishment by district staff to discipline students for violations of Board policies, the Code of Student Conduct and district rules and regulations.[9]

Any student disciplined by a district employee shall have the right to be informed of the nature of the infraction and the applicable rule or rules violated.[10]

When suspensions and expulsions are imposed, they shall be carried out in accordance with Board policy.[7][10]

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[5][7][11][12][13][14]

On and Off-Campus Activities

This policy and the Code of Student Conduct apply to the behavior of students at all times during the time they are under the supervision of the school or at any time while on school property, while present at school-sponsored activities, and while traveling to or from school and school-sponsored activities or at other times while riding in school-provided means of transportation ("on-campus"). This policy and the Code of Student Conduct also apply to student behavior that occurs at other times and places ("off-campus") when:[3]

1. The conduct involves, threatens or makes more likely violence, use of force or other serious harm directed at students, staff or the school environment;

2. The conduct materially and substantially disrupts or interferes with the school environment or the educational process, such as school activities, school work, discipline, safety and order on school property or at school functions;

3. The conduct interferes with or threatens to interfere with the rights of students or school staff or the safe and orderly operation of the schools and their programs;

4. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property; or

5. The proximity, timing or motive for the conduct in question or other factors pertaining to the conduct otherwise establish a direct connection to attendance at school, to the school community, or to a school-sponsored activity. This would include, for example, but not be limited to, conduct that would

violate the Code of Student Conduct if it occurred in school that is committed in furtherance of a plan made or agreed to in school, or acts of vandalism directed at the property of school staff because of their status as school staff.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that reasonable and necessary rules and regulations are developed to implement Board policy governing student conduct.

The Superintendent or designee shall publish and distribute to all staff, students and parents/guardians the rules and regulations for student behavior contained in the Code of Student Conduct, the sanctions that may be imposed for violations of those rules, and a listing of students' rights and responsibilities. A copy of the Code of Student Conduct shall be available in each school library and school office and may be included in student handbooks and on the district website.[1][8]

The building principal shall have the authority to assign discipline to students, subject to Board policies, administrative regulations, the Code of Student Conduct and school rules, and to the student's due process right to notice, hearing, and appeal.[7][10][15][16]

Teaching staff and other district employees responsible for students shall have the authority to take reasonable actions necessary to control the conduct of students in all situations and in all places where students are within the jurisdiction of this Board, and when such conduct interferes with the educational program of the schools or threatens the health and safety of others, in accordance with Board policy, administrative regulations, the Code of Student Conduct and school rules.[15]

Reasonable force may be used by teachers and school authorities under any of the following circumstances: to quell a disturbance, obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects, for the purpose of self-defense, and for the protection of persons or property.[9]

Referral to Law Enforcement and Reporting Requirements

For reporting purposes, the term **incident** shall mean an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use, or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the school safety and security provisions of School Code.[17][18][19]

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents committed by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[14][17][19][20][21][22]

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.[14][17][23]

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent, or designee, shall annually, by July 31, report all new incidents to the PA Department of Education on the required form.[14][19][22][24][25][26][27]

When a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, district staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[28][29]

The Superintendent shall report to the Board the methods of discipline imposed by administrators and incidences of student misconduct, in the degree of specificity required by the Board.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

West Allegheny School District believes that it is essential for our schools to provide a safe and supportive atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Students must be able to work together and to accept and share responsibilities. While discipline begins in the home, the school provides reinforcement and continued opportunity for students to learn self-discipline and behaviors appropriate for becoming responsible citizens and living productively in our society.

West Allegheny's approach to student discipline is corrective and intended to modify the inappropriate behavior. Maintaining appropriate standards of discipline in the West Allegheny School District is essential to the establishment of a safe and orderly educational environment where students can learn. The Student Code of Conduct will be interpreted by the administration and their designees in a manner which they deem just, given the circumstances of the individual case. **Additionally, students must understand that administrators shall have the authority to enforce other reasonable disciplinary actions which they find warranted by situations not covered specifically (including limiting student participation/attendance in extracurricular school- based events/special assemblies/programs aimed at rewarding positive student effort and performance).**

Discipline issues arise for a variety of reasons and in varying degrees of frequency and severity. The general sequence presented here is not intended to be rigidly followed. The actual sequence of disciplinary action may vary depending on the individual case and the process will be initiated at the step deemed appropriate. In general, these steps are followed:

1. Teacher and student address issue
2. Teacher and parent/guardian address issue
3. Teacher, counselor, parent/guardian and/or student meet to address issue
4. Principal, parent/guardian, student, and other school personnel are involved to address issue
5. School officials, parent/guardian, student, and social service agencies are involved to address issue
6. An administrative review occurs with the principal
7. A superintendent's review occurs with the administrative staff, the superintendent or designee
8. School Board hearing

Misbehaviors and their interventions are categorized across four levels according to degree of seriousness and frequency of occurrence. Each school may have additional guidelines for student behavioral expectations as part of a positive behavior intervention and incentive system.

Level I

Level I offenses include minor misbehaviors on the part of the student which are disruptive and impede classroom procedures and learning or that interfere with the orderly and safe operation of the school. These misbehaviors are expected to be addressed by the individual teacher or staff member who observes the incident but may require the intervention of an administrator. An accurate record of the offense, corrective and intervention supports, and disciplinary action must be maintained by the teacher or staff member. Repeated instances of Level I behavior, despite redirection or intervention, may constitute a violation at a higher level with referral to an administrator.

Examples of Level I Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Disrespectful actions or language towards peers, adults, and/or property
- Classroom disruptions and violations of classroom procedures established by the teacher, which may include tardiness to class, disruptive behavior, failure/refusal to follow directives
- Disruptive behavior in common areas (e.g., hallways, cafeteria, playground)
- Minor dress code violations
- Lack of cooperation with staff (verbal/non-verbal)

- Failure or refusal to comply with adult directives
- Inappropriate and/or profane language or gesture not directed at others
- Untruthful or deceptive behavior to school personnel
- Violation of Academic Integrity Policy (refer to Academic Integrity Policy), cheating, plagiarism
- Misuse or unauthorized use of electronic devices
- Refusal to engage in academic learning activities
- Inhibiting other students' learning process

Examples of Level I Consequences Including but not Limited to:

- Timely parent notification (by phone & documented in writing)
- Verbal redirection
- Special assignment
- Behavior contract
- Confiscation of electronic device
- Mediation
- Parent/student/teacher conference
- Loss of classroom privilege
- Classroom meeting
- Referral to school counselor
- Change of classroom seating
- Teacher assigned detention
- Student conference

Level II

Level II offenses are misbehaviors whose frequency or seriousness disrupts the learning climate of the school and/or classroom. These infractions can result from the continuation of Level I misbehaviors and/or include new offenses. The educational consequences are serious enough to require disciplinary action taken by administrative personnel. Repeated or more serious instances of misbehavior at this level raise the offense to a higher level.

Examples of Level II Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Repeated Level I Violations or Level I with aggravating circumstances
- Failure to complete assigned Level I discipline
- Major dress code violation or repeated violations
- Minor disruption in school such as horse playing, play fighting, verbal altercation, etc.
- Failure to properly identify oneself to teachers and/or staff
- Falsification of documents, statements, and/or misrepresentation of parent/guardian
- Loitering in an unauthorized area
- Failure to attend class, leaving class without authorization, presence in unauthorized areas
- Leaving school without authorization
- Verbal/non-verbal flagrant disrespect toward teachers and staff
- Agitating/instigating comments between students
- Use of obscene language/gestures toward others
- Possession of matches, lighters
- Use/possession of tobacco and/or related products, look alike products (first offense)
- Use/possession of vapes, vaping materials and/or related products, look alike products (first offense)

Examples of Level II Consequences Including but not Limited to:

- Detention
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension
- Temporary removal of driving privileges
- Verbal and written reprimand
- Behavior contract
- Parent notification and possible conference
- Referral to SAP
- Withdrawal of privileges and/or participation in school activities
- Loss of driving privileges

Level III

Level III offenses are acts whose frequency or seriousness disrupt the learning climte of the school and are directed against persons or properties. These misbehaviors could endanger the health and safety of those in the school.

Examples of Level III Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Repeated Level II Violations or Level II with aggravating circumstances
- Failure to complete assigned Level II discipline
- Vandalism (Less than $100) or Petty theft (less than $100)
- Trespassing on school property
- Disorderly conduct
- Major disruption of school such as smoke/stink bombs, fireworks, etc.
- Fighting, harassment, threatening comments, simple assault, hazing
- Act or acts of discrimination and/or intimidating behaviors intended to demean another person
- Bullying/Cyber-bullying
- Refusal to leave school property when directed to do so
- Sexual misconduct, indecent exposure
- Sexual harassment
- Student demonstrations that result in disruption to the school
- Violation of the Acceptable Use Policy (refer to Acceptable Use Policy)
- Truancy
- Possession of pornography or other illegal material, sexting
- Use/possession of drugs and or alcohol, look-alikes, and/or paraphernalia (non-distribution amount)
- Use/possession of regulated and/or non-regulated THC (non-distribution amount)
- Use/possession of tobacco and/or related products, look alike products (2nd offense)
- Use/possession of vapes, vaping materials and/or related products, look alike products (2nd offense)

Examples of Level III Consequences Including but not Limited to:

- Up to 10-day suspension
- Law enforcement/charges
- Due Process
- Restitution
- Truancy citation
- Referral to SAP
- Parent Conference
- Activity Restriction (examples include: school sponsored trips, dances, commencement exercises, etc.)

Level IV

Level IV offenses disrupt the learning climate of the school by posing a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of others in the school. These criminal acts always require administrative actions and may require the removal of the student from school, the intervention of law enforcement authorities and possible action by the West Allegheny School Board.

Examples of Level IV Violations Including but not Limited to:

- Repeated Level III Violations or Level III with aggravating circumstances
- Failure to complete assigned Level III discipline
- Possession of a weapon or look-alike weapon of any kind on school property including school sponsored events and transportation to or from school
- Bomb threat or causing a false alarm
- Arson or attempted arson
- Tampering with security/safety equipment and/or technology systems
- Terroristic threats or acts
- Commission of a criminal felony on school property or at a school sponsored event
- Aggravated assault

- Sexual assault (a student convicted/adjudicated will not be educated within the same school as the victim for the duration of their educational career)
- Distribution of pornography (including but not limited to child pornography)
- Distribution and/or intent to sell drugs, alcohol, paraphernalia, or look-alike substances
- Distribution and/or intent to sell regulated and/or non-regulated THC
- Vandalism and/or theft over $100
- Burglary of school property
- Possession/use of explosive devices
- Misconduct off campus: If any of the above acts occur off campus, a student is subject to expulsion if the victim is a student or school employee and there is a reasonable basis to believe that the continued presence of the student demonstrates a clear threat to the safety of the victims or others in the school environment.

Examples of Level IV Consequences Including but not Limited to:

- Out-of-School Suspension
- Alternative Education Placement
- Restitution
- Expulsion
- Superintendent's hearing
- School Board of Directors' hearing
- Involvement of law enforcement with potential for criminal charges
- Applicable Level III consequences
- Activity restriction (examples include: school sponsored trips, dances, commencement exercises, etc.)

After-School Detention

Students may be assigned an after-school detention for behavioral infractions by a teacher or administrator as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. After-school detention is served outside of the school day from 2:45 to 3:35 PM. Students and parents are notified of the detention and the assigned date. Transportation home following an after-school detention is the responsibility of the student and the parent. Failure to serve an after-school detention will result in the following consequences:

First Offense: One day of in-school suspension

Second Offense: Two days of in-school suspension and a parent meeting will be scheduled

Third Offense: Two days of out-of-school suspension

Additional Offenses: Additional offenses will follow progressive discipline in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct

In-School Suspension (ISS)

Students may be assigned an in-school suspension for behavioral infractions as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Students serving in-school suspension (ISS) are temporarily prohibited from attending regular classes, school day events, and extracurricular activities/events on any day ISS is assigned. All schoolwork must be completed in ISS and returned to the designated teacher. Students in ISS will complete a reflective assignment focusing on how their actions may have impacted themselves and others and develop strategies to make better choices in the future. Parents will be notified of an in-school suspension. Students that arrive late to school for ISS will be required to make up the time missed.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

Students may be assigned out-of-school suspension for behavioral infractions as outlined in our Student Code of Conduct. Students serving out-of-school suspension (OSS) are temporarily prohibited from any events that occur during the school day and all after-school activities during the duration of the suspension. This includes weekend activities if the suspension is continuing to be served at the start of the following week. All missed schoolwork must be completed at home and returned to the designated teacher upon return to regular classes. Students are expected to access their classwork on Canvas for the duration of their suspension. Students will be allowed to make up quizzes, tests, papers, and/or major projects missed while serving OSS for full credit. Parents will be notified of an out-of-school suspension. If a student is sent home during the school day due to an out-of-school suspension, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation home for the student.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Each of our classroom teachers is responsible for establishing classroom expectations for the school year. You may expect a plan to be shared by every teacher that your child has this school year, minimally posted on Canvas. The plan is for your review and includes rules, regulations, and consequences unique to each teacher's classroom management. These plans are supplemental to the contents included in this handbook.

TARDY TO CLASS

Students who arrive to class after the bell are required to have a pass from a staff member or the student will be considered to have an unexcused tardy to class. If a student does not attend any portion of a class, it is considered skipping and the student will receive discipline in correspondence with the Student Code of Conduct with increasing severity for each reoccurring violation.

First Offense: Verbal Warning

Second Offense: Student will receive a teacher or administrator issued after-school detention

Third Offense: Student will receive a teacher or administrator issued after-school detention; parent meeting

SKIPPING CLASS

A student's greatest opportunity to have academic success is by being present and on time to class to maximize engagement with daily instruction. Students are expected to attend each of their scheduled classes in their assigned locations (including study halls and lunch) throughout the duration of each class period. If a student does not attend any portion of a class, it is considered skipping and the student will receive discipline in correspondence with the Student Code of Conduct with increasing severity for each reoccurring violation. Students who skip class will receive a 0 for any assignments they missed in the class they skipped without an opportunity for a make-up.

First Offense: 1 day of ISS; Zero is received for all classwork in the skipped class.

Second Offense: 1 day OSS; Zero is received for all classwork in the skipped class; parent meeting

Third Offense: 2 days OSS; Zero is received for all classwork in the skipped class; parent meeting;
Activity Restriction

******As with any policy violation, any mitigating and/or aggravating circumstances may alter the consequence for each violation in alignment with the Code of Conduct.***

HIGH SCHOOL GRADING GUIDELINES

Grading Procedure

The faculty and administration of West Allegheny Senior High School believe that it is essential to have a clearly stated grading system in order to further good communication between parents, students, and teachers. Therefore, they have established the following policy that will be subject to review at the beginning of each school year.

Grading Scale

The West Allegheny School District utilizes the following grading scale for quarterly and final grades. Quarterly report cards will designate student percentage grades. Student final transcripts will only reflect a student's final letter grade for each course. Courses graded as Pass/Fail will be designated with a P or F on both report cards and transcripts.

A	90 – 100%		P =	Pass
B	80 – 89%		F =	Fail
C	70 – 79%		I =	Incomplete (awarded in special circumstances only)
D	60 – 69%		M=	Medical (for physical education only)
F	59% and below		W=	Withdrawal from a course after the first midterm of the first quarter (will remain on a student's transcript)
			X =	Missing a major component of the course that MUST be completed to potentially pass the class. Seniors with an X grade will not be eligible for graduation.

Illegal/Unexcused Absences

If a student misses one or more days of class due to either excused or unexcused absences, the number of days they will be given to turn in missing work is equal to the number of days they were absent plus one additional day unless other arrangements are made with the teacher(s). This timeline does not include absences that resulted from a class being skipped, in which case the student is given a 0 for any assignment missed.

Nine Weeks Grade

Each student shall earn a final percentage grade for each of the four nine-week grading periods. These percentages are based on points earned for course requirements such as tests, homework, projects, and reports. To calculate the final percentage, a teacher may choose to weight assessment categories or use total points.

Any student who refuses to complete work or opts out of assignments may receive a zero grade. A student earning a failing (F) quarterly grade, and meeting established criteria, shall be recorded no less than 50% unless approved by a principal. For students meeting the established criteria, the 50% minimum is intended to encourage student performance, increase motivation, and give students the opportunity to experience success. If students do not meet the established criteria, they will receive the grade they earned, between a 0% and 49.9%.

Final Exams

Teachers are required to administer a final exam or end of course performance-based assessment (PBA) for each course. All students in a course must be given a consistent final/PBA, regardless of the teacher or section. Courses that require a standardized culminating exam (i.e. a Keystone Exam or Advanced Placement) are encouraged to administer a PBA. All final exams will be designed to last one class period.

For year-long courses, finals/PBAs:

- **Will count for 10% of the final grade**
- Should focus on power standards for the course and be weighted such that
    - Material covered during quarter 1: 10-15%
    - Material covered during quarter 2: 10-15%
    - Material covered during quarter 3: 35-40%
    - Material covered during quarter 4: 35-40%

For semester-long courses, finals/PBAs:

- **Will count for 10% of the semester grade**
- Should focus on power standards for the course and/or be weighted such that
    - Material covered during quarter 1/3: 20-30%
    - Material covered during quarter 2/4: 70-80%

Expectations for final exams/PBAs should be outlined in the course syllabus and shared with students/families at the start of the school year. Prior to the administration of the final/PBA, a study guide must be provided to students.

Final Grade

The final grade for a student will be determined using one of two methods, percentages or quality points.

When using percentages, each of the four (4) nine-week grade percentages shall be averaged into the student's final grade. Each of the four grading periods is weighted equally and the final is worth 10% of the final course grade.

When using quality points, each of the four (4) nine-week letter grades and the final exam will be converted to a 4-point scale, with A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0.

Once converted, the average of the quality points from the four nine-weeks will account for 90% of the final grade, with the final exam counting for the remaining 10%. The following scale will be used to determine the final grade:

A = 3.51 - 4.0	**C** = 1.51 - 2.49	**F** = 0 - .49
B = 2.51 - 3.49	**D** = .51 - 1.49	

Students with **three (3) F's will fail automatically** unless the following condition is met: The teacher, upon reviewing the student's total year performance believes that the student in question has met the **MINIMUM** criteria for passing and the principal, upon reviewing each individual case, authorizes the passing grade.

In the event a student changes academic levels of a course mid-year (e.g. from Honors to Academic), the teacher assigning the final grade may exercise one of two options:

1. Use the percentage(s) assigned from the prior course, along with the earned percentage(s) in the currently enrolled course to calculate a final grade.

2. Adjust the student's final grade to reflect overall mastery and performance level of the current course to assign a final grade.

Quality Point Values/Weighted Grades

West Allegheny High School utilizes a three-tiered point system for weighting classes. Students in a weighted course will receive an additional quality point assessment per grading period. The final letter grade will remain the same; only the quality points will change.

The tables below represent the weighted and non-weighted point values for all full credit courses and courses with a lab. Only the point values increase, the credit for each course remains the same. Additionally, the point values are lower for courses that are not a full credit (e.g. semester courses).

Percentage Range	Grade	AP / ECIHSA Courses	Honors Courses	All Other Courses
90-100	A	5.00	4.50	4.00
80-89	B	4.00	3.50	3.00
70-79	C	3.00	2.50	2.00
60-69	D	2.00	1.50	1.00
0-59	F	0	0	0

Percentage Range	Grade	AP / ECIHSA Courses With a Lab (1.5 Credits)	Honors Courses With a Lab (1.5 Credits)	All Other Courses With a Lab (1.5 Credits)
90-100	A	7.50	6.75	6.00
80-89	B	6.00	5.25	4.50
70-79	C	4.50	3.75	3.00
60-69	D	3.00	2.25	1.50
0-59	F	0	0	0

Test Return Procedure

The assessment practice of testing provides the student and teacher information regarding the level of achievement. Testing provides the feedback to the teacher that is needed to revise teaching style, to re-teach material and to develop guidelines for pacing instruction. The student is able to view areas of proficiency and deficiency and adjust appropriately. **All tests will be returned to and discussed with the students within one week of the administering of the test.** Essay assignments of at least 2

pages in length will be returned and discussed within two weeks of the assignment. Teachers may invoke the options below regarding testing:

1. Return a test (answer sheet and test)/essay assignment, discuss the test/essay, and the test/essay remains the property of the student. Therefore, it becomes the sole responsibility of the student to share the test(s) essay with the parent and also the sole responsibility of the student to present the test(s) in the event that he/she believes that a grade assigned was inaccurate.

2. Return a test (answer sheet and test)/essay assignment, discuss the test/essay, the student is directed to take the test home for review and/or parent/guardian signature and then require that the test/essay be returned so that the teacher may maintain their files for each student. Teachers cannot invoke academic penalties for tests not returned.

    - Teachers may post a test for student/parent review on Canvas in lieu of sending test copies home, unless the family has reported no access to the appropriate technology to utilize Canvas.

Note: The test return procedures do not apply to final exams or end of course performance-based assessments.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The West Allegheny High School is committed to encouraging strict standards of academic integrity and committed to helping students develop intellectually, creatively, and ethically. Academic integrity is a shared partnership between administrators, teachers, students and parents to ensure that the standard of academic honesty leads to higher levels of performance by providing challenging critical thinking opportunities. Therefore, any kind of academic fraud such as cheating, plagiarism, helping others to cheat or participating in academic misconduct is prohibited. Those students who violate this school's standard for academic integrity will be subject to the following consequences if concurrent within the calendar school year:

First Offense in any subject area: a zero on the assignment with the possibility for partial recovery not to exceed 50% of the assignment provided the student meets the expectations of the teacher. Parent contact made by teacher. Teacher notifies administration.

Second Offense in any subject area: a zero on the assignment with no point value recovery and a discipline referral (Level II within the Student Code of Conduct) to the administration. Parent contact made by teacher and administration.

Third Offense in any subject area: a zero on the assignment, a discipline referral (Level III within the Student Code of Conduct) to the administration, and a failing grade for the nine weeks in the class where the third offense took place. Parent contact made by teacher and administration.

Four Offenses within same class: Student will be removed from the class with a failing grade in such class for the year and a discipline referral (Level IV within the Student Code of Conduct) to the administration. Parent contact made by teacher and administration.

It is the responsibility of all students to maintain academic integrity with regard to class assignments, exams, and any other graded course requirements. Thus, cheating, plagiarism, and/or knowingly assisting another student to violate academic integrity are all violations of the above mentioned.

STUDENT DRESS CODE & APPEARANCE GUIDELINES

In alignment with the West Allegheny School District's mission to inspire responsible citizenship, students are expected to present themselves in a manner that reflects personal pride and respects the school community. While a student's style and grooming are primarily the responsibility of the student and their parents, the district maintains standards of decency, cleanliness, safety, and appropriateness to ensure a focused and positive learning environment.

Prohibited Items and Styles

Inappropriate Imagery or Language

- Clothing featuring words, symbols, or images that are sexually suggestive or promote violence, weapons, gangs, drugs, or alcohol.
- Apparel containing language or symbols that demean any individual's race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or background.

Headwear and Accessories

- Hats, hoods, visors, and sunglasses worn inside the building (unless authorized by school personnel).
- Bandannas, sweatbands, or headbands with attached scarves.
- Heavy chains (including wallet chains and neck chains), dog collars, or spiked/studded jewelry.

Clothing Fit and Coverage

- Sagging pants or items that expose undergarments.
- Pants long enough to drag below the shoes, creating a tripping hazard.
- Excessively short or revealing skirts, dresses, and shorts.
- Clothing with rips or holes that expose undergarments or excessive skin.
- Tops that expose the midriff, stomach, or lower back (such as halter tops, crop tops, tube tops, and sports bras worn as shirts).
- Revealing necklines, low-cut, see-through or one-shoulder shirts.

Note: The administration reserves the right to address any clothing or accessory deemed disruptive to the educational environment on an individual basis.

Policy Enforcement and Violations

Correction: Students wearing non-compliant attire will be required to correct the issue (e.g., changing clothes, turning a shirt inside out, or removing a hat/hood).

Progressive Discipline: Initial infractions will typically be addressed with a warning and a request to correct the attire. Continued or repeated violations will result in disciplinary actions in strict alignment with the Student Code of Conduct.

DRESS AND GROOMING - POLICY 221

Purpose

The Board recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference.

Authority

The district has the authority to impose limitations on students' dress in school. The Board will not interfere with the right of students and their parents/guardians to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices disrupt the educational program of the schools or constitute a health or safety hazard.[1][2]

Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, technical education, extracurricular activities or other situations where special attire may be required to ensure the health or safety of the student.[2]

The district directs the staff to support students experiencing educational instability by waiving penalties related to a delay in compliance with Board policy or school rules related to dress and grooming.[3]

Delegation of Responsibility

The building principal or designee shall be responsible to monitor student dress and grooming, and to enforce Board policy and school rules governing student dress and grooming.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all school rules implementing this policy impose only the minimum necessary restrictions on the exercise of the student's taste and individuality.[2]

BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING - POLICY 249

Purpose

The Board is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence.

Definitions

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:[1]

1. Substantially interfering with a student’s education.
2. Creating a threatening environment.
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

School setting means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.[1]

Authority

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying/cyberbullying by district students.[1]

The Board encourages students who believe they or others have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee.

Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.

The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventative action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of bullying brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be bullying under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies.

When a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, district staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[2][3]

Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination

Every report of alleged bullying that can be reasonably interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination are identified, the Title IX Coordinator shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.[4][5]

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy and the district's legal and investigative obligations.

Retaliation

Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of bullying or participation in an investigation of allegations of bullying is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Delegation of Responsibility

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students.[1]

The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.[1]

District administration shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School Report:[1]

1. Board's Bullying Policy.
2. Report of bullying incidents.
3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

Guidelines

The Code of Student Conduct, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.[1][6][7]

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within each school building and on the district website.[1]

Education

The district shall develop, implement and evaluate bullying prevention and intervention programs and activities. Programs and activities shall provide district staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.[1][8][9][10]

Consequences for Violations

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include:[1][6][11]

1. Counseling within the school.
2. Parental conference.
3. Loss of school privileges.
4. Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.
5. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
6. Detention.
7. Suspension.
8. Expulsion.
9. Counseling/Therapy outside of school.
10. Referral to law enforcement officials.

HAZING - POLICY 247

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe, positive environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the district and are prohibited at all times.

Definitions

Hazing occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a student with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following:[1]

1. Violate federal or state criminal law.
2. Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug or other substance which subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm.
3. Endure brutality of a physical nature, including, but not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, or exposure to the elements.
4. Endure brutality of a mental nature, including, but not limited to, activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment.
5. Endure any act of a sexual nature.
6. Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the student.

Aggravated hazing occurs when a person commits an act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death to the student and:[2]

1. The person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the student; or
2. The person causes, coerces or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the student.

Organizational hazing occurs when an organization intentionally, knowingly or recklessly promotes or facilitates hazing.[3][4]

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation of this policy regardless of whether:[5]

1. The consent of the student was sought or obtained, or
2. The conduct was sanctioned or approved by the school or organization.

Student activity or organization means any activity, society, corps, team, club or service, social or similar group, operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by the district, whose members are primarily students or alumni of the organization.[6][7]

For purposes of this policy, **bodily injury** shall mean impairment of physical condition or substantial pain.[8]

For purposes of this policy, **serious bodily injury** shall mean bodily injury which creates a substantial risk of death or which causes serious, permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ.[8]

Authority

The Board prohibits hazing in connection with any student activity or organization regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school property or outside of school hours.[4][5][7][9][10]

No student, parent/guardian, coach, sponsor, volunteer or district employee shall engage in, condone or ignore any form of hazing.

The Board encourages students who believe they, or others, have been subjected to hazing to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee.

Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination

Every report of alleged hazing that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a hazing investigation, potential issues of discrimination are identified, the Title IX Coordinator shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged hazing.[11][12]

Delegation of Responsibility

Students, parents/guardians, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, and district employees shall be alert to incidents of hazing and shall report such conduct to the building principal or designee.

When a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, district staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[13][14]

Guidelines

In addition to posting this policy on the district's publicly accessible website, the district shall inform students, parents/guardians, sponsors, volunteers and district employees of the district's policy prohibiting hazing, including district rules, penalties for violations of the policy, and the program established by the

district for enforcement of the policy by means of distribution of written policy, publication in handbooks, presentation at an assembly or verbal instructions by the coach or sponsor at the start of the season or program.[4]

This policy, along with other applicable district policies, procedures and Codes of Conduct, shall be provided to all school athletic coaches and all sponsors and volunteers affiliated with a student activity or organization, prior to coaching an athletic activity or serving as a responsible adult supervising, advising, assisting or otherwise participating in a student activity or organization together with a notice that they are expected to read and abide by the policies, procedures and Codes of Conduct.[7]

Complaint Procedure

A student who believes that they have been subject to hazing is encouraged to promptly report the incident to the principal or designee. Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.

The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of hazing shall be provided to the principal or designee, who shall promptly notify the Superintendent or designee of the allegations and determine who shall conduct the investigation. Allegations of hazing shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventative action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of hazing brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be hazing under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies.

Interim Measures/Police

Upon receipt of a complaint of hazing, the principal or designee, in consultation with the Superintendent or designee, shall determine what, if any interim measures should be put in place to protect students from further hazing, bullying, discrimination or retaliatory conduct related to the alleged incident and report. Such interim measures may include, but not be limited to, the suspension of an adult who is involved, the separation of alleged victims and perpetrators, and the determination of what the complaining student needs or wants through questioning.

Those receiving the initial report and conducting or overseeing the investigation will assess whether the complaint, if proven, would constitute hazing, aggravated hazing or organizational hazing and shall report it to the police consistent with district practice and, as appropriate, consult with legal counsel about whether to report the matter to the police at every stage of the proceeding. The decision to report a matter to the police should not involve an analysis by district personnel of whether safe harbor provisions might apply to the person being reported, but information on the facts can be shared with the police in this regard.[15]

Referral to Law Enforcement and Safe Schools Reporting Requirements –

For purposes of reporting hazing incidents to law enforcement in accordance with Safe Schools Act reporting, the term **incident** shall mean an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use, or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the Safe Schools Act.[16][17][18]

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents, as defined in the Safe Schools Act, committed by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[16][17][19][20][21][22]

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in a defined incident as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction

over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.[17][22][23]

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all new incidents to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form.[16][22]

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy and the district's legal and investigative obligations.

Retaliation

Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of hazing or participation in an investigation of allegations of hazing is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Consequences for Violations

Safe Harbor –

An individual needing medical attention or seeking medical attention for another shall not be subject to criminal prosecution if the individual complies with the requirements under law, subject to the limitations set forth in law.[15]

Students –

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of hazing, the investigator shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action by the coach or sponsor, up to and including removal from the activity or organization. The fact of whether a student qualified for and received safe harbor under a criminal investigation shall be considered in assigning discipline.[4][7][15][24][25]

Nonstudent Violators/Organizational Hazing -

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding that a coach, sponsor, or volunteer affiliated with the student activity or organization engaged in, condoned or ignored any violation of this policy, the coach, sponsor, or volunteer shall be disciplined in accordance with Board policy and applicable laws and regulations. Discipline could include, but is not limited to, dismissal from the position as coach, sponsor, or volunteer, and/or dismissal from district employment.[26]

If an organization is found to have engaged in organizational hazing, it shall be subject to the imposition of fines and other appropriate penalties. Penalties may include rescission of permission for that organization to operate on school property or to otherwise operate under the sanction or recognition of the district.

Criminal Prosecution –

Any person or organization that causes or participates in hazing may also be subject to criminal prosecution.[4]

DISCRIMINATION – TITLE XI SEXUAL HARASSMENT - POLICY 103

Authority

The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and activities offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability.[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8][9][10][11][12][13][14][15][16][17]

The Board also declares it to be the policy of this district to comply with federal law and regulations under Title IX prohibiting sexual harassment, which is a form of unlawful discrimination on the basis of sex. Such discrimination shall be referred to throughout this policy as Title IX sexual harassment. Inquiries regarding the application of Title IX to the district may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

The district is committed to the maintenance of a safe, positive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination by providing all students course offerings, counseling, assistance, services, employment, athletics and extracurricular activities without any form of discrimination, including Title IX sexual harassment. Discrimination is inconsistent with the rights of students and the educational and programmatic goals of the district and is prohibited at or, in the course of, district-sponsored programs or activities, including transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activities.

Violations of this policy, including acts of retaliation as described in this policy, or knowingly providing false information, may result in disciplinary consequences under applicable Board policy and procedures.[18][19][20][21]

The Board directs that the foregoing statement of Board policy be included in each student and staff handbook, and that this policy and related attachments be posted to the district's website.

The Board requires a notice stating that the district does not discriminate in any manner, including Title IX sexual harassment, in any district education program or activity, to be issued to all students, parents/guardians, employment applicants, employees and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the district. All discrimination notices and information shall include the title, office address, telephone number and email address of the individual(s) designated as the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator.

Reports of Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination and Retaliation

The Board encourages students and third parties who believe they or others have been subject to Title IX sexual harassment, other discrimination or retaliation to promptly report such incidents to the building principal, even if some elements of the related incident took place or originated away from school grounds, school activities or school conveyances. A person who is not an intended victim or target of discrimination but is adversely affected by the offensive conduct may file a report of discrimination.

The student's parents/guardians or any other person with knowledge of conduct that may violate this policy is encouraged to immediately report the matter to the building principal.

A school employee who suspects or is notified that a student has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to the building principal, as well as properly making any mandatory police or child protective services reports required by law.[22]

If the building principal is the subject of a complaint, the student, third party or a reporting employee shall report the incident directly to the Title IX Coordinator.

The complainant or the individual making the report may use the Discrimination/Sexual Harassment/Bullying/Hazing/Dating Violence/Retaliation Report Form attached to this policy for purposes of reporting an incident or incidents in writing; however, verbal reports of an incident or incidents shall be accepted, documented and the procedures of this policy and the relevant attachments followed.

The building principal shall promptly notify the Title IX Coordinator of all reports of discrimination, Title IX sexual harassment or retaliation. The Title IX Coordinator shall promptly contact the complainant regarding the report to gather additional information as necessary, and to discuss the availability of supportive measures. The Title IX Coordinator shall consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures.

The Title IX Coordinator shall conduct an assessment to determine whether the reported circumstances are most appropriately addressed through the Discrimination Complaint Procedures prescribed in Attachment 2 to this policy, or if the reported circumstances meet the definition of Title IX sexual harassment and are most appropriately addressed through the Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures and Grievance Process for Formal Complaints in Attachment 3, or other Board policies.

Disciplinary Procedures When Reports Allege Title IX Sexual Harassment

When a report alleges Title IX sexual harassment, disciplinary sanctions may not be imposed until the completion of the grievance process for formal complaints outlined in Attachment 3. The district shall presume that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination has been made at the completion of the grievance process for formal complaints.

When an emergency removal, as described in Attachment 3, is warranted to address an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of an individual, and it is not feasible to continue educational services remotely or in an alternative setting, the normal procedures for suspension and expulsion shall be conducted to accomplish the removal, including specific provisions to address a student with a disability where applicable.[18][20][23][24]

When an emergency removal is not required, disciplinary sanctions shall be considered in the course of the Title IX grievance process for formal complaints. Following the issuance of the written determination and any applicable appeal, any disciplinary action specified in the written determination or appeal decision shall be implemented in accordance with the normal procedures for suspensions, expulsions or other disciplinary actions, including specific provisions to address a student with a disability where applicable.[18][19][20][23]

Discipline/Placement of Student Convicted or Adjudicated of Sexual Assault

Upon notification of a conviction or adjudication of a student in this district for sexual assault against another student enrolled in this district, the district shall comply with the disciplinary or placement requirements established by state law and Board policy.[25][26]

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a report and the investigation related to any form of discrimination or retaliation, including Title IX sexual harassment, shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy, the attachments and the district's legal and investigative obligations.[27][28][29][30][31]

Retaliation

The Board prohibits retaliation by the district or any other person against any person for:[30]

1. Reporting or making a formal complaint of any form of discrimination or retaliation, including Title IX sexual harassment.

2. Testifying, assisting, participating or refusing to participate in a related investigation, process or other proceeding or hearing.
3. Acting in opposition to practices the person reasonably believes to be discriminatory.

The district, its employees and others are prohibited from intimidating, threatening, coercing, or discriminating against anyone for actions described above. Individuals are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator immediately if retaliation is believed to have occurred.

Definitions

Complainant shall mean an individual who is alleged to be the victim.

Respondent shall mean an individual alleged to be the perpetrator of the discriminatory conduct.

Discrimination

Discrimination shall mean to treat individuals differently, or to harass or victimize based on a protected classification including race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, or handicap/disability.
Harassment is a form of discrimination based on the protected classifications listed in this policy consisting of unwelcome conduct such as graphic, written, electronic, verbal or nonverbal acts including offensive jokes, slurs, epithets and name-calling, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, or other conduct that may be harmful or humiliating or interfere with a person's school or school-related performance when such conduct is:

1. Sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive; and
2. A reasonable person in the complainant's position would find that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment such that it deprives or adversely interferes with or limits an individual or group of the ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or opportunities offered by a school.

Definitions Related to Title IX Sexual Harassment

Formal complaint shall mean a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging Title IX sexual harassment and requesting that the district investigate the allegation under the grievance process for formal complaints. The authority for the Title IX Coordinator to sign a formal complaint does not make the Title IX Coordinator a party in the grievance process for formal complaints. The phrase "document filed by a complainant" refers to a document or electronic submission that contains the complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the formal complaint.[29][32]

Supportive measures shall mean nondisciplinary, nonpunitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed.[32]

Supportive measures shall be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the educational program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the educational environment, or to deter sexual harassment. **Supportive measures** may include, but are not limited to:[32]

1. Counseling.
2. Extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments.
3. Modifications of work or class schedules.
4. Campus escort services.

5. Mutual restrictions on contact between the parties.
6. Changes in work or housing locations.
7. Leaves of absence.
8. Increased security.
9. Monitoring of certain areas of the campus.
10. Assistance from domestic violence or rape crisis programs.
11. Assistance from community health resources including counseling resources.

Supportive measures may also include assessments or evaluations to determine eligibility for special education or related services, or the need to review an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Service Agreement based on a student's behavior. This could include, but is not limited to, a manifestation determination or functional behavioral assessment (FBA), in accordance with applicable law, regulations or Board policy.[17][18][23][24][33]

Title IX sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:[32]

1. A district employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or district service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, commonly referred to as *quid pro quo sexual harassment.*

2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to a district education program or activity.

3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking.

    a. ***Dating violence*** means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim and where the existence of such a relationship is determined by the following factors:[34]

        i. Length of relationship.
        ii. Type of relationship.
        iii. Frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

    b. ***Domestic violence*** includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving federal funding, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.[34]

    c. ***Sexual assault*** means a sexual offense under state or federal law that is classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.[35]

d. ***Stalking*****,** under Title IX means stalking on the basis of sex, for example when the stalker desires to date a victim. Stalking means to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to either:[34]

i. Fear for their safety or the safety of others.

ii. Suffer substantial emotional distress.

Such conduct must have taken place during a district education program or activity and against a person in the United States to qualify as sexual harassment under Title IX. An **education program or activity** includes the locations, events or circumstances over which the district exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the harassment occurs. Title IX applies to all of a district's education programs or activities, whether such programs or activities occur on-campus or off-campus.[28][29][32]

Delegation of Responsibility

In order to maintain a program of nondiscrimination practices that is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, the Board designates the Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services as the district's Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. The Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator can be contacted at:[36]

Address: P. O. Box 55, Imperial, PA 15126
Email: lutchell@westasd.org (or) current Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services
Phone Number: 724-695-3422

The Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator shall fulfill designated responsibilities to ensure adequate nondiscrimination procedures are in place, to recommend new procedures or modifications to procedures and to monitor the implementation of the district's nondiscrimination procedures in the following areas, as appropriate:

1. Curriculum and Materials - Review of curriculum guides, textbooks and supplemental materials for discriminatory bias.

2. Training - Provide training for students and staff to prevent, identify and alleviate problems of discrimination.

3. Resources - Maintain and provide information to staff on resources available to complainants in addition to the school complaint procedure or Title IX procedures, such as making reports to the police, and available supportive measures such as assistance from domestic violence or rape crisis programs and community health resources including counseling resources.

4. Student Access - Review of programs, activities and practices to ensure that all students have equal access and are not segregated except when permissible by law or regulation.

5. District Support - Assure that like aspects of the school programs and activities receive like support as to staffing and compensation, facilities, equipment, and related areas.[37]

6. Student Evaluation - Review of assessments, procedures, and guidance and counseling materials for stereotyping and discrimination.

7. Reports/Formal Complaints - Monitor and provide technical assistance to individuals involved in managing informal reports and formal complaints.

Guidelines

Title IX Sexual Harassment Training Requirements

The Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), decision-maker(s), or any individual designated to facilitate an informal resolution process related to Title IX sexual harassment shall receive the following training, as required or appropriate to their specific role:

1. Definition of sexual harassment.
2. Scope of the district's education program or activity, as it pertains to what is subject to Title IX regulations.
3. How to conduct an investigation and grievance process for formal complaints, including examination of evidence, drafting written determinations, handling appeals and informal resolution processes, as applicable.
4. How to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest and bias.
5. Use of relevant technology.
6. Issues of relevance including when questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.
7. Issues of relevance, weight of evidence and application of standard of proof and drafting investigative reports that fairly summarize relevant evidence.
8. How to address complaints when the alleged conduct does not qualify as Title IX sexual harassment but could be addressed under another complaint process or Board policy.

All training materials shall promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of Title IX sexual harassment without relying on sex stereotypes.

All training materials shall be posted on the district's website.

Disciplinary Consequences

A student who is determined to be responsible for violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include but is not limited to:[18][19][20]

1. Loss of school privileges.
2. Permanent transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.
3. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
4. Detention.
5. Suspension.
6. Expulsion.
7. Referral to law enforcement officials.

An employee who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the applicable Board policy, collective bargaining agreement and individual contract, up to and including dismissal and/or referral to law enforcement officials.[21][38]

Reports of Discrimination

Any reports of discrimination that are reviewed by the Title IX Coordinator and do not meet the definition of Title IX sexual harassment but are based on race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability shall follow the Discrimination Complaint Procedures in Attachment 2 to this policy.

Reports of Title IX Sexual Harassment

Any reports deemed by the Title IX Coordinator to meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX shall follow the Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures and Grievance Process for Formal Complaints in Attachment 3 to this policy.

TOBACCO AND VAPING PRODUCTS - POLICY 222

Purpose

The Board recognizes that tobacco, nicotine, THC and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other electronic cigarettes, present a health and safety hazard that can have serious consequences for users, nonusers and the school environment. The purpose of this policy is to prohibit student possession, use, purchase and sale of tobacco and vaping products, including all other electronic cigarettes.

Definition

State law defines the term **tobacco product** to broadly encompass not only tobacco but also vaping products including all other electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes). **Tobacco products**, for purposes of this policy and in accordance with state law, shall be defined to include the following:[1][2]

1. Any product containing, made or derived from tobacco or nicotine that is intended for human consumption, whether smoked, heated, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed or ingested by any other means, including, but not limited to, a cigarette, cigar, little cigar, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff and snus.
2. Any electronic device that delivers nicotine or another substance to a person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to, electronic nicotine delivery systems, an electronic cigarette, a cigar, a pipe and a hookah.
3. Any product containing, made or derived from either:
    a. Tobacco, whether in its natural or synthetic form; or
    b. Nicotine, whether in its natural or synthetic form, which is regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration as a deemed tobacco product.
4. Any component, part or accessory of the product or electronic device listed in this definition, whether or not sold separately.

The term **tobacco product** does not include the following:[1][2]

1. A product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco cessation product or for other therapeutic purposes where the product is marketed and sold solely for such approved purpose, as long as the product is not inhaled. NOTE: *This exception shall be governed by Board policy relating to Medications.*[3]
2. A device, included under the definition of tobacco product above, if sold by a dispensary licensed in compliance with the Medical Marijuana Act. NOTE: *Guidance issued by the PA Department of Health directs schools to prohibit possession of any form of medical marijuana by students at any time on school property or during any school activities on school property. This exception shall be governed by Board policy relating to Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia.*[4]

Authority

The Board prohibits possession, use, purchase or sale of tobacco nicotine, THC, and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other e-cigarettes, regardless of whether such products contain tobacco, THC or nicotine, by or to students at any time in a school building; on school buses or other

vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district; on property owned, leased or controlled by the school district; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property.[1][2][5]

The Board prohibits student possession or use of products marketed and sold as tobacco cessation products or for other therapeutic purposes, except as authorized in the Board's Medication policy.[3] The Board prohibits student possession of any form of medical marijuana at any time in a school building; on school buses or other vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district; on property owned, leased or controlled by the school district; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property.[4] The Board authorizes the confiscation and disposal of products prohibited by this policy.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy. The Superintendent or designee shall notify students, parents/guardians and staff about the Board's tobacco, nicotine, THC and vaping products policy by publishing information in student handbooks, parental newsletters, posters, and by other efficient methods, such as posted notices, signs, Code of Student Conduct and on the district website.[2]

Reporting

Parental Report –

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving possession, use, purchase or sale of a tobacco, nicotine, THC or vaping product, including a Juul or other e-cigarette, immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.[6][7][8]

Office for Safe Schools Report -

The Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all incidents of possession, use or sale of tobacco, nicotine, THC and vaping products, including Juuls or other e-cigarettes, by students to the PA Department of Education on the required form.[8][9][10]

Law Enforcement Incident Report –

The Superintendent or designee may report incidents of possession, use or sale of tobacco, nicotine, THC and vaping products, including Juuls or other e-cigarettes, by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the school police, School Resource Officer (SRO) or to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[1][2][6][8][9][10][11]

Guidelines

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to prosecution initiated by the district and, if convicted, shall be required to pay a fine for the benefit of the district, plus court costs. In lieu of the imposition of a fine, the court may admit the student to an adjudication alternative.[2] Tampering with devices installed to detect use of tobacco, nicotine, THC or vaping products shall be deemed a violation of this policy and subject to disciplinary action.[12]

Students with Disabilities

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[8][13][14][15][16][17]

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES/PARAPHERNALIA - POLICY 227

The distribution, possession, use, and being under the influence of drugs, controlled substances, and alcoholic beverages are prohibited. This includes the school buildings, school grounds, school buses, and any and all activities under the control or direction of school personnel whether they occur on or off school property. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary measures being taken against offenders. The Administration of the District also reserves the right to prefer civil charges against any and all offenders, and to refer those offenders to law enforcement authorities for appropriate action. Definition of illegal controlled substances, staff notifications, and the District's disciplinary actions are listed in the “Drugs, Controlled Substances, and Alcoholic Beverages Administrative Guidelines” available in each school building and the central office.

WEAPONS - POLICY 218.1

Purpose

The Board recognizes the importance of a safe school environment relative to the educational process. Possession of weapons in the school setting is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by law.

Definitions

Weapon - the term shall include but is not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.[1][2]

Possession - a student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker or assigned storage area; or under the student's control while on school property, in student vehicle while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.

Authority

The Board prohibits students from possessing and bringing weapons and replicas of weapons into any district buildings, onto school property, to any school-sponsored activity, and onto any public vehicle providing transportation to or from school or a school-sponsored activity, or while the student is coming to or from school.[2][3]

The Board shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law and Board policy.[2][4][5] The Superintendent may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.[2]

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies. [2][4][6][7][8][9][10][11]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall react promptly to information and knowledge concerning possession of a weapon. Such action shall be in compliance with state law and regulations and with the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement officials and the district’s emergency preparedness plan.[11][12][13]

When the behavior of a student in possession of a weapon indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, district staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[14][15]

Guidelines

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report incidents involving weapons on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[2][11][13][16][17][18]

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving weapons as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.[11][16][19]

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all incidents involving possession of a weapon to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form.[11][13][18]

The building principal shall annually inform staff, students, and parents/guardians about the Board policy prohibiting weapons and about their personal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of the school community.

In accordance with federal law, possession or discharge of a firearm in, on, or within 1,000 feet of school grounds is prohibited. Violations shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.[20][21]

Transfer Students

When the district receives a student who transfers from a public or private school during an expulsion period for an offense involving a weapon, the district may assign that student to an alternative assignment or may provide alternative education, provided the assignment does not exceed the expulsion period.[2][22]

TERRORISTIC THREATS - POLICY 218.2

Purpose

The Board recognizes the danger that terroristic threats by students present to the safety and welfare of district students, staff and community. The Board acknowledges the need for an immediate and effective response to a situation involving a terroristic threat.

Definitions

Communicate - shall mean to convey in person or by written or electronic means, including but not limited to, telephone, electronic mail, Internet, social media channels, facsimile, telex and similar transmissions.[1]

Terroristic threat - shall mean a threat communicated either directly or indirectly to commit any crime of violence with the intent to terrorize another; to cause evacuation of a building, place of assembly or facility of public transportation; or to otherwise cause serious public inconvenience, or cause terror or serious public inconvenience with reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.[1]

Authority

The Board prohibits any district student from communicating terroristic threats directed at any student, employee, Board member, community member or property owned, leased or being used by the district.

The Board shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law and Board policy.[2]

The Superintendent may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee, in coordination with the threat assessment team, shall react promptly to information and knowledge concerning a possible or actual terroristic threat. Such action shall be in compliance with state law and regulations, Board policy and administrative regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement officials, and the district's emergency preparedness plan.[3][4][5][6][7]

Guidelines

In all cases of terroristic threats, where a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, district staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[3][4]

Staff members and students shall be made aware of their responsibility for informing the threat assessment team regarding any information or knowledge relevant to a possible or actual terroristic threat.[4][8]

The threat assessment team shall immediately inform the Superintendent or designee, School Safety and Security Coordinator and building principal of a terroristic threat, in accordance with Board policy and administrative regulations.[4]

The Superintendent or designee may report incidents involving terroristic threats on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[6][7][9][10][11]

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident involving a terroristic threat as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.[6][9][12]

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all incidents of terroristic threats to the PA Department of Education on the required form.[6][7][11]

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[6][13][14][15][16][17]

If a student is expelled for making terroristic threats, the Board may require, prior to readmission, that the student provide competent and credible evidence from a behavioral service provider that the student does not pose a risk of harm to others.[2][4][16]

SEARCHES - POLICY 226

Purpose

The Board acknowledges the need to respect the rights of students to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures while fulfilling the district's interest in protecting and preserving the health, safety and welfare of the school population, enforcing rules of conduct, and maintaining an appropriate atmosphere conducive to learning.

Authority

School officials have the authority to lawfully search students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions, without a warrant, when in school, on school grounds or when otherwise under school supervision, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the place or thing to be searched contains prohibited contraband, material that would pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the school population, or evidence that there has been a violation of the law, Board policy, or school rules. The scope and extent of searches must be reasonable in relation to the nature of the suspected evidence, contraband or dangerous material and to the grounds for suspecting that it may be found in the place or thing being searched.[1][2][3][4]

The district has a compelling interest in protecting and preserving the health, safety and welfare of the school population, which under certain circumstances may warrant general or random searches of students and their lockers, vehicles or other belongings without individualized suspicion, for the purpose of finding or preventing entry onto school property of controlled substances, weapons or other dangerous materials.[5][6][7]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board authorizes the administration to conduct searches of students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions in accordance with the standards set forth in this policy.

The Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the district solicitor, shall develop guidelines and procedures to implement this policy, and shall ensure that school staff who are involved in carrying out searches or determining when searches will be conducted receive appropriate periodic training about such procedures and currently applicable legal standards.[3]

Students, parents/guardians and staff shall be notified at least annually, or more often if deemed appropriate by administration, about the standards and procedures in effect pursuant to this policy.

Guidelines

Individualized Suspicion Searches

Students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions, may be searched without a warrant when in school, on school grounds or when otherwise under school supervision, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the place or thing to be searched contains prohibited contraband, material that would pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the school population, or evidence that there has been a violation of the law, Board policy, or school rules. The scope and extent of searches must be reasonable in relation to the nature of the suspected evidence, contraband or dangerous material and to the grounds for suspecting that it may be found in the place or thing being searched.[3]

In determining whether reasonable suspicion exists, the principal or designee always should be able to articulate what is being looked for, and why it is thought to be located in the particular place to be searched. The scope of a search should be limited to the place or places the item sought is believed to be.

Examination by school staff of text messages, call logs, files, images or other data contained in a student's mobile telephone or other electronic device, without the student's consent, normally constitutes a search

that must be justified by reasonable suspicion that material in violation of law, district policy or school rules, or evidence of such a violation, is contained in the particular files, directories or other data locations being examined in the device.

Random or General Searches Without Individualized Suspicion

Under certain circumstances, random or general searches of students and their belongings, including student lockers or vehicles parked on school property, may be conducted during the school day or upon entry into school buildings or school activities, in the absence of suspicion focused on a particular student or students, for the purpose of finding or preventing entry onto school property or activities of controlled substances, weapons or other dangerous materials. Such searches normally will be conducted in a minimally intrusive manner using screening methods such as dogs or other animals trained to detect controlled substances, explosives or other harmful materials by smell, as well as metal detectors and other technology. When such screening methods provide a reasonable suspicion that particular students, items or places possess or contain controlled substances, weapons or other dangerous material, screening may be followed by physical searches of those particular students, items or places on an individualized basis.

General or randomized searches must apply to all students or a randomized selection, such as every tenth student. Random or general searches for weapons or other dangerous devices may be conducted when there are circumstances, information or events tending to indicate increased likelihood that students may be armed or headed for physical confrontation or as a continuation or escalation of a prior incident, in or out of school.

Random or general searches for controlled substances may be conducted when there are circumstances, events or information tending to indicate significant drug use, possession or trafficking among students in school. Random or general searches not based on individualized suspicion must be approved in advance by the Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the district solicitor. Coordination with law enforcement officials will be accomplished as provided in the memorandum of understanding with the applicable law enforcement agency.[8]

Searches Upon Consent

Searches may be conducted at any time, with or without reasonable suspicion, if the student has given knowing and voluntary consent specific to the place to be searched.

The administration may establish rules and procedures governing certain privileges enjoyed by students, such as the privilege of parking a vehicle on school grounds, that make the student's consent to random searches or inspections a condition of access to the privilege.[6]

Searches by or at the Request of Law Enforcement Officials

The legal standards governing searches initiated by school officials are less strict than the standards applicable to law enforcement authorities in many situations. When searches of students, student belongings, vehicles or lockers are conducted by or at the request of law enforcement officials, with or without the involvement of school staff, the law enforcement officials are solely responsible for ensuring that a warrant has been issued or that the circumstances otherwise permit the search to be lawfully conducted in accordance with the standards applicable to law enforcement actions. School staff will not interfere with or obstruct searches initiated by law enforcement, but may assist when law enforcement officials have requested such assistance and have represented that a warrant has been issued or that they otherwise have proper authority for a lawful search.[8]

Locker Inspections and Searches

Lockers are assigned to or otherwise made available to students as a convenience for the safe storage of books, clothing, school materials and limited personal property, and to facilitate movement between classes and activities and to and from school. Such lockers are and shall remain the property of the school district, and to the extent students have any expectation of privacy of lockers at all, it is very limited.

No student may place or keep in a locker any substance or object that is prohibited by law, Board policy or school rules, or that constitutes a threat to the health, safety or welfare of the occupants of the school building or the building itself. Students are required to ensure that their lockers do not contain spoiled food items or beverages, or soiled clothing which may attract pests, create odors or cause unhealthy conditions. A student locker may be opened and inspected for cleanliness, with or without the consent of the student, whenever there are odors, pests or other indications that a locker contains spoiled food, soiled clothing in need of laundering or similarly unhealthy matter.

Students are exclusively responsible for locking their assigned lockers to ensure the security of their personal belongings and school property entrusted to them. Students are permitted to secure their assigned lockers only with locks provided by the district, or if the district does not provide locks, personal combination locks for which the combination has been provided to designated school staff.

Prior to an individual locker search or inspection, the student to whom the locker is assigned shall be notified and be given a reasonable opportunity to be present. However, when there is a reasonable suspicion that a locker contains materials which pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of the school population, student lockers may be searched without prior notice to the student.

The principal or a designated staff person shall be present whenever a student locker is inspected for cleanliness or is searched. The principal or designee shall maintain written records of all occasions when a locker is searched or inspected. Such records shall include the reason(s) for the search, persons present, objects found and their disposition.

Searches Involving Removal of Clothing or Examination Beneath Clothing

Searches of students involving the removal of undergarments or examination beneath undergarments are subject to stricter standards than are required to justify other searches of a student's person or belongings. Such searches are permitted only when the basis for suspicion establishes either:

1. That the reasons for believing that the items being searched for are concealed specifically inside undergarments are stronger reasons than grounds that would support only a more general reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of the items or has them somewhere on the student’s person; or,

2. That the quantity or nature of the items being sought present a higher level of danger to the school population than other kinds of contraband.

Searches involving the removal of or examination beneath any clothing of a student, other than jackets, coats or other outerwear, shall be conducted only by a staff person of the same gender as the student, with at least one (1) other staff person of the same gender present as a witness, and in a location assuring privacy from observation by persons not involved in the search or of the opposite sex.

Searches involving the removal of undergarments or examination beneath undergarments will be conducted only after consultation with the district solicitor.

Handling and Disposal of Items Found in the Course of Searches

Any items or material found during a search or inspection, the student’s possession of which is in violation of law, district policies or school rules, or otherwise is evidence of such a violation, may be confiscated, and may be used as evidence in student discipline proceedings or a criminal investigation, even if such items or material were not the original objective of the search or inspection.

The principal shall be responsible for ensuring that confiscated items or material are properly inventoried and secured until the conclusion of disciplinary action, if any, and are then properly disposed of if not appropriate to be returned to the student. Items or materials that are evidence of a criminal offense, or that are not lawful for ordinary citizens to possess will be promptly turned over to proper law enforcement authorities for custody or disposal.

DUE PROCESS

If disciplinary action is pending, you have a right to know what the accusation is, who made the accusation, and what punishment is being proposed. You may refute the charge. If it is a violation of rules that may involve an exclusion for more than three days, or a possible expulsion, you are entitled to a hearing as explained in State Code.

You should always ask the administrators to discuss your rights with you whenever you have any questions about them. You are always entitled to due process. Due process means knowing the accusation and being able to refute it before disciplinary action is taken.

ACTIVITY RESTRICTION PROCEDURES

The principal(s) and/or designee may place a student on activity restriction for a period of time up to a full school year as a result of failing academic performance, misbehavior on or off school premises, or a poor pattern of attendance. A student placed on activity restriction shall be excluded from participating in or attending activities beyond the regular school day and/or when school rules apply, including, but not limited to, athletic contests, art performances, school-sponsored dances such as Homecoming and/or Prom, and school sponsored non-curricular activities or field trips.

Any student who commits a Level III or IV violation, as described in the West Allegheny School District Student Code of Conduct, resulting in charges filed with local law enforcement may be placed on activity restriction for up to a school year. Students who commit Level II offenses or repeated Level I offenses may also be placed on activity restriction.

In addition, any student who has been **absent more than 10% of school days** may be placed on activity restriction. Periodic attendance reviews will occur throughout the school year at times determined by the administration. Also, students who have accumulated a level II, III, or IV code of conduct violation resulting in consequences of in-school or out-of-school suspension may be placed on activity restriction.

Restriction reductions will be considered upon written request to the high school administration from the student. Reductions may be considered on a case-by-case basis and not within the first 30 days. Reduction reviews may only occur in 30-day increments and will consist of a review of the student's discipline, attendance, and academic records, as well as any other factors as determined by the administration.

***NOTE: Three infractions resulting in in-school suspension and/or out-of-school suspension will place a student on Activity Restriction as outlined above.**

THREAT ASSESSMENT - POLICY 236.1

Purpose

The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and the school community and providing the resources and support to address identified student needs. The Board adopts this policy to address student behavior that may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community and others.[1]

Authority

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator, to establish a threat assessment team and develop procedures for assessing and intervening with students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community and others.[1]

Definitions

Behavioral service providers – includes, but is not limited to, a state, county or local behavioral health service provider, crisis intervention center or psychiatric hospital. The term includes a private service provider which contracts with a state, county or local government to act as a behavioral health agency.[2]

Bias – the attitudes or beliefs we have about a person or group that affects our understanding, actions and decisions in a conscious or subconscious manner.

Threat assessment – a fact-based process for the assessment of and intervention with students whose behaviors may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator, shall appoint individuals to a district threat assessment team.[1]

The Superintendent or designee shall designate a member of the team as team leader for the threat assessment team.[1]

The threat assessment team shall include the School Safety and Security Coordinator and individuals with expertise in school health; counseling, school psychology or social work; special education and school administration; school security personnel; and behavioral health professionals.[1][3]

The Superintendent or designee may assign additional staff members or designated community resources to the threat assessment team for assessment and response support.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations to support the threat assessment process.

Guidelines

Training

The School Safety and Security Coordinator shall ensure that threat assessment team members are provided individual and/or group training annually on:[1]

1. Responsibilities of threat assessment team members.
2. Process of identifying, reporting, assessing, responding to and intervening with threats.
3. Identifying and avoiding racial, cultural or disability bias.[4]
4. Confidentiality requirements under state and federal laws and regulations, and Board policies.[5][6][7][8][9]

Threat assessment team training shall be credited toward professional education requirements and school safety and security training requirements for staff, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[1][6] [10][11][12][13]

Information for Students, Parents/Guardians and Staff

The district shall annually notify students, staff and parents/guardians about the existence and purpose of the threat assessment team through posting information on the district website, publishing in handbooks and through other appropriate methods.[1]

The threat assessment team shall make available age-appropriate informational materials to students regarding recognition of threatening or at-risk behavior that may present a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others and how to report concerns, including through the Safe2Say Something program and other district reporting hotlines or methods. Informational materials shall be available for review by parents/guardians.[1][4][14][15][16][17]

The threat assessment team shall make available informational materials for school employees regarding recognition of threatening or at-risk behavior that may present a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others and how to report concerns, including through the Safe2Say Something program and other district reporting hotlines or methods. Information for school employees shall include a list of the staff members who have been appointed to the threat assessment team.[1][4][14][15][17]

The district shall annually provide mandatory training for school staff on identification or recognition of student behavior that may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, other individuals, school facilities or the community, in accordance with law, Board policy and the standards specified by the state's School Safety and Security Committee.[6][12]

Reporting and Identification

The threat assessment team shall document, assess and respond to reports received regarding students whose behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others.[1]

The threat assessment team shall assist in assessing and responding to reports that are received through the Safe2Say Something Program identifying students who may be a threat to themselves or others.[1][6]

The threat assessment team shall assist in assessing and responding to reports of students exhibiting self-harm or suicide risk factors or warning signs, as identified in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[1][14]

When the threat assessment team has made a preliminary determination that a student's reported behavior may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, the team shall immediately take the following steps:[1]

1. Notify the Superintendent or designee and School Safety and Security Coordinator of the reported threat.
2. Notify the principal of the school the student attends of the reported threat, who shall notify the student's parent/guardian of the reported threat.

When a reported student's behavior indicates that there may be an imminent threat to the safety of the student or others, or an emergency situation, a threat assessment team member shall take immediate action, which may include promptly reporting to the appropriate law enforcement agency and school administration.[1][3][6][18]

Where a threat assessment team member has reasonable cause to suspect that a reported situation indicates that a student may be a victim of child abuse, the member shall make a report of suspected child abuse in accordance with law and Board policy.[1][19][20]

Inquiry and Assessment

In investigating, assessing and responding to threat reports, the threat assessment team shall make a determination if the report should be addressed under one or more specific Board policies or administrative regulations, based on the subject matter of the report and the requirements of law, regulations and Board policy, including, but not limited to, reports involving:

1. Discrimination/Title IX Sexual Harassment.[4][15]
2. Bullying/Cyberbullying.[17]
3. Suicide Awareness, Prevention and Response.[14]
4. Hazing.[21]

Members of the threat assessment team shall engage in an assessment of the reported student behavior that may indicate a threat, in accordance with training and established procedures. This process may include, but is not limited to:

1. Interviewing the student, other students, staff, parents/guardians or others regarding the subject(s) of the reported threat.
2. Reviewing existing academic, health and disciplinary records and assignments, as appropriate, regarding the subject(s) of the report.
3. Conducting searches of lockers, storage spaces, and other possessions on school property as applicable, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[22]
4. Examining outside resources such as social media sites, in coordination with law enforcement, or contacting law enforcement, juvenile probation, or community agencies to request additional information about the subject(s) of the report, in accordance with law, regulations and Board policies.
5. Where appropriate, convening the appropriate team to assess and/or address the situation that is the subject of the report, such as the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, Section 504 Team, Behavior Support team, Student Assistance Program team, or others.[5][23][24][25][26][27]

The threat assessment team shall establish and implement procedures, in accordance with the district's Memorandum of Understanding, to address situations where the investigation of a reported threat shall be transferred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.[3][18]

The threat assessment team may request that the county agency or juvenile probation department consult and cooperate with the team in assessing the student who is the subject of a preliminary determination regarding a threat.[1]

When assessment of a student's behavior determines that it is not a threat to the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, the threat assessment team shall document the assessment and may refer the student to other appropriate resources such as a child study team, the Student Assistance Program team, an IEP or Section 504 Team or other district supports and services.

Response and Intervention

The threat assessment team shall make recommendations for disposition of the threat, including the information gathered during the assessment and recommendations for response and intervention.

Following notification to the student's parent/guardian, the threat assessment team may refer the student to an appropriate program or take action to address the reported situation in accordance with applicable Board policy, which may include, but is not limited to:[1]

1. A referral to the Student Assistance Program.[5]
2. A referral to the appropriate law enforcement agency.[3][6][18]
3. An appropriate evaluation to determine whether the student is a qualified student with a disability in need of a Section 504 Service Agreement or in need of special education services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[23][24][27]
4. A referral to the student's IEP Team to review and address the student's IEP and/or Positive Behavior Support Plan. This could include, but is not limited to, a manifestation determination or functional behavioral assessment in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[24][25][26][27]
5. A referral to the student's Section 504 Team to review and address the student's Section 504 Service Agreement and/or Positive Behavior Support Plan.[23]
6. With prior parental consent, a referral to a behavioral service provider, health care provider or county agency.[28]
7. Addressing behavior in accordance with applicable discipline policies and the Code of Student Conduct.[29][30][31][32]
8. Ongoing monitoring of the student by the threat assessment team, a child study team, Student Assistance Program team or other appropriate school personnel.
9. Taking steps to address the safety of any potential targets identified by the reported threat.[6][33]

Safe Schools Incident Reporting –

For Safe Schools reporting purposes, the term **incident** means an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the Safe Schools Act.[18][34][35]

When a reported threat also meets the definition of an incident under the Safe Schools Act, in accordance with reporting requirements, the Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents, if not previously reported by district staff, and may report discretionary incidents committed by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the Memorandum of Understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.[18][29][34][36][37]

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian, if not previously notified by district staff, of any student directly involved in an incident on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity, who is a victim or suspect, immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee will inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee will document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.[18][34][38]

Students With Disabilities –

When reporting an incident committed by a student with a disability or referring a student with a disability to a law enforcement agency, the district shall provide the information required by state and federal laws and regulations and shall ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the student are transmitted for consideration by these authorities. The district shall ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act when transmitting copies of the student's special education and disciplinary records.[7][9][39][40][41][42]

Monitoring and Management

The threat assessment team shall monitor and coordinate with the designated team or resource to provide support and follow-up assessment as necessary. Follow-up assessments, referrals, re-entry plans and other supports shall be documented.

The threat assessment team, in coordination with other appropriate teams and supports, shall determine monitoring or management is no longer needed for disposition of the threat(s), and may transfer appropriate information in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[5][7][9][14][23][24]

Records Access and Confidentiality

In order to carry out their duties and facilitate the timely assessment of and intervention with students whose behavior may indicate a threat, the threat assessment team shall have access to the following student information to the extent permitted under applicable law and regulations:[1]

1. Student health records.[43][44]
2. Prior school disciplinary records.[7][9][45]
3. Records related to adjudication under applicable law and regulations.[45][46][47][48][49][50]
4. Records of prior behavioral or mental health or psychological evaluations or screenings maintained by the district.
5. Other records or information that may be relevant to evaluating a threat or determining treatment or referral options for a student that are maintained by the district.

The threat assessment team shall use all information or records obtained in fulfilling the team's duty in accordance with law to evaluate a threat or to recommend disposition of a threat. Team members shall not redisclose any record or information obtained or otherwise use any record of a student beyond the purpose for which the disclosure was made to the team, in accordance with law.[1]

The threat assessment team shall maintain confidentiality and handle all student records in accordance with applicable law, regulations, Board policy, the Student Records Plan and the district's legal and investigative obligations.[5][7][8][9][14][17][39][41][45][51]

Threat assessment members whose other assignments and roles require confidentiality of specific student communications, in accordance with law, shall ensure that all confidential communications and information are addressed in accordance with applicable law, regulations, Board policy and administrative regulations.[8][52][53][54][55]

Annual Board Report

The threat assessment team shall provide the required information to the Superintendent, in consultation with the School Safety and Security Coordinator, to annually develop and present to the Board, at an executive session, a report outlining the district's approach to threat assessment, which shall include:[1]

1. Verification that the district's threat assessment team and process complies with applicable law and regulations.
2. The number of threat assessment teams assigned in the district, and their composition.
3. The total number of threats assessed that year.
4. A summary of interactions with outside law enforcement agencies, juvenile probation and behavioral service providers.
5. An assessment of the district's threat assessment team(s) operation.
6. Recommendations for improvement of the district's threat assessment processes.
7. Any additional information required by the Superintendent or designee.

The annual threat assessment report shall be presented as part of the annual report to the Board by the School Safety and Security Coordinator on district safety and security practices.[1][3]

The threat assessment team's information addressing verification of compliance with law and regulations, the number of threat assessment teams assigned in the district and their composition, the total number of threats assessed that year, and additional information required by the Superintendent or designee shall be included in the School Safety and Security Coordinator's annual report on district safety and security practices that is submitted to the state's School Safety and Security Committee.[1][3][56]

SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION, AND RESPONSE - POLICY 819

Purpose

The Board is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its students and the school community; promoting healthy development; and safeguarding against the threat or attempt of suicide. This policy supports the provision of a comprehensive district program of education, training and resources designed to promote school connectedness and behavioral health, and prevent suicide.[1][2][3][4][5][6]

Authority

The Board directs the district to provide education on youth suicide awareness and prevention; methods of prevention, intervention and response to suicide attempt or suicide; and reporting procedures.[1][2][3][4][5][6]

The district is committed to providing access to age and developmentally-appropriate youth suicide awareness and prevention supports and resources to all district students, without bias or discrimination.[2][3]

The district shall notify employees, students and parents/guardians of this policy and shall post the policy on the district's website.[1]

Definitions

Behavioral health - the emotion, behaviors and biology related to a person's mental well-being, their ability to function in everyday life and their concept of self.

Behavioral service providers – include, but are not limited to, state, county or local behavioral health service providers, crisis intervention center or psychiatric hospital. The term includes a private service provider which contracts with a state, county or local government to act as a behavioral health agency.[4][7]

Bias – the attitudes or beliefs we have about a person or group that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in a conscious or subconscious manner.[4]

Individualized Management Plan – a plan developed for a student who is referred to the threat assessment team that documents the concerns that brought a student to the team's attention, as well as the resources and supports a student might need based on the information gathered during the assessment. The Individualized Management Plan is developed primarily for documentation and communication purposes.[4]

Postvention – a multi-component crisis response to provide support, promote healing after a tragic loss and to minimize risk of contagion after a suicide.

Prevention - refers to efforts that seek to reduce the factors that increase the risk for suicidal thoughts and behaviors and increase the factors that help strengthen, support and protect the behavioral health and wellness of individuals.

Protective factors - refer to characteristics associated with a lower likelihood of negative outcomes or that reduce a risk factor's impact. Protective factors may be seen as positive countering events.

Resilience - the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress, or "bouncing back" from difficult experiences.

Risk factors - refer to characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community or cultural level that precede and are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes, including suicide.

Safety Plan – an agreement developed between the student, parent/guardian, appropriate team members and behavioral health professionals, following a suicide screening or assessment, that documents communications, conveys an understanding of the seriousness of the student's distress and provides a set of skills and resources the student can use in a crisis.

School connectedness - the belief by students that adults and peers in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals.

School personnel - include, but may not be limited to, administrators, teachers, school-based behavioral health professionals (e.g., school counselor, school psychologist, school social worker), paraprofessionals, support staff, coaches, bus drivers, custodians and cafeteria workers.

Self-harm – behavior that is self-directed and deliberately results in injury or the potential for injury to oneself. Self-harm behaviors can be either suicidal or nonsuicidal.

Suicide - death caused by self-directed injurious behavior with intent to die as a result of the behavior.

Suicide attempt - a potentially self-injurious behavior for which there is evidence that the person had at least some intent to kill themselves.

Suicide threat - a verbal or nonverbal communication that an individual intends to harm themselves with the intention to die but has not acted on the behavior.

Threat assessment – a fact-based process for the assessment of and intervention with students whose behaviors may indicate a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others.[4]

Warning signs - evidence-based indicators, often observable, that someone may be in danger of suicide, either immediately or in the very near future.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee, in collaboration with designated school personnel, shall develop administrative regulations regarding the district's protocols for response to suicide threats, suicide attempts and suicide.

Guidelines

SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION EDUCATION[1]

Suicide Awareness and Prevention Education for Students

Students shall receive age and developmentally-appropriate, student-centered lessons on the importance of safe and healthy choices, coping strategies focused on resiliency, how to recognize risk factors and warning signs, as well as help-seeking strategies for self or others, including how to engage school resources.

These lessons shall be integrated into the curriculum of health classes and other classes as appropriate. The lessons may be taught by health and physical education teachers, classroom teachers, student services staff or community service providers.

Programming related to suicide prevention shall be delivered in small group or classroom settings; not in a large group or auditorium setting.

District staff shall provide resources and access to counseling staff for students participating in programming, who may struggle with the topic of suicide prevention.

Lessons shall contain information on comprehensive health and wellness, including emotional, behavioral and social skills development by:

1. Informing students about broader behavioral health issues such as depression and substance use, as well as specific risk factors, protective factors and warning signs for suicide.

2. Encouraging students to seek help for themselves or their peers, including when concerns arise via social media or other online forum, and to avoid making promises of confidence when they are concerned about the safety of a peer or other individual.

3. Adhering to safe and effective messaging guidelines, avoiding graphic testimonials and including research-based suicide prevention resources.

4. Promoting a healthy school climate where students feel connected to and can identify trusted adults in the building.

5. Providing local, state and/or national resources for seeking help.

Suicide Awareness and Prevention Education for School Personnel

As part of the district's professional development plan, professional educators shall participate in a minimum of four (4) hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training every five (5) years.[1][8][9]

The district shall make required training and refresher training available on an ongoing basis, so that educators may fulfill training requirements throughout the required timeframe.

School safety and security training for employees may include suicide awareness.[9]

Additional professional development in suicide risk screening and/or assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to specialized staff and school behavioral health professionals such as school crisis response/intervention team members, threat assessment team members, designated administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers and school nurses.

Resources for Parents/Guardians

The district shall provide parents/guardians with resources including, but not limited to, health promotion and suicide risk, including characteristics and warning signs, and information about local, state and national behavioral health resources.

METHODS OF PREVENTION[1]

The district shall utilize a multifaceted approach to suicide prevention which integrates school and community-based supports.

The methods of prevention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to, education, training and awareness; early identification and support for students at risk; and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts.

Information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents/guardians, the building principal, the threat assessment team and/or crisis response/intervention team or other

appropriate authority when the health, welfare or safety of the student or any other person is clearly in jeopardy, in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[4][10][11][12][13][14][15]

Suicide Prevention Coordinators

District-Wide -

A district-level suicide prevention coordinator shall be designated by the Superintendent or designee. This may be an existing district employee. The district suicide prevention coordinator shall be responsible for planning and coordinating implementation of this policy.

Building-Level -

Each building principal shall designate a school suicide prevention coordinator to act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation. This may be an existing district employee, who may also be a member of the threat assessment team.[4]

Early Identification Procedures

Early identification of individuals with warning signs or suicide risk factors that appear to adversely impact the student is crucial to the district's suicide prevention efforts. To promote awareness, school personnel, students and parents/guardians should be educated about suicide risk factors and warning signs.

Referral Procedures

Any school personnel who observes a student exhibiting a warning sign for suicide, or who has another indication that a student may be contemplating suicide, shall immediately refer the student for suicide risk screening and/or assessment and intervention in accordance with Board policy and district procedures.[4][15][16]

In the absence of a warning sign for suicide, students demonstrating suicide risk factors that appear to be adversely impacting the student, or other indications of self-harm, should be referred to an appropriate team or staff member (e.g., principal, school counselor, Student Assistance Program team) for support and follow-up.

When a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, school personnel shall report the student to the threat assessment team, an appropriate member of the team or the suicide prevention coordinator. The threat assessment team, crisis response/intervention team and designated staff responsible for conducting or arranging suicide risk screening and assessment shall coordinate to provide assessment and intervention in accordance with Board policy and district procedures.[4][15][16][17]

School personnel shall arrange for or provide continuous adult supervision to ensure the student's safety.

Safe2Say Something

When the district receives a report through the Safe2Say Something program, members of the Safe2Say Something team shall coordinate with the appropriate emergency dispatch center(s), local law enforcement and/or district team, in accordance with district procedures.[9]

Documentation

The district shall document the referral, including specific reasons identified as indications that the student may be at risk.[4]

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION[1]

The methods of assessment and intervention utilized by the district include, but are not limited to, responding to threats of suicide or self-harm, suicide attempts in school, suicide attempts outside of school and suicide.

The district shall maintain a trained school crisis response/intervention team. Team members may include, but not be limited to, designated administrators, school counselors, school nurse, school psychologist, social worker, school security personnel, members of the Student Assistance Program team and others as designated by the district such as community behavioral health agency resources.

The district's threat assessment team shall serve as a crisis response/intervention team, and may coordinate with district behavioral health staff and community behavioral health agency resources as needed.[4]

Suicide intervention procedures shall involve collaboration and coordination with the student, the parent/guardian, suicide prevention coordinator, the threat assessment team and/or the crisis response/intervention team and additional support services as needed.

Student Assessment and Intervention

When a student has been referred for assessment, designated members of the threat assessment team and/or crisis response/intervention team shall coordinate with appropriate behavioral health staff to assess and respond to the student's behavior, which may include development or update of an Individualized Management Plan and/or Safety Plan, where appropriate, in accordance with Board policy and administrative regulations.[4]

A district-approved suicide risk screening or assessment tool may be used by trained behavioral health staff such as school counselors, psychologists or social workers.

Parents/Guardians of a student identified as being at risk of suicide shall be notified by the building principal or designee and informed of crisis and community resources. If the school suspects that the student's risk status is the result of abuse or neglect, school staff shall immediately notify Children and Youth Services, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[4][6]

The district shall identify and develop agreements with behavioral service providers to whom students may be referred for further suicide risk screening and/or assessment and intervention.

If the student has been identified as being at increased risk of suicide, the district shall develop a new, or update a previous, Safety Plan to support the student and the student's family. The Plan should be developed collaboratively with input from the student, the student's parents/guardians, appropriate team members and behavioral health professionals.

Students With Disabilities

For students with disabilities who are identified as being at risk for suicide or who attempt suicide, the team receiving the referral or other district staff shall notify the appropriate Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or Section 504 team to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[3][4][18][19][20][21]

If a student is identified as being at risk for suicide or attempts suicide and the student may require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education shall be notified and shall take action to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[3][18][19][20][21]

Documentation

The district shall document observations, recommendations and actions conducted throughout the course of intervention, suicide risk screening and/or assessment and follow-up, including verbal and written communications with students, parents/guardians, appropriate team members and behavioral service providers.[4]

METHODS OF RESPONSE TO SUICIDE ATTEMPT OR SUICIDE[1]

The district's crisis response/intervention team shall coordinate with first responders, district behavioral health staff and/or community behavioral health resources in response to a suicide attempt or suicide.

Response to Suicide Attempt

Methods of response to a suicide attempt utilized by the district include, but are not limited to:

1. Acting in accordance with professional development and crisis response training including, but not limited to:
    a. The rendering of first aid until professional medical services and/or transportation can be received.
    b. Supervision of the student and movement of all other students out of the immediate area.
2. Coordinating with the threat assessment team to document or follow up on the threat assessment process, in accordance with Board policy, where applicable.[4]
3. Notifying students, employees and parents/guardians.
4. Working with families.
5. Collaborating with community providers.

Re-entry Procedures

A student's excusal from school attendance after a behavioral health crisis and the student's return to school shall be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, and in accordance with Board policy.[3][18][19][20][22][23]

Prior to a student returning to school after a behavioral health crisis, a district-employed behavioral health professional, member(s) of the threat assessment team, the building principal or designee shall meet with the parents/guardians of the student and, if appropriate, meet with the student to discuss the student's return to school and to create an individual re-entry plan.[4]

When authorized by the student's parent/guardian, the designated district employee shall coordinate with the appropriate outside behavioral service providers, request releases of information and written documentation from the treating facility and encourage their involvement in the re-entry process.

A school behavioral health professional shall periodically check in with the student and monitor the student's re-entry plan, which may include strategies and supports to facilitate the student's progress and transition back into the school community, including referrals to other school-based teams or programs (e.g. Student Assistance Program).

Re-entry of a student with a disability requires coordination with the appropriate team to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[3][18][19][20][21]

Response to Suicide (Postvention)

Upon confirmation of a suicide, the district shall immediately implement established postvention procedures which shall include methods for informing the school community; identifying and monitoring at-risk youth; and providing resources and supports for students, staff and families.

DOCUMENTATION PROCEDURES[1]

Effective documentation assists in preserving the safety of the student and ensuring communication among school staff, parents/guardians and behavioral service providers.

When school personnel take notes on any conversations or situations involving or relating to an at-risk student, the notes should contain only factual or directly observed information, not opinions or hearsay.

As stated in this policy, school personnel shall be responsible for effective documentation of incidents involving suicide prevention, intervention and response, in accordance with applicable laws, regulations and Board policy.[4]

Reports and information shall be maintained confidentially and made available to appropriate district staff in accordance with applicable laws, regulations and Board policy.[4][11][12][13][14][24][25]

SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND CRISIS RESOURCES[1]

***Crisis Resources**:*

- National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: 988 or visit http://988lifeline.org
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: **1-800-273-TALK (8255)** or visit http://988lifeline.org
- Crisis Text Line: **TEXT 741741** or visit http://www.crisistextline.org/

***National**:*

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Risk and Protective Factors
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center – Risk and Protective Factors
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Preventing Suicide: A Toolkit for High Schools
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center - Safe and Effective Messaging for Suicide Prevention
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center - After a Suicide Toolkit
- Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide

***Pennsylvania**:*

- Suicide Prevention Task Forces - groups of dedicated individuals that are committed to reducing the number of suicides and offering support to those who have been touched by suicide within their communities/counties in Pennsylvania.
- Suicide Prevention Guide
- List of Crisis Intervention contact information by county
- List of County CASSP and Children's Behavioral Health Contact Persons
- Prevent Suicide PA's Act 71 Information
- STAR Center's Postvention Manual

National and State Organizations

***National**:*

- American Association of Suicidology (AAS)
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)

***Pennsylvania**:*

- Prevent Suicide PA
- Jana Marie Foundation
- Aevidum
- Services for Teens at Risk (STAR-Center)
- Pennsylvania Department of Education
- Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services (PNSAS)

SCHOOL WELLNESS - POLICY 246

Purpose

West Allegheny School District recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development and readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education and promotion, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement.

Authority

The Board adopts this policy based on the recommendations of the Wellness Committee and in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.[1][2]

To ensure the health and well-being of all students, the Board established that the district shall provide :

1. A comprehensive nutrition program consistent with federal and state requirements.
2. Access at reasonable cost to foods and beverages that meet established nutrition guidelines.
3. Physical education courses and opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day.
4. Curriculum and programs for grades K-12 that are designed to educate students about proper nutrition and lifelong physical activity, in accordance with State Board of Education curriculum regulations and academic standards.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of this policy to ensure each of the district's schools, programs and curriculum is compliant with this policy, related policies and established guidelines and/or administrative regulations.[1][2]

Each principal or designee shall annually report to the Superintendent or designee regarding compliance in his/her school.[2]

Staff members responsible for programs related to school wellness shall report to the Superintendent or designee regarding the status of such programs.

The Superintendent or designee and the established Wellness Committee shall conduct an assessment at least once every three (3) years on the contents and implementation of this policy as part of a continuous improvement process to strengthen the policy and ensure implementation. This triennial assessment shall be made available to the public in an accessible and easily understood manner and include:[1][2]

1. The extent to which each district school is in compliance with law and policies related to school wellness.
2. The extent to which this policy compares to model wellness policies.
3. A description of the progress made by the district in attaining the goals of this policy.

At least once every three (3) years, the district shall update or modify this policy as needed, based on the results of the most recent triennial assessment and/or as district and community needs and priorities change; wellness goals are met; new health science, information and technologies emerge; and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued.[2]

The district shall annually inform and update the public, including parents/guardians, students, and others in the community, about the contents, updates and implementation of this policy via the district website, and student handbooks. This annual notification shall include information on how to access the School Wellness policy; information about the most recent triennial assessment; information on how to participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the School Wellness policy; and a means of contacting Wellness Committee leadership.[1][2]

Guidelines

Recordkeeping

The district shall retain records documenting compliance with the requirements of the School Wellness policy, which shall include:[2][3]

1. The written School Wellness policy.
2. Documentation demonstrating that the district has informed the public, on an annual basis, about the contents of the School Wellness policy and any updates to the policy.
3. Documentation of efforts to review and update the School Wellness policy, including who is involved in the review and methods used by the district to inform the public of their ability to participate in the review.
4. Documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on the implementation of the School Wellness policy and notification of the assessment results to the public.

Wellness Committee

The district shall establish a Wellness Committee comprised of, but not necessarily limited to, at least one (1) of each of the following: School Board member, district administrator, district food service representative, student, parent/guardian, school health professional, physical education teacher and member of the public. It shall be the goal that committee membership will include representatives from each school building and reflect the diversity of the community.[1]

The Wellness Committee shall serve as an advisory committee regarding student health issues and shall be responsible for developing, implementing and periodically reviewing and updating a School Wellness policy that complies with law to recommend to the Board for adoption.

The Wellness Committee shall review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in establishing goals for nutrition education and promotion, physical activity and other school based activities that promote student wellness as part of the policy development and revision process.[2]

Nutrition Education

Nutrition education will be provided within the sequential, comprehensive health education program in accordance with curriculum regulations and the academic standards for Health, Safety and Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences.[4][5][6]

The goal of nutrition education is to teach, model, encourage and support healthy eating by students. Promoting student health and nutrition enhances readiness for learning and increases student achievement.

Nutrition education shall provide all students with the knowledge and skills needed to lead healthy lives.

Nutrition education lessons and activities shall be age-appropriate.

Nutrition curriculum shall teach behavior-focused skills, which may include menu planning, reading nutrition labels and media awareness.

Nutrition education may be integrated into other subjects to complement but not replace academic standards based on nutrition education.

Lifelong lifestyle balance shall be reinforced by linking nutrition education and physical activity.

The staff responsible for providing nutrition education shall be properly trained and prepared and shall participate in appropriate professional development. The district shall develop standards for such training and professional development.[7]

Nutrition education shall extend beyond the school environment by engaging and involving families and the community.

Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion and education positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs.

District staff shall cooperate with agencies and community organizations to provide opportunities for appropriate student projects related to nutrition.

Consistent nutrition messages shall be disseminated and displayed throughout the district, schools, classrooms, cafeterias, and media.

Physical Activity

District schools shall strive to provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day for all students.

District schools shall contribute to the effort to provide students opportunities to accumulate at least sixty (60) minutes of age-appropriate physical activity daily, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Opportunities offered at school will augment physical activity outside the school environment, such as outdoor play at home, sports, etc.

Age-appropriate physical activity opportunities, such as outdoor and indoor recess, before and after school programs, during lunch, clubs, intramurals and interscholastic athletics, shall be provided to meet the needs and interests of all students, in addition to planned physical education. A physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students shall be maintained.

District schools shall partner with parents/guardians and community members to institute programs that support lifelong physical activity.

Physical activity shall not be used or withheld as a form of punishment.

Physical Education

A sequential physical education program consistent with curriculum regulations and Health, Safety and Physical Education academic standards shall be developed and implemented. All district students must participate in physical education aligned to Pennsylvania Chapter 4 regulations.[5][6][8]

Quality physical education instruction that promotes lifelong physical activity and provides instruction in the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong participation shall be provided.

Physical education classes shall be the means through which all students learn, practice and are assessed on developmentally appropriate skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong, health-enhancing physical activity.

A comprehensive physical education course of study that focuses on providing students the skills, knowledge and confidence to participate in lifelong, health-enhancing physical activity shall be implemented.

A varied and comprehensive curriculum that promotes both team and individual activities and leads to students becoming and remaining physically active for a lifetime shall be provided in the physical education program.

Adequate amounts of planned instruction shall be provided in order for students to achieve the proficient level for the Health, Safety and Physical Education academic standards.

Students shall be moderately to vigorously active as much time as possible during a physical education class. Documented medical conditions and disabilities shall be accommodated during class.Safe and adequate equipment, facilities and resources shall be provided for physical education courses.

Other School Based Activities

Safe drinking water shall be available and accessible to students, without restriction and at no cost to the student, at all meal periods and throughout the school day.[9][10][11][12]

Nutrition professionals who meet hiring criteria established by the district and in compliance with federal regulations shall administer the school meals program. Professional development and continuing education shall be provided for district nutrition staff, as required by federal regulations.[7][13][14][15]

District schools shall provide adequate space, as defined by the district, for eating and serving school meals.

Students shall be provided a clean and safe meal environment. Meal periods shall be scheduled at appropriate hours, as required by federal regulations and as defined by the district.[9]

Students shall have access to hand washing or sanitizing before meals and snacks.

Nutrition content of school meals shall be available to students and parents/guardians.

Students and parents/guardians may be involved in menu selections through various means, such as taste testing and surveys.

To the extent possible, the district shall utilize available funding and outside programs to enhance student wellness.

The district shall provide appropriate training to all staff on the components of the School Wellness policy.

Goals of the School Wellness policy shall be considered in planning all school based activities.

The district shall maintain a healthy school environment to optimize conditions for learning and minimize potential health risks to students, in accordance with the district's school environmental health program and applicable laws and regulations.

Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods/Beverages at School

All foods and beverages available in district schools during the school day shall be offered to students with consideration for promoting student health and reducing obesity.

Foods and beverages provided through the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs shall comply with established federal nutrition standards.[9][10][13][14]

Competitive Foods -

Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages offered or sold to students on school campus during the school day, which are not part of the reimbursable school breakfast or lunch.

Competitive foods available for sale shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School). These standards shall apply in all locations and through all services where foods and beverages are sold to students, which may include, but are not limited to: a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, snack carts and fundraisers.[2][16][17]

For purposes of this policy, **school campus** means any area of property under the jurisdiction of the school that students may access during the school day.[2][16]

For purposes of this policy, **school day** means the period from midnight before school begins until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the official school day.[2][16]

The district may impose additional restrictions on competitive foods, provided that the restrictions are not inconsistent with federal requirements.[16]

Fundraiser Exemptions -

Fundraising activities held during the school day involving the sale of competitive foods shall be limited to foods that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, unless an exemption is approved in accordance with applicable Board policy and administrative regulations.[18]

The district may allow a limited number of exempt fundraisers as permitted by the Pennsylvania Department of Education each school year: up to five (5) exempt fundraisers in elementary and middle school buildings, and up to ten (10) exempt fundraisers in high school buildings. **Exempt fundraisers** are

fundraisers in which competitive foods are available for sale to students that do not meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.[16]

The district shall establish administrative regulations to implement fundraising activities in district schools, including procedures for requesting a fundraiser exemption.

Non-Sold Competitive Foods -

Non-sold competitive foods available to students, which may include but are not limited to foods and beverages offered as rewards and incentives, at classroom parties and celebrations, or as shared classroom snacks, shall meet or exceed the standards established by the district.

If the offered competitive foods do not meet or exceed the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards, the following standards shall apply:

1. Classroom Parties and Celebrations:
    a. Parents/Guardians shall be informed that foods/beverages should only be brought in when requested for scheduled parties.
    b. Classroom parties shall offer a minimal amount of foods (maximum 2-3 items) containing added sugar as the primary ingredient (e.g., cupcakes, cookies) and provide the following:
        i. Fresh fruits/vegetables; and
        ii. Water, 100% juice, 100%juice diluted with water, low-fat milk or nonfat milk.
    c. When possible, foods/beverages for parties and celebrations shall be provided by the food service department to help prevent food safety and allergy concerns.
2. Shared Classroom Snacks:
    a. Shared classroom snacks are not permitted in district schools.

The district shall provide a list of suggested nonfood ideas and healthy food and beverage alternatives to parents/guardians and staff, which may be posted via the district website, student handbooks, newsletters, posted notices and/or other efficient communication methods.

Marketing/Contracting -

Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School) and comply with established Board policy and administrative regulations.[2][16]

Exclusive competitive food and/or beverage contracts shall be approved by the Board, in accordance with provisions of law. Existing contracts shall be reviewed and modified to the extent feasible to ensure compliance with established federal nutrition standards, including applicable marketing restrictions.[19]

Management of Food Allergies in District Schools

The district shall establish administrative regulations to address food allergy management in district schools in order to:

1. Reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions.
2. Ensure a rapid and effective response in case of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction.
3. Protect the rights of students by providing them, through necessary accommodations when required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities.

Safe Routes to School

The district shall cooperate with local municipalities, public safety agency, police departments and community organizations to develop and maintain safe routes to school.

District administrators shall seek and utilize available federal and state funding for safe routes to school, when appropriate.

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, FOSTER CARE AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTABILITY - POLICY 251

Purpose

The Board recognizes the challenges encountered by students experiencing homelessness, foster care and other educational instability. The Board is committed to facilitating the immediate enrollment; eliminating barriers to the attendance, education and graduation; and providing additional supports in compliance with federal and state laws, regulations and Board policy, for such students.[1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8]

Authority

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee to collaborate with school staff, other school districts, local agencies and other entities in supporting the needs of students experiencing educational instability.

The Board shall ensure that students experiencing educational instability have equal access to the same educational programs, activities and services provided to other district students.[1][2][3][4][5][6][7]

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to waive specific requirements in Board policies, procedures and administrative regulations to the extent that they create barriers for the enrollment and attendance of students experiencing educational instability. Such waivers include, but are not limited to, requirements regarding:[1][2][3][4][5][6][7]

1. Dress code.[9]
2. Transportation.[10]
3. School-sponsored or extracurricular activities for which students meet placement and qualification requirements, including, but not limited to, clubs, athletics, performing arts, class trips, social events, career and technical education, internships and specialized classes.[11][12][13][14][15][16][17]
4. Fees related to school-sponsored or extracurricular activity participation fees, and other fees including, but not limited to, school identification (badges, cards, etc.), uniforms, materials, lost or damaged items, athletic physical exams, parking or driving, food services, library, locker or padlock rental or replacement, summer school or credit recovery, technology and graduation regalia.[9][13][14][15][18][19][20][21][22]
5. Graduation.[19]
6. Registration deadlines.

It is the policy of the Board that no student shall be discriminated against, segregated or stigmatized based on their status as a student experiencing educational instability.

Definitions

Student Experiencing Educational Instability means a student who has experienced one (1) or more changes in school enrollment during a single school year due to any of the following:[4]

1. Homelessness.[1][3][7]

2. An adjudication of:[23][24]

    a. Dependency relating to child protective services and juvenile matters;

    b. Delinquency, if disclosed by the student's parent/guardian; or

    c. As part of court-ordered services under a voluntary placement or custody agreement.

A student experiencing foster care may also qualify as a student experiencing educational instability as defined above, if such circumstances apply.[25]

Enroll or **Enrollment** means attending classes and participating fully in school activities.[26]

Additional costs means the difference between what the district spends to transport a resident student to the student's assigned school and the cost to transport a child in foster care to the child's school of origin.

Foster care means twenty-four (24) hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions and pre-adoptive homes. A child is in foster care in accordance with this definition regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed and payments are made by the state, tribal or local agency for the care of the child, whether adoption subsidy payments are being made prior to the finalization of an adoption or whether there is federal matching of any payments that are made.[25]

Homeless children and youths means individuals who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, and includes:[26]

1. Children and youths who are:
    a. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason;
    b. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
    c. Living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters; or
    d. Abandoned in hospitals;
2. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings;
4. Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above; and
5. School-aged parents living in houses for school-aged parents if they have no other available living accommodations.

School of origin is the school in which the student experiencing educational instability was last enrolled.

- The school of origin for a *homeless child or youth* - the last school in which the homeless child or youth was enrolled when permanently housed or the school in which the homeless child or youth was last enrolled, including preschool.[27]
- The school of origin for a *child in foster care* - the school in which a child is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care. If a child's foster care placement changes, the school of origin is the school the child is attending immediately prior to each change in placement.[8]
- When the homeless child or youth, or child in foster care, completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin shall become the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

Unaccompanied youth means a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes youth who have run away from home; been abandoned or forced out of home by a parent, guardian or other caretaker; or separated from a parent or guardian for any other reason.[26]

Delegation of Responsibility

The Board designates the Superintendent or designee to serve as the district's point of contact for students experiencing educational instability.[4][5][27]

The name and contact information of the district's point of contact shall be included in the student's education records and provided to the student's education decision maker.[4]

The district's point of contact shall ensure outreach and coordination with the following, as appropriate to each individual student's needs:[4][5][27]

1. Local children and youth agency to:
    a. Establish formal mechanisms to ensure that the district is promptly notified when a child enters foster care or changes foster care placements;
    b. Develop a protocol on how to make best interest determinations; and
    c. Develop and coordinate transportation procedures.
2. Other local service agencies and entities that provide services to students experiencing educational instability.
3. Other school districts on issues of prompt identification, transfer of records, transportation and other inter-district activities.
4. District staff responsible for the provision of services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.[11][28]
5. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.

The district's point of contact, in consultation with the school counselor, school social worker, home and school visitor or school psychologist and the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team or Section 504 Team, shall:[4]

1. Facilitate the student's expedited consultation with the school counselor or other mental health professionals, as appropriate.
2. Facilitate the prompt placement of the student in appropriate courses.
3. Connect the student with educational services that meet the student's specific needs.
4. Immediately request the prior school entity, county agency and the student's education decision maker to provide the complete student information and records, including an IEP or Section 504 service agreement, if applicable. Within ten (10) business days, the prior school entity located within Pennsylvania, including schools with residential placements, shall provide the requested information and records to ensure proper transfer of course credits, grades and an IEP or Section 504 service agreement, if applicable.
5. Develop and execute a graduation plan in collaboration with the student in grades nine (9) through twelve (12). The graduation plan shall be customized to meet the specific needs of the student and shall detail the courses necessary for on-time graduation and transition to postsecondary education or the workforce. The graduation plan shall be included in the student's education records.

Additional Responsibilities to Support Homeless Students -

The district's point of contact shall ensure that public notice of the educational rights of homeless children and youths is disseminated in locations frequented by parents/guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths, including schools, shelters, public libraries and soup kitchens. Such notice shall be provided in a manner and form understandable to the parents/guardians of homeless children and youths, and unaccompanied youths.[27]

The district's point of contact shall provide reliable, valid and comprehensive data to the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations.[27]

Training

The district's point of contact shall provide professional development and training to school staff on the education needs of students experiencing educational instability.

Additional Training to Support Homeless Students -

The district's point of contact shall participate in professional development programs and other technical assistance activities offered by the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.[27]

The district's point of contact shall arrange professional development programs for school staff, including office staff.[27]

School personnel providing services to homeless children and youths, including school enrollment staff, shall receive professional development and support to:[27]

1. Improve identification of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths;
2. Understand the rights of such children, including requirements for immediate enrollment and transportation; and
3. Heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children.

Guidelines

Students enrolled in this district experiencing educational instability shall be provided support and services, as appropriate to each individual student's needs, in accordance with Board policy.[4]

Minimal documentation shall be required for a student experiencing educational instability to qualify for supports and services. Information used to determine that a student is experiencing educational instability may be confirmed verbally, in writing or by another manner by shelter providers, outreach workers, case managers, juvenile probation officers and others.

Parents/Guardians and students have the authority to determine what information shall be shared with the district. However the information provided must be sufficient in order for the District to determine that the student is experiencing educational instability.

Information related to the student's educational instability status shall be confidential and disclosed by the point of contact or other administrators only to other school staff who have a legitimate need to know unless authorized by the student or parent/guardian.[29][30]

Enrollment

Except when an unaccompanied youth or the parents/guardians of a homeless youth request otherwise, it shall be presumed that a student experiencing educational instability shall continue to be enrolled in their school of origin unless it is determined that it is not in the student's best interest to remain in the school of origin.[5][27]

In accordance with the homeless child's or youth's best interest, the district shall continue to enroll a homeless student in the student's school of origin within the district while the student remains homeless and through the end of the academic year in which the student obtains permanent housing.[27]

An unaccompanied youth or the parents/guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in any grade-appropriate school within the district regardless of the district attendance area where the student is actually living or a school of origin in another district.[27]

The district's point of contact shall assist an unaccompanied youth in placement or enrollment decisions, giving priority to the views of the student in determining where the student will be enrolled.[27]

Best Interest Determination -

The best interest determination shall be made in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations, court orders and established local procedures.

In making a best interest determination, the district shall:[5][27]

1. In the case of a homeless child or unaccompanied youth, give priority to the request of the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth.
2. Consider student-centered factors related to impact of mobility on achievement, education, appropriateness of the current educational setting, health and safety, and proximity to living arrangements including foster care placement.

The cost of transportation shall not be used as a factor in the best interest determination.

Documentation related to the best interest determination shall be maintained in the student's education record.[29][30]

Timeliness of Enrollment -

When a school receives a student experiencing educational instability, the school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if:[4][5][7][29][30][31][32][33][34][35]

1. The student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment.[27][31]
2. The application or enrollment deadline has passed.[27][31][32]
3. The district's point of contact shall immediately contact the school last attended by the student to obtain relevant academic or other records.[27]

The district may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information.

Grade Level Assignment -

If the district is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the district may administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's assignment within the school.[36]

Dispute Resolution

If a dispute involving a student experiencing educational instability arises, the concern shall be addressed and/or resolved at the lowest appropriate level in accordance with Board policy, unless otherwise stated below.[37]

Dispute Resolution for Homeless Students -

If the district determines that it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the unaccompanied youth or parent/guardian, the district shall provide the unaccompanied youth or parent/guardian with a written explanation of the reasons for its determination. The explanation shall be in a manner and form understandable to the unaccompanied youth or parent/guardian and shall include information regarding the right to appeal.[27]

If a dispute arises over eligibility, enrollment or school selection:[27]

1. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth shall be referred to the district's point of contact, who shall assist in the dispute resolution process.
2. The student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.
3. The district's point of contact shall issue a written decision of the dispute within twenty (20) business days of being notified of the dispute.

A parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth may file a complaint with the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.

Dispute Resolution for Students in Foster Care -

If a dispute arises over the appropriate school placement for a child in foster care, to the extent feasible and appropriate, the child shall remain in their school of origin, pending resolution of the dispute.[2]

Students Discharged From Foster Care

A student who has been discharged from foster care may be permitted to finish the semester in this district, if appropriate, without payment of tuition.[38]

Education Records

Information about a student's educational instability shall be treated as a student education record subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and shall not be deemed to be directory information.[29][30][39]

The district may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without written consent of the parent/guardian or the eligible student if the disclosure is:[29][30][39]

1. To comply with a court order authorizing the disclosure of education records in a case where a parent is a party to a proceeding involving child abuse or neglect or a dependency matter.
2. To an agency caseworker or other representative of a state or local child welfare agency, or tribal organization, who has the right to access a student's case plan, as defined and determined by the state or tribal organization, when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with state or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student, provided that the education records, or the personally identifiable information contained in such records, of the student will not be disclosed by such agency or organization, except to an individual or entity engaged in addressing the student's education needs and authorized by such agency or organization to receive such disclosure and such disclosure is consistent with the state or tribal laws applicable to protecting the confidentiality of a student's education records.

Comparable Services

Students experiencing educational instability shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other district students including, but not limited to:[3][27][40]

1. Transportation services.[10]
2. School nutrition programs.[21]
3. Career and technical education.[12]
4. Educational programs for which the student meets the eligibility criteria, such as:
    a. Services provided under Title I or similar state or local programs.[41]
    b. Programs for English Learners.[42]
    c. Programs for students with disabilities.[11]
    d. Programs for gifted and talented students.[16]
5. Preschool programs.

Transportation for Homeless Students -

The district shall provide transportation for homeless students to their school of origin or the school they choose to attend within the district.[3][10][27]

If the school of origin is outside district boundaries or homeless students live in another district but will attend their school of origin in this district, the school districts shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation.[27]

Transportation for Students in Foster Care –

The district shall ensure that children in foster care needing transportation to their school of origin promptly receive transportation in a cost-effective manner.[6][10]

To ensure that transportation for children in foster care to their school of origin is provided, arranged, and funded, the district shall collaborate with the local children and youth agency to develop a local transportation plan.[6]

The transportation plan shall address the following:[6]

1. The procedure the district and local children and youth agency will follow to provide transportation for children in foster care in a cost-effective manner and in accordance with applicable law.

2. How transportation costs will be covered if additional costs are incurred. Options include:
    a. The local children and youth agency agrees to reimburse the district;
    b. The district agrees to pay for the cost;[6]
    c. The district and the local children and youth agency agree to share the costs; or
    d. The district of origin, the district of foster residence, and the placing children and youth agency agree to share the costs.

3. Dispute resolution procedures to ensure that any disagreements regarding the cost of transportation are resolved promptly and fairly, and do not impact a student's ability to remain in the school of origin during the dispute resolution process.

The district shall submit the local transportation plan, including any updates or revisions, to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Transportation shall be provided to children in foster care in accordance with the local transportation plan regardless of whether transportation is provided to district students.

Course Credit and Graduation

The district shall ensure that each student experiencing educational instability in grades nine (9) through twelve (12) is provided with a graduation plan to facilitate the student's timely graduation. The graduation plan shall specify the courses and other requirements necessary for the student to graduate. The district's efforts to ensure that the student experiencing educational instability graduates in a timely manner may include:[4][5][6]

1. Waiving a specific course required for graduation if similar coursework has been satisfactorily completed in another school entity or the student has demonstrated competency in that content area. Evidence as to whether coursework has been satisfactorily completed and the amount of full or partial credit assigned, may be determined through any of the following:[4][19]

    a. Competency demonstration, which could include, but is not limited to:

        i. Submission of an essay, presentation or project.

        ii. Recognition that the student has already successfully completed a higher-level course, an experiential learning opportunity or internship that demonstrates competence in the content area.

    b. Performance on an examination.

    c. Successful completion of a career and technical education course.

    d. Other evidence or method determined appropriate by the district.

2. If a specific course requirement cannot be waived, the district shall provide an alternative or modified course of study that is currently offered to students and that will assist the student with acquiring the required work or competency requirements by the anticipated graduation date.

3. If, after considering full and partial course credits, waiving courses or providing alternative courses of study, the district determines that the student meets the established graduation

requirements, the student shall be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony and graduate with their peers.
If the student is determined not eligible for graduation, the district may request a high school diploma from the prior school entity. The prior school entity may issue a diploma if the student meets the prior school entity's graduation requirements.

Keystone Diploma –

In any school year for which demonstration of proficiency on a Keystone exam is required for graduation, a student who has successfully satisfied the graduation requirements may obtain a secondary school diploma known as the Keystone Diploma from the PA Department of Education, if both of the following provisions apply:[4][43]

1. All other graduation options have been exhausted.

2. The student is unable to obtain a diploma from the student's prior or receiving school entity.

The district's point of contact shall assist the student in determining the student's eligibility for a Keystone Diploma and, if eligible, obtaining the Keystone Diploma from the PA Department of Education.[4][43]

Students with Disabilities –

Students experiencing educational instability who have an IEP shall maintain the right to special education and the right to graduate either through attainment of credits or through the completion of the goals established in their IEP, in accordance with applicable law, regulations, Board policy, administrative regulations and state guidance.[11][19]

STUDENT EXPRESSION/DISSEMINATION OF MATERIALS - POLICY 220

Purpose

The right of public school students to freedom of speech is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth. The Board respects the right of students to express themselves in word or symbol and to disseminate nonschool materials to others as a part of that expression. The Board also recognizes that the exercise of that right is not unlimited and must be balanced with the district's responsibility to maintain a safe and orderly school environment and to protect the rights of all members of the school community.[1]

This policy addresses student expression in general as well as dissemination of expressive materials that are not part of district-sponsored activities (nonschool materials).

This policy does not apply to materials sought to be disseminated as part of the curricular or extracurricular programs of the district, which shall be regulated separately as part of the school district's educational program.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, **dissemination** shall mean students distributing or publicly displaying nonschool materials to others:

1. On school property or during school-sponsored activities by placing such materials upon desks, tables, on or in lockers, walls, doors, bulletin boards, or easels; by handing out such materials to other persons; or by any other manner of delivery to others; or

2. At any time or location when creating or sending information using email, websites, online platforms, social media channels or other technological means that are owned, provided or sponsored by the school district.

Expression means verbal, written, technological or symbolic representation or communication or by any other manner.

Nonschool materials means any printed, technological or written materials, regardless of form, source or authorship, that are not prepared as part of the curricular or approved extracurricular programs of the district. This includes, but is not limited to, fliers, invitations, announcements, pamphlets, posters, online discussion areas and digital bulletin boards, personal websites and the like.

Authority

Limitations on Student Expression

Students have the right to express themselves unless such expression is likely to or does materially and substantially disrupt or interfere with the educational process, including school activities, school work, discipline, safety and order on school property or at school functions; threatens serious harm to the school or community; encourages unlawful activity; or interferes with another's rights. Student expression is prohibited to the extent that it:[1]

1. Violates federal, state or local laws, Board policy or district rules or procedures;

2. Is defamatory, obscene, lewd, vulgar or profane;[2]

3. Advocates the use or advertises the availability of any substance or material that may reasonably be believed to constitute a direct and serious danger to the health or welfare of students, such as tobacco/vaping products, alcohol or illegal drugs;

4. Incites violence, advocates use of force or threatens serious harm to the school or community;

5. Materially and substantially disrupts or interferes with the educational process, such as school activities, school work, discipline, safety and order on school property or at school functions;

6. Interferes with, or advocates interference with, the rights of any individual or the safe and orderly operation of the schools and their programs; or

7. Violates written district procedures on time, place and manner for dissemination of otherwise protected expression.

Student expression that occurs on school property or at school-sponsored events, or occurs at any time or place when created or communicated using district-provided equipment, email, websites or other technological resources, is subject to this policy. The limitations, prohibitions and requirements of this policy shall apply to expression that occurs outside the foregoing circumstances only when and to the extent that the out-of-school expression:[1][2][3][4]

1. Incites violence, advocates use of force or otherwise threatens serious harm directed at students, staff or the school environment;

2. Materially and substantially disrupts or interferes with the educational process, such as school activities, school work, discipline, safety and order on school property or at school functions; or

3. Interferes with, or advocates interference with, the rights of any individual or the safe and orderly operation of the schools and their programs.

Dissemination of Nonschool Materials

The district requires that dissemination of nonschool materials shall occur only at the places and during the times set forth in written procedures. Such procedures shall be written to permit the safe and orderly operation of schools, while recognizing the rights of students to engage in protected expression.[1][3]

The district requires that students who wish to disseminate nonschool materials on school property shall obtain approval by submitting them at least five (5) school days in advance to the building principal or designee, who shall forward a copy to the Superintendent.[1]

If the nonschool materials include matters prohibited by this policy, the building principal or designee shall promptly notify the students of the nature of the violation and that they may not disseminate the materials until the violation is corrected and the materials are resubmitted for approval.

If notice of disapproval is not given during the period between submission and the time for the planned dissemination, students may consider the request approved and proceed with dissemination as requested, subject to all other established procedures and requirements relating to time, place and manner of dissemination. Students may nonetheless be directed to cease or suspend dissemination if it is later determined that the materials or the dissemination of them are in violation of this policy or implementing rules and procedures.

Students who disseminate printed nonschool materials shall be responsible for clearing any litter that results from their activity and shall schedule the event so that they do not miss instructional time themselves.

Printed nonschool materials displayed in a fixed location of a school building shall bear the date when placed in each location. The district may remove the materials within ten (10) days of the posting or other reasonable time as stated in applicable procedures.

Review of Student Expression

Review of nonschool materials proposed for dissemination shall be reviewed within five (5) days of submission so as to avoid unreasonable delay in dissemination.

School officials shall not censor or restrict nonschool materials or other student expression for the sole reason that it is critical of the school or its administration, or because the views espoused are unpopular or may make people uncomfortable.

Student-initiated religious expression is permissible, and apart from regarding time, place and manner, shall not be restricted unless the expression violates some other aspect of this policy, e.g., because it is independently determined to be in violation of this policy for reasons other than the religious nature of the content.

Appeal of the reviewer's decision may be made to the Superintendent and then to the Board, in accordance with Board policy and district procedures.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent shall assist the building principal in determining the designation of the places and times nonschool materials may be disseminated in each school building. Such designations may take into account maintenance of the flow of student traffic throughout the school and shall limit dissemination of nonschool materials to noninstructional times.

When student dissemination of nonschool materials or other student expression violates this policy, the building principal may determine what if any disciplinary or other consequences should be imposed. Disciplinary actions shall be in accordance with applicable Board policy and the Code of Student Conduct.[5][6]

The Superintendent shall ensure that building principals and other staff involved in reviewing nonschool materials proposed for dissemination and evaluating whether violations of this policy have occurred receive training regarding applicable standards and procedures. Special emphasis shall be given to understanding the limitations on school officials' authority to regulate off-campus student expression, as well as the need to articulate in detail the nature and extent of disruption to or interference with the school environment thought to be caused by on or off-campus student expression and the specific manner by which the student expression involved is thought to have caused it.

This Board policy and any procedures written to implement this policy shall be referenced in student handbooks so that students can access them for further information.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT - POLICY 250

Authority

In accordance with law, the Board shall permit disclosure of required student information about secondary students to representatives of postsecondary institutions and to representatives of the Armed Forces of the United States.[1][2][3]

Equitable access to secondary students shall be granted to postsecondary education representatives, military recruiters and prospective employers.

Guidelines

Postsecondary institutions and military recruiters shall have access to secondary students' names, addresses and telephone numbers, unless the student or parent/guardian requests that such information not be released without prior written parental consent.[2][3]

The district shall notify parents/guardians of the right of the secondary student or parent/guardian to request that student information not be released to representatives of postsecondary institutions and/or military recruiters without prior written parental consent.[2][3][4]

The district shall provide a list of graduating seniors, which shall be available to military recruiters by the first day of the academic year of graduation.[4]

Military Personnel

Military recruiters and all other members of the active and retired Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves, shall be permitted to wear their official military uniforms while on district property.[5]

Delegation of Responsibility

The principal shall determine under what conditions and when access to secondary students will be provided to representatives of postsecondary institutions, military recruiters and prospective employers.

The principal reserves the right to deny access to students when such access will materially and substantially interfere with the proper and orderly operation of the school; is likely to cause violence or disorder; or will constitute a violation of the rights of other students.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify parents/guardians prior to the end of the student's junior year about the provisions of this policy. The notice shall include:[4]

1. Notice that the school routinely discloses names, addresses and telephone numbers of junior and senior students to postsecondary institutions and military recruiters, subject to a parent's/guardian's or secondary student's request not to disclose such information without prior written parental consent.

2. Explanation of the parent's/guardian's or secondary student's right to request that information not be disclosed without prior written parental consent.

3. Procedures for how the parent/guardian or secondary student can opt out of the public, nonconsensual disclosure of such information, and the method and timeline for doing so.

ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES ELIGIBILITY POLICIES AND GUIDELINES
HIGH SCHOOL AND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish an accountable, transparent process that prioritizes attendance and academic success for students at West Allegheny Middle and High Schools. It provides proactive communication and study mechanisms designed to support the best interests of the student.

General Eligibility Guidelines

- **Roster Maintenance:** A report will be run Thursdays from PowerSchool for all in-season athletes.
- **Alternative Enrollment:** Students who are homeschooled, attend cyber-school, attend Parkway West CTC, or are placed in a private school must provide weekly documentation to verify their academic eligibility.
- **Minimum Course Requirement:** Students must maintain a passing grade in at least four full-credit subjects to remain eligible for any activity. Failure to do so will result in immediate restriction from both practices and competitions/performances until the student is passing at least four full-credit classes.
- **Course-Specific Tracking:** The progressive five-week intervention sequence outlined below applies independently to each individual course in which a failing ('F') grade is reported.

Progressive Academic Intervention

When a student is placed on the weekly eligibility list due to a failing ('F') grade, the following consecutive disciplinary phases will occur. For every week a student remains on the list, the appropriate head coach or director must notify parents expeditiously.

Week 1: Academic Warning

- **Status:** The student receives an official warning.
- **Consequence:** No penalty. The student may continue to practice, rehearse, and compete/perform.

Week 2: Continued Warning

- **Status:** The student remains on the eligibility list for a second consecutive week in the same subject.
- **Consequence:** No penalty. The warning status is extended; practice and event participation remain permitted.

Week 3: Competition & Performance Suspension

- **Status:** The student receives a third consecutive 'F' grade in the same subject.
- **Consequence:** The student is suspended from all competitions, games, and public performances. The student **is permitted** to continue attending practices and rehearsals.

Week 4: Full Activity Suspension

- **Status:** The student receives a fourth consecutive 'F' grade in the same subject.
- **Consequence:** The student is suspended from **all** participation, including practices, rehearsals, competitions, and performances.

Week 5: Seasonal Disqualification

- **Status:** The student receives a fifth consecutive 'F' grade in the same subject.
- **Consequence:** The student is disqualified from participating for the remainder of that team or organization's current season.
- **Notification:** In addition to immediate coach/director contact, parents will receive a formal written confirmation from the building principal.

End-of-Year Academic Standing

- **Final Grade Infractions:** Any student who receives an 'F' as a final second-semester grade for any course will face a **15-day participation suspension** at the start of the following academic school year.
- **Suspension Terms:** During this 15-day period, the student is permitted to attend practices and rehearsals but is strictly prohibited from competing or performing.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PARTICIPANTS IN ATHLETICS AND ACTIVITIES

Participant Responsibilities for Athletics and Activities

As a student representing the West Allegheny School District, your participation in extracurricular activities and athletics is a privilege that comes with specific academic, behavioral, and logistical responsibilities.

Attendance Requirements

To maintain daily eligibility for practices, rehearsals, and competitions, students must adhere to the following attendance standards:

- **Daily Attendance:** Students must be in attendance during the school day to participate in any extracurricular event that evening. Exceptions are granted only for school-sanctioned field trips or pre-approved absences for academic or medical reasons.
- **Tardiness:** Students must be in attendance by **8:00 AM** to participate in all extracurricular activities, including practices, competitions, programs, and/or meetings.

  The **only exception** to the 8:00 AM arrival time is for documented medical appointments which require written verification from a healthcare provider or if a student is scheduled for a late arrival. If a student is scheduled for a late arrival, they must arrive to school prior to their assigned start time or provide medical documentation.

  Without prior permission from administration and/or a medical excuse, students are not permitted to leave school early and return for extracurricular activities.
- **Tardiness Accumulation:** Every four (4) incidents of tardiness will convert into one (1) unexcused absence for eligibility tracking.
- **Extended Absences & Suspensions:** Any student who accumulates more than twenty (20) days of absence and/or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) within a single semester will face immediate disqualification. To regain eligibility, the student must maintain consecutive attendance for at least forty-five (45) school days. This penalty carries over into the subsequent school year.

Equipment and Uniforms

Students are financially responsible for any lost, damaged, or unreturned items. Failure to return equipment or settle outstanding fees will result in the following restrictions:

- **Future Participation:** Students cannot join an active roster or receive uniforms/equipment for their next sport or activity until the debt is cleared.
- **Penalties:** Failure to return equipment or settle outstanding debts will prevent a student from being placed on an active roster or receiving uniform/equipment for the next consecutive sport or activity.

  Seniors must satisfy any outstanding debt before receiving their cap and gown.

Transportation Policy

- **School Transport:** Participants are required to travel to away events using district-provided transportation. Operating personal vehicles to or from events is strictly prohibited.
- **Alternative Travel:** A student may be permitted to ride home from an event with their own parent/guardian, provided a formal request is approved in advance by the sponsor, head coach, principal, or Athletic Director.

Physical Exams and Activity Fees

- **Mandatory Physicals:** Students must pass a comprehensive physical examination prior to the start of any athletic season. Physicals must fall within specific seasonal date windows.
- **Scheduling & Forms:** Required documentation is available on-line. The district provides complimentary physical examinations at designated times throughout the school year.
- **Activity Fees:** The mandated district Athletic and Arts Activity Fee must be paid in full prior to the start of the respective sport or activity season.

Sportsmanship and Representation

Participants are highly visible ambassadors of the West Allegheny community and are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct both in and out of uniform. The district strictly enforces the sportsmanship qualities outlined by the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA). Setting a positive, respectful example for peers, opponents, and spectators is a core expectation for all participants.

General Information & Best Practices

1. **Securing Valuables:** Students should securely lock all personal belongings in a locker. It is strongly recommended that students refrain from bringing large sums of money, jewelry, or high-value items to school or athletic facilities.
2. **Communications:** Stay informed regarding scheduling changes, event cancellations, and urgent announcements by listening to daily school broadcasts and monitoring official social media via **@WestASports and visiting the athletic website at www.westasports.com.**
3. **Conflict Resolution:** Students should directly address any personal program concerns (including playing time, lettering requirements, or team dynamics) with their head coach or activity sponsor first to allow for an open, collaborative discussion.
4. **Administrative Support:** The Principal and Athletic Director remain available at any time to discuss overarching matters regarding student participation in West Allegheny athletics and activities.