

Name\_\_\_\_\_Homeroom\_\_\_\_\_

# **Wyoming Valley West Middle School**



# **SPARTANS**

## **Student Handbook**

### **2023-2024**



## **Mission Statement**

*The Mission of the Wyoming Valley West Middle School, in partnership with home and community, is to promote academic excellence in a safe and nurturing environment to ensure that all students become lifelong learners and are able to successfully develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, positive attitudes, and knowledge necessary to become productive and socially responsible citizens in a technology-based global society.*

- \* High Achievement Standards \**
- \* A Safe School Environment \**
- \* An Integrated Curriculum \**



*It is the policy of the Wyoming Valley West School District to provide an equal opportunity for all children to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in our schools regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, or disability.*

## **Wyoming Valley West Middle School Contact Information**

201 Chester Street  
Kingston, PA 18704  
phone: 570-287-2131  
fax: 570-714-3005

Principal  
David Bond, Jr.  
dbond@wwwsd.org

Assistant Principal (7th grade; 8th grade boys)  
Christopher Gegaris  
cgegaris@wwwsd.org

Assistant Principal (6th grade; 8th grade girls)  
Tara Shook  
tshook@wwwsd.org

Guidance Counselor (6th grade)  
Jessica DePhillips  
jdephillips@wwwsd.org

Guidance Counselor (7th grade)  
Alexa Yankosky  
ayankosky@wwwsd.org

Guidance Counselor (8th grade)  
Kristen Kaminski  
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Main Office Staff  
Teresa Lindgren

Guidance Staff  
Lori Griffiths

Custodial Staff  
Dan Ivanitch





# 2023-2024 School Calendar

## WYOMING VALLEY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT



450 N. Maple Ave  
(570) 288-6551 [www.wvwsd.org](http://www.wvwsd.org)  
Kingston, PA 18704

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Aug 30	New Teacher Orientation
Aug 30	6th & 9th Grade Orientation (HS/MS)
Aug 31	District In-Service @ HS 8-3
Aug 31	Kindergarten Orientation (1-2:30)
Sept 1	District In-Service in buildings (8-1)
Sept 4	Labor Day (No School)
Sept 5	1st Student Day of School
Sept 11	Meet the Teacher Night @ HS 6-8
Sept 12	Meet the Teacher Night @ MS 6-8
Sept 14	Meet the Teacher Night @ ES 6-8
Sept 22	Act 80 Day (Early Student Dismissal)
Oct 9	Columbus Day (No School)
Oct 31	Act 80 Day (Early Student Dismissal)
Nov 10	Veterans Day (No School)
Nov 13	@HS P/T Conf. 12-2:30 & 6-8
Nov 14	@MS P/T Conf 12:30-3 & 6-8
Nov 15	@ES P/T Conf 1-3:30 & 6-8
Nov 22	Early Dis. HS-10:30, MS-11:20, ES 12:00
Nov 23-27	Thanksgiving Recess (No School)
Dec 22	Early Dis. HS-10:30, MS-11:20, ES 12:00
Dec 23-Jan 1	Year End Recess (No School)
Jan 15	Martin Luther King Day (No School)
Jan 25	End of 1st Semester
Jan 26	Act 80 Day (Early Student Dismissal)
Feb 16-19	Winter Recess (No School)
March 15	District In-Service in buildings (8-1)
March 29-April 1	Spring Recess (No School)
April 19	Act 80 Day (Early Student Dismissal)
May 3 & 24	Act 80 Day (Early Student Dismissal)
May 27	Memorial Day (No School)
June 6	GRADUATION
June 7, 10	Early Student Dismissal
June 10	Last Day of School
TEST DATES Keystone/PSSA	
TBD	

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### Marking Periods

1-Wednesday, November 8th (46 Days)
2-Thursday, Jan 25th-Semester (45 Days)
3-Wednesday, April 5th (46 days)
4-Monday, June 10th (45 days)

### Student Days( ) by Month

Sept (19), Oct (21), Nov (18)
Dec (16), Jan (21), Feb (19), Mar (19)
Apr (21), May (22), June (6)
<b>Total Student Days = 182</b>

### Act 80 Days

Sept. 22	HS 10:30, MS 11:20 ES 12:00
Oct 31	HS 10:30, MS 11:20 ES 12:00
Jan 26	HS 10:30, MS 11:20 ES 12:00
April 19	HS 10:30, MS 11:20 ES 12:00
May 3	HS 10:30, MS 11:20 ES 12:00
May 24	HS 10:30, MS 11:20 ES 12:00

### In-Service Days

Aug 31	@High School 8-3
Sept 1	In buildings 8 to 1
March 15	In buildings 8 to 1

### Inclement Weather Days

FID 1	1st snow day
FID 2	2nd snow day
FID 3	3rd snow day
FID 4	4th snow day
FID 5	5th snow day
Feb 16	6th snow day



School Closed



Teacher In-Service (No school for students)

Act 80 Day (Early student dismissal)



Significant Dates



Parent Teacher Conferences



First and Last day of school

Jan 6, 2023 version

# Contents

<b>Assemblies</b>
<b>Attendance</b>
<b>Awards</b>
<b>Bags For Books, Gym Clothes, etc...</b>
<b>Before and After School</b>
<b>Book Store</b>
<b>Building/Alternate Schedules</b>
<b>Bus Passes</b>
<b>Bus Rules</b>
<b>Change of Address/Phone Number</b>
<b>Closed Campus</b>
<b>Directory Information</b>
<b>Discipline</b> <i>*Suspensions (ISS and OSS)</i> <i>*Expulsion</i>
<b>Dispensing of Medicine</b>
<b>Diversity</b>
<b>Dress Code</b>
<b>Due Process</b>
<b>Early Dismissal</b> <i>*Students Being Released to someone other than their Parent/Guardian</i>
<b>Electronic Device Policy</b>
<b>En route to and from School</b>
<b>Entrance to the Building (Student)</b>
<b>Entrance to the Building (Parent/Guardian/Visitor)</b>
<b>Excessive Absence Policy</b> <i>*Appeals</i> <i>*Procedures</i>
<b>Extra-curricular Activities</b>

<b>Extra Help</b>
<b>Flexible Instruction Day (FID)</b>
<b>Fighting</b>
<b>Fire Drills (Evacuations)</b>
<b>Food and Drink</b>
<b>Grading System</b>
<b>Guidance Counselor</b>
<b>Gum and Candy</b>
<b>Hall Passes</b>
<b>Hallway Behavior</b>
<b>Homework</b>
<b>Honor Roll</b>
<b>Incomplete</b>
<b>Lavatory Passes</b>
<b>Leaving School Early</b>
<b>Library</b>
<b>Lockers</b>
<b>Lunch Period</b>
<b>Make-up Work</b>
<b>Material Fees</b>
<b>Media Release</b>
<b>Parent Contact Information</b>
<b>Parking Lots</b>
<b>Parties</b>
<b>Peer Mediation</b>
<b>Personal Property</b>
<b>Posting of Materials</b>
<b>Prohibited Activities</b>
<b>Promotion Policy</b>
<b>Public Address System</b>
<b>Report Cards</b>

<b>Resources and Programs</b>
<b>School Calendar</b>
<b>School Closing</b>
<b>Security</b>
<b>Shop Safety</b>
<b>Skateboard/Bike/Rollerblade/Scooter Policy</b>
<b>Skyward</b>
<b>Smoking</b>
<b>Student Records</b>
<b>Student Valuables</b>
<b>Tardiness</b>
<b>Testing Program</b>
<b>Textbooks</b>
<b>Telephone</b>
<b>Tobacco</b>
<b>To and From School</b>
<b>Visitors to School</b>
<b>Weapons</b>
<b>Withdraw/Transfer</b>
<b><u>*Additional Policies</u></b>

## **ASSEMBLIES**

Assemblies provide one of the few opportunities in school for students to learn formal audience decorum. Regardless of the type of program, students are to be respectful. Performers are very conscious of their audience; therefore, talking, whispering, whistling, stamping of feet, and booing are discourteous. Yelling is appropriate only at pep assemblies. Homeroom seating will be used unless specified. Students should proceed to the assembly quietly, promptly finding a seat, and giving the chairman of the assembly immediate and complete attention. Applause should be in keeping with the occasion. Students must not leave the assembly until dismissed.

## **ATTENDANCE**

\*See Attendance Policy and Social Probation Policy located in the back portion of the Handbook.

## **AWARDS**

Academic awards are given to students who meet the requirements/qualifications for that particular honor. Most awards are given out at the Awards Ceremony which takes place near the conclusion of the school year.

### **ACADEMIC DISTINCTION AWARD**

*Presented to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who achieve 98 or higher for the first three marking periods consecutively.*

#### **English Award**

*The 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have earned this award are recognized for their intrinsic motivation and eagerness to learn the subject matter as demonstrated by their positive classroom contributions.*

### **FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

*Presented to a Spanish and French student with the highest G.P.A.*

#### **Language Arts Award**

*The 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have earned this award are recognized for their intrinsic motivation and eagerness to learn the subject matter as demonstrated by their positive classroom contributions.*

#### **Math AWARD**

*The 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have earned this award are recognized for their intrinsic motivation and eagerness to learn the subject matter as demonstrated by their positive classroom contributions.*

### Social Studies Awards

*The 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have earned the intrinsically motivated Social Studies award are recognized for their motivation and eagerness to learn the subject matter as demonstrated by their positive classroom contributions.*

*The American Legion Award is presented to one boy and one girl from 8th Grade who demonstrates the following qualities:  
Scholarship, Honor, Patriotism, and Citizenship.*

### Science AWARDS

*The 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have earned the intrinsically motivated Science award are recognized for their motivation and eagerness to learn the subject matter as demonstrated by their positive classroom contributions.*

*The Earth and Space Science Award is presented to the student in 8<sup>th</sup> grade with the highest grade point average in the Earth & Space Science course.*

## TRI SEMESTER COURSE AWARDS

### Art

*The students who have earned this award are recognized for their intrinsic motivation and eagerness to learn the subject matter as demonstrated by their positive classroom contributions.*

### Computer

*The 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have earned this award are recognized for their intrinsic motivation and eagerness to learn the subject matter as demonstrated by their positive classroom contributions.*

### Family and Consumer Sciences

*The students in 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade who have earned this award are recognized for their intrinsic motivation and eagerness to learn the subject matter as demonstrated by their positive classroom contributions.*

## OTHER COURSE AWARDS

### Outstanding Eighth Grade Band Student

*Presented annually to two intrinsically motivated students, three year members of the middle school band. These students demonstrate exceptional musical skill and make positive contributions to the Wyoming Valley West Middle School music program.*

### STRING Orchestra

*Presented annually to two 8<sup>th</sup> grade string orchestra students. These students demonstrate exceptional musical skill and make positive contributions to the Wyoming Valley West Middle School orchestra program.*

### Chorus

*Presented annually to two chorus students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade that are exceptional vocalists.*

### TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

*Presented to an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student showing the greatest potential in Technology Education 8.*

### SPECIAL AWARDS

#### Philip AND Gilda Plaksin Spartan Service Award

*The Spartan Service Award is presented to an eighth grade student council member who has shown excellence in leadership, citizenship, and community service. The recipient is a leader to his/her peers and an example to all at the Wyoming Valley West Middle School, dedicated to making a difference for others in the school community. This student also exemplifies core values of respect, loyalty, excellence, and selfless service in everything they do. He/she is an exemplary representation of the Wyoming Valley West Middle School.*

#### WILBUR TROY EDUCATION AWARD

*Presented to a male and female student in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade who exhibits a true appreciation and passion for learning, actively participates in school activities, promotes the betterment of the community and the environment, and possesses an awareness of the current world events.*

#### Charles R. Suppon Leadership award

*The Leadership Award is presented to a student in 8<sup>th</sup> grade who has displayed the following characteristics throughout the duration of his/her time at the WVW Middle School: a willingness to take on challenges, the capability to make tough decisions, a concern for one's peers, the ability to work with others, a clear understanding of school issues, and a commitment to the betterment of the school.*

### NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

*Membership in the National Junior Honor Society is one of the highest honors that can be awarded to a secondary school student. Membership in the Wyoming Valley West Middle School Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society is open to 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Each candidate will receive a packet containing a Student Activity Information Form. This packet will also outline the criteria for academic performance and mandatory Community Service requirements. The successful candidates are notified and participate in a formal candlelight induction ceremony in the spring.*

### BAGS FOR BOOKS, GYM CLOTHES, ETC...

In order to protect the safety and welfare of all students, it is required that students utilize book bags or gym bags where the contents are visible. Students can use any bag they like while traveling to and from school, but bags being used in school must follow the visibility specifications. \*Mesh or clear plastic/vinyl bags are



recommended. If contents are not visible, students will be required to keep these bags in their assigned locker for the entire school day. *Small purses may be carried for personal needs.*

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL**

Students will enter the building upon arrival and proceed directly to locker and homeroom. Breakfast will be served in homeroom. No student should be in the building before 8:00 a.m. unless requested by a teacher. A student request by a teacher must have a pass from that teacher clarifying the student's purpose for being in the building. After arriving at school, students are not to leave before dismissal time (closed campus) unless permission is granted from the office. No student should be in the building after school unless requested by a teacher or unless that student is participating in a supervised activity.

The school is responsible for students:

- During the instructional hours of the school day
- During the instructional hours of the school day on school district property
- On school district vehicles (owned, rented, leased or contracted) \*Bus stop activity will depend on the situation.
- At school district events held before, during or after school that are directly observed and supervised by school district staff.

# **BUILDING AND ALTERNATE SCHEDULES**

## **WYOMING VALLEY WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL**

### **DAILY SCHEDULE 2023-2024**

TEACHERS AT ASSIGNED PLACES	8:00
HOMEROOM	8:00 - 8:27
FIRST CLASS	8:30 - 9:18
SECOND CLASS	9:21 - 10:09
THIRD CLASS	10:12 - 11:00
<b><u>“A” LUNCH</u></b>	
LUNCH	<b>11:03 - 11:33</b>
FOURTH CLASS	11:36 - 12:24
FIFTH CLASS	12:27 - 1:15
<b><u>“B” LUNCH</u></b>	
FOURTH CLASS	11:03- 11:51
LUNCH	<b>11:54 - 12:24</b>
FIFTH CLASS	12:27 - 1:15
<b><u>“C” LUNCH</u></b>	
FOURTH CLASS	11:03 - 11:51
FIFTH CLASS	11:54 - 12:42
LUNCH	<b>12:45 - 1:15</b>
SIXTH CLASS	1:18 - 2:06
SEVENTH CLASS	2:09 - 2:57
DISMISSAL	2:57
FIVE MINUTES TO BUS DEPARTURE	3:00
TEACHER DISMISSAL AND BUS DEPARTURE	3:05

Delayed Opening Schedule

**WYOMING VALLEY WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**2023-2024 TWO HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE**

TEACHERS AT ASSIGNED PLACES	10:00
HOMEROOM	10:00 - 10:20
FIRST CLASS	10:23 - 10:55
SECOND CLASS	10:58 - 11:30
THIRD CLASS	11:33 - 12:05

**“A” LUNCH**

**LUNCH 12:08 - 12:38**

FOURTH CLASS 12:41 - 1:13

FIFTH CLASS 1:16 - 1:48

**“B” LUNCH**

FOURTH CLASS 12:08 - 12:40

**LUNCH 12:43 - 1:13**

FIFTH CLASS 1:16 - 1:48

**“C” LUNCH**

FOURTH CLASS 12:08 - 12:40

FIFTH CLASS 12:43 - 1:15

**LUNCH 1:18 - 1:48**

SIXTH CLASS 1:51 - 2:23

SEVENTH CLASS 2:26 - 2:57

DISMISSAL 2:57

FIVE MINUTES TO BUS DEPARTURE 3:00

TEACHER DISMISSAL AND BUS DEPARTURE 3:05

Act 80 Schedule

**WYOMING VALLEY WEST MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**2023-2024 ACT 80 SCHEDULE**

TEACHERS AT ASSIGNED PLACES	8:00
HOMEROOM	8:00-8:27
FIRST CLASS	8:30-8:52
SECOND CLASS	8:55-9:17
THIRD CLASS	9:20-9:42
FOURTH CLASS	9:45-10:07
FIFTH CLASS	10:10-10:32
SIXTH CLASS	10:35-10:57
SEVENTH CLASS	11:00-11:20
DISMISSAL	11:20
BUS DEPARTURE	11:25

## **BUS PASSES**

Passes giving students permission to ride buses on routes other than the one assigned will be authorized only in emergencies by the administration. A written request for a bus pass must be submitted to the guidance/attendance office. This request must be submitted to the guidance secretary in the morning and must include a parent or guardian's signature AND a phone number where the person can be reached. Once verified and approved, this pass will be finalized by the guidance secretary. The administration reserves the right to approve or reject a request.

## **BUS RULES**

Transportation is provided for students living outside of the Kingston area who abide by the rules and regulations necessary for the safety of all passengers. Pupils are to:

- Arrive at the bus stop **ten minutes** prior to scheduled departure.
- Respect private property on the way to and at the bus stop and wait at the designated stop only.
- Talk in a normal, conversational voice with no excessive noise.
- Play safely without fighting or darting out into the street. Ball playing is not allowed at the school bus stops, except in those limited instances where the loading zone is a school yard or municipal playground. Following a single warning, drivers are instructed to confiscate the balls and convey them to the school's office. In instances where students are allowed to play ball when arriving at school, balls may be transported on the bus with the provision that they be carried in a bag/book bag.
- Refrain from bringing animals or potentially dangerous materials to the bus stop or on the bus.
- Cooperate with and obey the driver at all times. The bus driver and/or principal are authorized to assign seats.
- Approach the bus only after it has come to a complete stop and board the bus without pushing or disturbing others.
- Remain seated facing forward and with feet on the floor at any time the bus is in motion. Students are not to leave their seats until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- Leave the bus only upon arrival at the school or regular bus stop.
- Ride only the bus to which you are assigned unless permission is granted by the principal or Transportation Director.
- Go directly home or to a place designated by parent/guardian when leaving the bus after school.
- Keep the bus and bus stop clean. Students will be required to pay for any vandalism they committed.
- Refrain from gesturing or calling out to passersby.

### **Pupils are required to comply with the following directives:**

- Compliance to the school's Tobacco Policy.
- The use of profanity is prohibited at all times.
- The use of electronic devices is not permitted on the school bus or at the bus stop.
- Eating or drinking is prohibited on the bus.
- Striking or causing injury to other persons on the school bus or at the bus stop is strictly prohibited.
- For safety reasons, heads, hands and feet must be kept inside the bus at all times.
- Throwing anything inside the bus or outside the windows is prohibited.
- Falsifying identity is prohibited.

Alleged infractions of the aforementioned rules will be referred to the building principal for investigation. The first violation, as determined by the principal, will result in a warning or up to a three school-day bus suspension and notification of the parent by phone or letter. The second violation, as determined by the principal, will result in up to a five school-day suspension from bus transportation. The third violation, as determined by the principal, could result in a ten school-day suspension from bus transportation. The fourth and subsequent violations will result in an indefinite suspension from bus transportation. Regarding this policy, the principal and/or Director of Transportation reserves the right to make a decision that takes into consideration the best interests of the district.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER**

All changes of addresses or telephone numbers should be handled in two ways: (1) parents should access the Skyward Parent Portal under the “parents” tab of [wvwsd.org](http://wvwsd.org), review each child’s contact information and make necessary changes for all children; please note making a change for one child does not make a change for all children in the family and (2) contact our building’s guidance office secretary at 570-287-2131. Up to date information is imperative in the event that an emergency contact needs to be made. Emergencies could include necessary contact by Administrators, Counselors and/or the Nurse.

## **CLOSED CAMPUS**

Wyoming Valley West Middle School operates on a closed campus policy. Students must stay on school grounds from the time they arrive until the time that they are dismissed. Students are considered responsible for all school policies from the time they arrive on school property until the time they leave school property in accordance with state statutes.

## **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

With regard to the release of student information, parents are reminded that with few exceptions, information relative to a student cannot be released to anyone outside of educational agencies without prior consent of the parent or eligible student. Student information which does not require prior consent and may be disclosed on request is called "Directory Information." This would include the following: the student's name, address, telephone number, date of birth, place of birth, participation in activities and sports conducted by school, dates of attendance, honors, awards, diploma, certificates, parents' or guardians' names and address. All parents and students are advised that those items listed as "Directory Information" may be withheld at the request of the parent, guardian, or eligible student. This request must be submitted in writing to the school principal.

## **DISCIPLINE**

The objective of disciplinary actions taken by teachers and assistant principals is to teach students to become self-disciplined and responsible citizens. Pupils who are self-disciplined will find that rules do not greatly affect them.

Our school has the responsibility of providing an educational program that will encourage each student to develop to his/her fullest potential. In order to realize this goal, each student has the right to a free public education as long as this right is exercised within the rules and regulations of the school and does not hinder the other students' progress in pursuing a meaningful educational program.

Students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that does not detract from the learning process. Students must know and understand school regulations, must make an effort to uphold them and recognize that those in authority have the responsibility for maintaining the orderly process of education.

Students shall know that teachers will take reasonable disciplinary action to deter acts which interrupt the educational process and they may use reasonable force in self-defense or in restraint of a student to prevent harm to that student or to others (Pennsylvania Code 12.5 b).

Students will not use language or actions that hurt faculty, staff and students or create an unsafe environment.

*Any student who participates in any destructive act in school, who is involved in the planning of such an act or is aware that such an act may take place without contacting the administration immediately will be subject to being disciplined accordingly.*

The following student behavior may lead to disciplinary action(s), which may include suspension, expulsion and/or juvenile charges upon review of the School Resource Officer. Below is a non-exhaustive list of negative behaviors, please review the list below with your student. Understand that the use of various punishments for the violation of set rules is done at the discretion of building administration. The purpose of punishment is to correct negative behaviors and in turn teach life lessons about operating as a member of a society based on rules. It is our hope to work in conjunction with parents and guardians to help instill a positive set of rules and functionality. In all cases, students will be given due process.

### Prohibited Acts / Infractions\* (not limited to the following list)

- Pulling fire alarm
- Possession / use of lighter or tobacco related products
- Bullying / harassment
- Biting another student
- Booking
- Bus violation
- Violation of Cafeteria rules
- Causing bodily harm
- Class cut
- Class disruption
- Cheating
- Choke / choke hold
- Electronic device policy violation
- Unauthorized use of electronic device
- Creating a school disruption
- Creating an unsafe environment
- Violation of Drug / Alcohol policy
- Disrespect for school employees
- Damage property
- Dress code violation
- Extortion
- Family Consumer Science violation
- Fighting
- Food / drink violation
- Forgery
- Falsifying reports
- Gum chewing
- Headlock
- Horseplay / scuffling
- Inappropriate exposure
- Inappropriate gestures
- Inappropriate language / drawing
- Instigating
- Inappropriate behavior
- Insubordination
- ISS (In-School Suspension) violation
- Inappropriate touching
- Institutional vandalism
- Kicking another student
- Lab safety violation
- Leaving class without permission
- Lying to Administration / Teachers / School Staff
- Littering
- Locker violations
- Leaving school grounds
- Malicious mischief
- Misuse of pass
- Name calling
- Inappropriate / Offensive comments
- Public display of affection
- Possession of a non-instructional item
- Possession of stolen property
- Profanity towards Administration / Teachers / School Staff
- Profanity
- Pushing / shoving
- Punching another student
- Racial comments
- Restraining student
- Receiving stolen property
- Running in halls
- Simple assault on student
- Aggravated assault on student
- Simple assault on staff
- Aggravated assault on staff
- Rape
- Involuntary sexual deviate intercourse
- Statutory sexual assault

- Sexual assault
- Aggravated indecent assault
- Indecent assault
- Indecent exposure
- Open lewdness
- Obscene materials and performances
- Sexual harassment
- Racial intimidation
- Other harassment / intimidation
- Minor altercation
- Stalking
- Kidnapping
- Unlawful restraint
- Threat to staff / student
- Reckless endangering
- Robbery
- Theft
- Attempt / commit murder / manslaughter
- Suicide attempted / committed
- Burglary
- Arson
- Vandalism
- Criminal trespassing
- Rioting
- Bomb threat
- Terroristic threat
- Failure to disperse
- Disorderly conduct
- Plagiarism
- Possession of firearms
- Possession of knife
- Possession of cutting instrument
- Possession of explosive
- Possession of BB / pellet gun
- Possession of other weapon
- Possession of controlled substance
- Sale / distribution of controlled substance
- Slapping another student
- Snowballs
- Spitting
- Threat of bodily harm
- Tardy to school
- Tardy to class
- Throwing food
- Throwing objects (class / bus)
- Truancy
- Vulgarity
- Wrongful entry

### Consequences/Punishments \* (Not limited to the following list)

- Conference with Guidance Counselor
- Conference with Administrator
- Lunch Detention
- Parental Conference/Meeting
- In School Suspension (ISS)
- Out of School Suspension (OSS)
- Expulsion (\*alternative education)

### SUSPENSION: EXCLUSION FROM CLASS AND EXPULSION

Suspension: The exclusion from school for a period of from one to ten consecutive school days. Length of suspension will be determined by school administration. Parents or guardians will be notified in writing of the action taken, and will have complete custody and jurisdiction of their child during the suspension. A suspended student may not loiter or appear on school property or at any school-sponsored activity while on suspension. A student will be readmitted to school after a satisfactory solution to his conduct is agreed upon by parents and administration.

*In-School Suspension (ISS)- The in-school suspension program is exclusion from regular classes for a period of one to ten consecutive days. Students placed in ISS will receive classwork from their regular class teachers in an attempt to remain current with their respective classes.*

*Out of School Suspension (OSS)- Out of school suspension is exclusion from the school as a whole from one to ten consecutive days. Students placed on OSS will be provided with classwork they will be responsible for. Students are not to report to school and/or school events during the time of suspension.*



*Expulsion- A student may be excluded permanently from school for a period exceeding ten days by the Board of School Directors. Such action shall be preceded by a formal hearing. For details on the "due process" procedure, see the Board Policy on Suspension and Expulsion which is on file at the principal's office.*

## **DISPENSING OF MEDICINE**

\*Refer to WYOMING VALLEY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT MEDICATION POLICY.

## **DIVERSITY**

As the Wyoming Valley West student body continues to evolve and diversify, we continue to support and promote respect and tolerance for all ethnic groups. Any inappropriate behavior relating to ethnic intimidation with malicious intent will result in suspension and may lead to criminal charges.

## DRESS CODE

No. 221

# WYOMING VALLEY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: 200 PUPILS

TITLE: DRESS AND GROOMING

ADOPTED:

REVISED: June 30, 2023

### PURPOSE

The intent of this policy is to ensure that our students dress appropriately, are not disruptive to the educational process, and do not compromise the safety and security of our school. While requiring a specific type of clothing, it is not our purpose to interfere with students' decisions or freedom of expression. However, the safety of all students, the security of the building, and the environment in which our students learn must be the foremost objectives of our school.

### GUIDELINES

#### Permitted

- Clothing, including both a shirt with pants, short, or skirt, or the equivalent, and shoes.
- Clothing that covers the shoulders, chest, and torso (shoulders to waists) and covers all undergarments.
- Tops that fall comfortably to the belt or buckle of the pants
- Leggings, sweatpants, yoga pants, khakis, joggers, and non-ripped jeans.
- Appropriate footwear at all times. All footwear must have a back.
- Dresses/Skirts that are at least mid-length, with no plunging backs below the mid-back, not made from transparent material, nor have a slide or front cut outs.
- Pants that can be worn at/to the waistline. All undergarments must be covered at all times.
- Crewneck sweatshirts and t-shirts.
- **Shirts without collars that are school appropriate and are not revealing, distracting, controversial, or pose a safety threat.**

#### Not Permitted

- Halter tops, bare midriffs, see-through shirts, mesh shirts, tube tops, sleeveless shirts, tank tops, or any top without a back.
- Clothing with obscene language and/or pictures, deemed offensive, sexually suggestive, condoning violence, suicide or vulgar language
- Excessively short/tight skirts and shorts are inappropriate for school.
- Clothing or article that advertises or advocates the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco or makes reference to gangs, including bandannas and tattoos.
- Cut, ripped, or torn clothing.
- Headgear and/or coats should be placed in student lockers during the school day. Caps, bandannas, hats, or hoods may only be worn outside of the building. If worn, headgear will be confiscated on the first offense and held until the end of the day. Headbands must be appropriate and secure the hair.
- Sagging pants (pants must be secured at the waist).
- Dog chain necklaces, spiked bracelets, hanging belts, or wallet chains.
- Pajamas, slippers, slipper boots, blankets, or bedroom attire.
- Clothing that shows underwear, the midriff, chest, or buttocks.

- Flip flops, sandals, slides, shoes without back, or any footwear that poses a safety hazard is not permitted.
- Hoodies
- Cargo Pants/Shorts with multiple pockets

**\*THESE GUIDELINES** do not cover every possible situation. Questionable attire or appearance will be referred to the principal or principal's assistant. Since styles of clothing change rapidly, the school reserves the right to restrict certain fashions that are inappropriate and distracting to the learning environment. Maybe if in doubt, do not wear it to school.

#### Exemptions

Parents/Guardians who object to the policy based on religious or medical grounds must present to the building principal a signed letter detailing the reason for the objection. The parent/guardian and the building principal will meet to discuss the exemption.

#### Board Discretion

The above dress code may be amended at any time at the discretion of the Wyoming Valley West School Board.

#### Discipline

The purpose of school is to promote and foster a solid learning environment. Students are expected to dress in a manner which encourages this purpose. Violation of this policy will result in parental notification and appropriate school action.

Noncompliance will be considered a violation of school policy. The consequences will be as follows.

#### *Secondary Level:*

Offense	Disciplinary Action
1st Offense	At the discretion of the administration, the student will be excluded from class (i.e., in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension) for one (1) day. Parents/Guardians will be notified of the class exclusion. The student is expected to return in full compliance of the structured dress code.
2nd Offense	At the discretion of the administration, the student will be excluded from class (i.e., in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension) for one (1) day. A parental meeting must take place for the child to return to class. The student is expected to return in full compliance of the structured dress code.
3rd and Successive Offenses	At the discretion of the administration, the student will be subject to a three (3) to possible ten (10) day out-of-school suspension and a ten (10) day co-curricular suspension. A parental meeting must take place for the student to return to school. The student is expected to return in full compliance of the dress code.

## **DUE PROCESS**

Any student facing disciplinary action will be given Due Process. Due Process includes the following:

- Oral or written notice of the charge and an informal hearing.
- An opportunity to hear the evidence the authorities have and the opportunity to respond if the student denies the charges.

## **EARLY DISMISSALS**

Parents are asked not to request early dismissal except in cases of absolute necessity. Medical, dental and all other appointments should be made after school hours. Valid picture identification (preferably a valid driver's license) is required when picking up a student for early dismissal.

In case of absolute necessity, a written request signed by the parent should include the reason for the request and a telephone number where the parent may be reached. This request should be presented to the attendance clerk the day prior to dismissal and the attendance officer will verify the excuse.

Requests for dismissal for medical or dental appointments should include the doctor's name and telephone number.

Permission to leave school will not be approved until after the reason is verified and determined to be necessary. Students excused for an early appointment are to return to school at the conclusion of the appointment.

When a student wishes to be excused before regular dismissal time on a certain day, he/she must present a written excuse from the parent or guardian to the attendance office during homeroom period. That information will be posted on Skyward, informing teachers of that student's early dismissal.

If the individual requesting the early dismissal of the student is not the custodial parent, in addition to a picture ID, a phone call to the custodial parent for permission is required, even though a note from said parent may have been submitted.

## **STUDENT RELEASE TO OTHER THAN PARENT/GUARDIAN**

No student will be released to anyone other than his/her parent/guardian who is on file with the Wyoming Valley West School District. Any exceptions must be pre-arranged with the principal.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY**

### **POLICY / GRADES K - 12**

The use of electronic devices by students has been found to be disruptive. In many instances, electronic devices have been used for illegal purposes, including issues related to alcohol and drug abuse. The Wyoming Valley West School District is committed to ensuring every student be provided with a safe environment in which to learn. Therefore, the district has enacted a policy that prohibits the use of all electronic devices.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES DEFINITION**

Electronic devices - to include, but not limited to, Bluetooth speakers, beepers, pagers, long and short wave radios, all walkman type radios, CD/cassette players, remote control devices, cameras, video recorders, laser

pointers, gaming devices, iPods, iPads, electronic tablets and toys that do not serve any educational value in school.

### **POSSESSION OF CELLULAR/SMART PHONES**

The possession of cellular and/or smart phones shall be allowed in school. All students shall have phones out of sight and turned off. The use of cellular/smart phones is prohibited. Students are not permitted to carry phones visible on their person during the school day. Students who use a cellular telephone or have it visible shall have it confiscated and returned to the parent/guardian. Upon second and subsequent offenses, the cellular telephone will be confiscated, and returned at the end of the school year. Smart watches may be worn but are not permitted to be used for communication (social media, texting, etc.)

### **ENFORCEMENT**

The use of electronic devices are prohibited in school, on school property or in any conveyance providing transportation to or from any school, school event, or function during the hours and days that school is in session. These devices will be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian. Upon second and subsequent offenses, the item(s) will be confiscated, and returned at the end of the school year.

### **RETURNED ITEM**

The returned item will be the responsibility of the Principal or their designee. The item will be inventoried by recording the make, model and serial number on the inventory report. The item will be returned to a parent/guardian as soon as possible. The parent/guardian agreement report shall be signed when returning the item. Upon second and subsequent offenses, the item(s) will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school year.

### **WAIVER**

Parents/guardians shall sign the district's agreement report acknowledging the electronic device was returned to them as soon as possible or at the end of the school year. In consideration of being advised of this policy, the parent/guardian, waives and releases any and all claims for damages and theft of the electronic communication they may have against the Wyoming Valley West School District.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR REFUSAL TO TURN OVER ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Refusal to turn over an electronic device will result in a one (1) day out-of-school suspension for insubordination.

### **EN ROUTE TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

Students walking to and from school and students at or near bus stops are expected to treat persons and property with respect and shall comply with school rules or be subject to potential school disciplinary action.

## **ENTRANCE TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING (Student)**

Depending on their grade, students will enter via Chester Street doors as follows - sixth grade via the gym doors, seventh grade via the flag pole doors and eighth grade via the front main doors. \*No student is permitted to enter through the back doors at any time.

## **ENTRANCE TO THE SCHOOL BUILDING (Parent, Guardian, Visitor)**

A valid picture identification (preferably a valid driver's license) is required when picking up a student for an early dismissal. If the individual requesting the early dismissal of the student is not the custodial parent, in addition to the picture ID, a phone call to the custodial parent for permission is required even though a note from said parent may have been submitted. Parent or Guardian must be a listed party on the skyward system, otherwise permission to take a student will NOT be permitted.

## **EXCESSIVE ABSENCE POLICY**

\*See Attendance Policy and Social Probation Policy located in back portion of Handbook

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Each student is urged to participate in one or more extracurricular activities. Students are encouraged to join activities that interest them. There are athletics, music, student government, and other special interest groups.

## **FLEXIBLE INSTRUCTION DAY (FID)**

A Flexible Instructional Day (FID) Program is a tool available to public school entities as an alternate approach to delivering instruction when circumstances (e.g., a disease epidemic, a hazardous weather condition, a law enforcement emergency, the inoperability of school buses or other equipment necessary to the public school entity's operation, damage to a school building, or a temporary circumstance rendering any portion of a school building unfit or unsafe for use) prevent the delivery of instruction in its customary manner or location. This recent addition to the PA Public School Code enables school entities to meet the 180 instructional requirement of section 1501 of the Code.

The number of Flexible Instructional Days used by an entity may not exceed five (5) days per school year. The FID program may be online, offline, or a combination of the two.

### **WWV FID Program General Structure:**

- The FID "school day" will be from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- Students in Grades 6-12 must sign into Google Classroom during the homeroom period, using their district-issued Chromebooks, and follow their daily schedules on Google Classroom.
- During the 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. school day, teachers will respond to messages sent via Google Classroom and/or emails from students.
- Although "live" instruction is not required as part of the FID, Grade 3-12 teachers may, at their own discretion, choose to use a "Google Meet" or video assignment.
- Teachers will modify daily instruction just as they would if students were physically present.
- If technology is not available due to power outages or other circumstances, the district will NOT use a FID, and the day will be made up within the school calendar as approved by the Board of Education.

**Grades 3-12:** Students in Grades 3-12 and teachers will work in an “asynchronous” (not live) instructional day using Google Classroom. The day’s structure/times will be consistent with the normal daily schedule for students and teachers. All materials will be posted to Google Classroom by 8:00 a.m. on a FID. **Students must complete the FID assignments by the end of the school day (3:00 p.m.) or be marked “absent” for the day.** If more time is needed, students will be given three (3) days following the FID to complete and return the assignment for grading purposes only. A FID absence will be counted either “excuse” or “unexcused” using the standard absence procedure (absence note) when the student returns to school

## **FIGHTING POLICY**

The Wyoming Valley West School District will maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. Fighting cannot be tolerated. Students who engage in fighting, instigate a fight, or engage in any act of violence, while in school, on school property, during the time spent in travel to and from school and school sponsored activities will be held accountable in accordance with school discipline procedures. Consideration will be given to alternative education services and programs for fighting at school and school sponsored activities. In addition, students who engage in fighting, instigate a fight, or engage in any act of violence, may be reported to law enforcement authorities in a manner consistent with Public School Code and charged with violating the criminal laws of Pennsylvania.

Students must make every effort to avoid fighting. When confronted and challenged to fight, students should seek help from the nearest adult authority.

Student onlookers that contribute to the school disruption or unsafe environment may be subject to disciplinary action upon administrative review.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

The purpose of fire drills is to teach students to evacuate the building quickly, orderly, and methodically with a high degree of self-control. Fire drills may be announced or unannounced. Students are not to assist in firefighting duties or the handling of fire extinguishers. The exit route for each room location is displayed in that room and students are urged to make note of the exit route.

According to Pennsylvania School Law, pupils will receive instruction and training by means of fire drills so that they may, in emergencies, leave the building in the shortest time without confusion or panic. These drills will be held at least once a month.

\*Evacuation drills simulating other emergency situations may be conducted with or without notice throughout the school year as well. Just as in our fire drill activities, the purpose of such exercises is to ensure student safety in the event that an actual emergency situation was to arise.

## **FOOD AND DRINK**

Food and drink are not to be consumed at any time during the school day except during the student's lunch and breakfast periods. Please note, during the Covid-19 pandemic the school will permit students to carry water to class in lieu of using school-provided water fountains. Administration reserves the right to inspect water containers upon reasonable suspicion of alcohol or other school contraband within said container.

## **FOOD DELIVERY**

Students are required to bring lunch from home or purchase items from the school cafeteria. Deliveries of food or drink to students during the academic day is prohibited.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

It is the policy of the Wyoming Valley West School District that a minimum grade of 50% (.50) will be the lowest recorded grade for the first, second and third marking period recorded on the report card.

A = 92-100

B = 82-91

C = 72-81

D = 62-71

F = 0-61

An official report card is issued four times each year and can be accessed via the parent portal on Skyward only. Report cards are **not** distributed in school or mailed to the residence.

### **Addendum to Policy #213 – Grading of Student Progress**

It shall be the policy of the Wyoming Valley West School District that a minimum grade of 50% (.50) will be the lowest recorded grade for the first, second and third marking period recorded on the report card. In addition, an *Incomplete* may be recorded pending administrative approval for marking periods 1, 2, and 3.

All incomplete work must be completed by the last day of the successive marking period.

All fourth quarter work must be completed and submitted one week prior to the last day of school.

Any deviation of this policy MUST have administrative approval.

## **GUIDANCE COUNSELORS**

The guidance counselor is a vital member of the education team. The counselor helps all students in the domains of academic achievement, personal/social development, and career development. The counselor provides encouragement for success and the opportunity for students to be contributing members of the school and community. Counselors act as liaisons to assist students and their families in each of the three domains.

Appointments with school counselors are necessary for students and parents/guardians. Students may visit the counselor by obtaining a pass from the counselor, and are not to leave class unless it is absolutely necessary and then only with the permission of the teacher. Parents/guardians who have concerns should contact the student's counselor to schedule an appointment.

## **GUM AND CANDY**

Gum chewing and candy are not permitted in the building. Any student failing to follow this rule may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **HALL PASSES**

Except for the change of classes, students should not be in the halls without a pass. **The office does not issue passes to students who are late from one class to another.**

## **HALLWAY BEHAVIOR**

Students are expected to behave in a mature fashion as they move from class to class during the day. They should stay to the right side of the hall to provide for traffic flow and use stairways only in the direction that has been designated. Running is prohibited anywhere in the building.



Students should walk at all times, be aware of their surroundings, use appropriate language and stay to the right of the hallways and stairwells. Students must take the most direct route to their classes; students found in other areas of the building will result in disciplinary action including lavatories on different floors. Students are expected to be on time for class, excessive tardiness will result in disciplinary action. Every effort should be made to keep hallways clean and free of litter. Take pride in our building!

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework provides an opportunity for additional drill in subject skills. It is necessary to establish independent working habits for students and also serves as a means for the students to test themselves on what they have learned in the classroom. It is an excellent indicator for the parents as to where their students are having the greatest difficulty or success in their academic progress. *Upon request, attendance office personnel will assist in locating homework assignments and books for students who are absent in excess of two (2) consecutive school days. Therefore, parents/guardians should call the attendance office before 9:00 a.m. to request work.*

## **HONOR ROLL**

The Wyoming Valley West Middle School honor roll is designed to recognize high academic achievement. Following is an explanation of the system of calculating honors:

"High Honors With Distinction" are awarded to those students who have achieved a 98%-100% in all subjects.

"High Honors" are awarded to those students who have achieved an overall average of 92%-97% in subjects.

"Honors" are awarded to those students who have achieved an overall average of 86%-91% in subjects.

## **LAVATORY PASSES**

Except for the homeroom period and lunch periods, students found to be in the lavatory without authorization will be subject to disciplinary measures.

## **LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY**

Students must stay on the school grounds from the time that they arrive until the time that they are dismissed. Students may not leave the school grounds during the school day without the permission of an administrator. Ordinarily this permission is granted once the student produces a note from home indicating the purpose of the request. Such written requests should be presented in the attendance office at least one day in advance. Students leaving early and not returning will be charged with an absence as follows: 8:23 - 9:14 - Full Day Absent; 9:15 - 11:50 - ½ Day Absent; 11:51 to the end of the day - No Charged Absence.

## **LOCKERS**

Each student will be assigned a locker. The security of a student's locker depends upon the individual student keeping his/her combination a secret. Students may visit their hall lockers only in the morning, before and after lunch, and after school in order to minimize hall congestion. **Lockers are not to be shared by students.** If there is any type of problem with a locker, students must make their homeroom teacher, a custodian, or the

Main Office aware immediately in order to remedy the situation. Lockers are the property of the Wyoming Valley West School District and may be checked for health, safety, and security reasons without notice. During the course of the school year, if there is any cause for suspicion, dogs may be used for locker searches.

## **LUNCH PERIOD**

Students who are excused for lunch have five minutes to arrive in the cafeteria. Those students who are found on the main floor or the second floor during the following times must have a hall pass or they will face disciplinary action.

**A Lunch 11:03 - 11:33 (6<sup>th</sup> grade)**  
**B Lunch 11:54 - 12:24 (7<sup>th</sup> grade)**  
**C Lunch 12:45 - 1:15 (8<sup>th</sup> grade)**

### **The following are specific rules which you should observe during the lunch period:**

Students must:

1. Use only central stairways going to and from the cafeteria.
2. Be seated before lunch lines will open.
3. Follow all directions of the lunch captain and respective section supervisors.
4. Take only food that can be eaten and return to the assigned section.
5. Keep tables and floor area clean by keeping the food on trays, and by faithfully carrying the trays, milk cartons, lunch bags and other paper and food waste to the nearest garbage can.
6. Clean tables when finished eating; the workers in the cafeteria are there to help clean accidental spills from the tables or floors.
7. Remain seated in the cafeteria unless en route to a table, to the compactor, or to the exit.
8. Refrain from carrying food from the cafeteria unless given specific permission from a faculty member to do so.
9. Only go through the lunch line once. All purchases, lunch, drinks, snacks, etc... should be made at this time.
10. Administration reserves the right to assign students to a specific seat or section at any time throughout the school year.

\*Violation of cafeteria rules may result in lunch detention or other disciplinary action.

### **Lunch Cost**

Federal mandates state that school lunches will come at no cost. This does not include snacks or any additional items purchased by the student.

**Students will only be able to add money to their accounts during homeroom on the following days**

**6th grade - Tuesdays**  
**7th grade - Wednesdays**  
**8th grade - Thursdays**

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

Students who are absent from school are encouraged to continue school work daily via GoogleClassroom as possible. Ultimately, students have five school days after returning from absence to complete missed school work.

## **MATERIALS FEES**

A fee must be paid for school materials used in a student project before it is removed from the instructional area. If fees are not paid within 30 days of project completion, projects will be discarded or recycled.

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

There are many times throughout the school year where pictures will be taken of our students for publicity in local newspapers, websites, and the like. If you wish not to have your child's picture or name appear in these various media sources, you are asked to place your request in writing to the building principal. This could also be prevented by having your child respectfully deny any picture opportunities. Please understand that this will not prevent a child's picture from ever appearing in a media source.

## **PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

It is very important that contact information regarding our students is accurate and up to date. There are many reasons that the school may have to reach a student's family. These include: academic performance, behavioral issues, field trip planning, sports, extracurricular activities, and most importantly, emergencies. In addition, the Middle School communications system demands that we have correct information to inform students and their families of school closings and delays. All changes of addresses or telephone numbers should be handled in two ways: (1) parents should access the Skyward Parent Portal under the "parents" tab of [wwwsd.org](http://wwwsd.org), review each child's contact information and make necessary changes for all children; please note making a change for one child does not make a change for all children in the family and (2) contact our building's guidance office secretary at 570-287-2131. Up to date information is imperative in the event that an emergency contact needs to be made. Emergencies could include necessary contact by Administrators, Counselors and/or the Nurse.

## **PARKING LOTS**

Parking areas are off limits to students during the school day unless permission is granted by the administration to visit a car. Students are not allowed to cut through parking lots during their arrival to or dismissal from school.

## **PARTIES**

Parties are not to be held during school hours unless approved by the principal in advance as a justifiable educational experience or reward.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Care must be taken to protect personal property during the school day. When not in use, it should be in a locked or otherwise secure area. At the end of the school day, all personal property, including musical instruments, should be taken home. The school will not be responsible for damaged, lost or stolen property left in the building overnight or in unauthorized places in the building during the school day.

## **POSTING OF MATERIALS**

No materials are to be posted on chalkboards, painted walls, acoustical tiles, or plastered walls. Authority to post signs and advertisements must be obtained from an administrator. It is understood that all posted signs will be taken down immediately following the activity.

## **PROMOTION POLICY**

Students at the Middle School level need to earn 4 credits per school year in order to advance to the next grade level.

## **PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM**

All announcements to be made over the public address system must be submitted in advance for approval by an administrator who will determine when and by whom the announcement will be read.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued via the Skyward Parent Portal. Upon notification by the school, parents shall log into the Skyward Parental Portal, look for the "Portfolio" link on the left side then proceed to find the "Report Card" related to the corresponding marking period.

## **RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS**

The Wyoming Valley West Middle School's mission goes far beyond educational pursuits. Support programs have been implemented in the school that address family issues, respect for peers, commitment to the community and volunteerism. Other programs recognize students for achievement and selfless actions in and out of school.

### ***P.B.I.S. (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports)***

*A program designed by school staff to promote school safety and good behavior. School staff supports and educates students on behavioral expectations and strategies. The focus of the program is on prevention of negative behaviors.*

### ***OTNY***

*OTNY is an academic counseling program that focuses on support for those 6th, 7th and 8th grade students who are at-risk of being retained for the current school year. Eligibility criteria is that a student is failing three or more core classes after the second marking period, and parents agree to have their child attend the group. Students will meet in small groups with their school counselors approximately twice a month to work on*

*assignments that are past due, assignments that are upcoming, organization, and general maintenance of their academic standing, to supply the students with the necessary criteria needed for promotion.*

### ***Peer Tutoring Program***

*This program allows select student tutors to be paired with students who are struggling in one or more academic areas. Peer tutoring not only provides a review of academic areas of weakness, but also a social connection.*

### ***S.A.P***

*The Student Assistance Program is a panel of teachers, school counselors, and healthcare professionals that evaluates referrals sent by teachers who may have a concern with specific students facing barriers to their education. Once the case is reviewed by the SAP team a plan of action is developed to help reduce, or eliminate, the barrier. Referral to outside mental health and drug and alcohol agencies can be considered.*

### ***Strengthening Families Program***

*The Strengthening Families Program is an initiative of the Wyoming Valley West School District and Penn State's PROSPER Project. PROSPER is an acronym for PROMoting School/community/university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience. This program is designed to help parents build on their strengths in showing love and setting limits. Students work on developing skills in handling peer pressure and building a positive future. Overall, it helps families grow together. The Strengthening Families Program is available for students in grades 5 and 6.*

### ***Students of the Month***

*The current criteria for Student of the Month is: Students are nominated by teachers and other educators monthly.*

- Positive contributor to school and classroom communities*
- Commendable academic achievement*
- Excellent attendance*
- Consistent exemplar of respect, responsibility and kindness as per the WWV Middle School PBIS Pillars*

### ***WEBS***

*Webs (Women Empowered by Science) is an opportunity for sixth grade girls to participate in an exciting and innovative program at Wilkes University. WEBS was developed in response to the growing awareness that many girls lose interest in science during the middle school year. This program runs from January through April one day per month after school on the Wilkes campus. This is an exciting opportunity which promotes enthusiasm for science. This program is limited to a small number of students.*

### ***Newspaper Club***

*The Wyoming Valley West Middle School Newspaper Club is responsible for newsletter publications throughout the school year. To be eligible for this club any 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade student must meet the following criteria:*

- *Available to stay after school on certain dates*
- *Maintain a “B” or higher in English*
- *Meet deadlines*
- *Work well as a team*
- *Spend time outside of class to work on the newspaper*
- *Take responsibility seriously*
- *Obtain a recommendation from your present English teacher*

### ***Student Council***

*Student Council is an organization conducted by students and supervised by adults. The purpose of the student council is to give students an opportunity to develop leadership by organizing and carrying out school activities and service projects. In addition to planning events that contribute to school spirit and community welfare, the student council is the voice of the student body. They help share student ideas, interests and concerns with the school wide community. The Wyoming Valley West Middle School Student Council is open to any 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade student. All students must fully understand the rules and fulfill the obligations of the student council if elected.*

### ***National Junior Honor Society***

*Membership in the National Junior Honor Society is one of the highest honors which can be awarded to a middle school student. Membership in the Wyoming Valley West Middle School Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society is open to 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Students in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade who have achieved a 96 cumulative GPA or better after the second marking period are eligible. The students selected for membership are then notified of their acceptance by mail. A formal candlelight induction ceremony is held in the spring.*

### ***Yearbook Club***

*The yearbook club is open to students in seventh and eighth grade. Students from each grade are accepted after going through the application process with final approval at the discretion of the principals. The yearbook club will be responsible for taking pictures throughout the year then designing and publishing the yearbook. Students will be required to attend meetings several times per month after school. Meetings may become more frequent as publication deadlines approach and may also occur on weekends or during the summer months. A general meeting will be conducted at the start of the school year to discuss the application process and all requirements with the student body.*

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

The official school calendar will be kept by the principal and all school, class, and organizational activities will be scheduled through this office. Faculty advisors will request calendar dates for activities. It is important that in-school personnel schedule activities as far in advance as possible to avoid conflict with other planned activities. The school board determines when school is in session. This calendar is published in the beginning of the handbook.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING**

In the event of inclement weather or mechanical breakdown, school may be closed or the starting time may be delayed. The same conditions may also necessitate early dismissal. School closings, delayed starting times, or early dismissals will be announced via local media, and by Skylert, the Wyoming Valley West automated

communications system. Parents and guardians will be asked to choose a method of communication for the automated system and are responsible to keep the school updated on changes in address, phone, and/or email contact information. NOTE: If no report is heard, this indicates that school is in session.

\*Please refer to Flexible Instructional Day for more information.

## **SECURITY**

The Wyoming Valley West Middle School has been authorized, for security reasons, to operate a video surveillance system. Additionally, students will be required to walk through metal detectors daily before entering the building.

## **SHOP SAFETY**

In some of our courses, curricular concepts are reinforced or demonstrated via shop environments. Two examples of such courses are Family Consumer Science and Industrial Technology. In a shop environment, certain rules and regulations need to be set in place in order to ensure the safest learning environment possible for all involved in the class. Failure to follow said rules may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of privileges.

Basic rules for shop environment: \*Not limited to

- The use of any sharp object in a threatening or malicious manner is strictly prohibited. Weapon policy can be invoked.
- Maliciously damaging equipment is prohibited.
- Long hair (boys and girls) must be tied back.
- Aprons must be worn and tied properly in order to prevent hazards.
- Improper use of towels or liquids is prohibited.
- Shop area should be cleaned in accordance with set rules before leaving class.
- Protective eyewear must be used as specified by the instructor.

## **SKATEBOARD/BICYCLE/ROLLERBLADE/SCOOTERS**

Bicycles, roller blades, scooters and skateboards are prohibited at the Wyoming Valley West Middle School.

## **SKYWARD**

Skyward is our district's information management system for parents/guardians to locate information regarding their child's academic performance, attendance records, contact information, and lunch account status.

\*It is imperative that contact information is kept current and up-to-date. The Wyoming Valley West School Districts uses Skyward as a resource and means to communicate with families regarding emergencies and/or school related concerns.

## **SMOKING**

Smoking, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, hookah pens, lighters and/or matches are not permitted in district buildings, on the bus, nor on any campus of the school district. Violation of this policy will result in suspension and notification to the School Resource Officer for juvenile review. "Smoking" shall mean all uses or possession of tobacco products or above mentioned alternatives. This also includes chewing tobacco and snuff.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

The Wyoming Valley West policy for collection and dissemination of student records is available for examination at the school office or at the Central Office.

## **STUDENT VALUABLES**

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or electronic devices to school. Watches, rings, and other items require your close supervision. Students, not the school, must be responsible for their personal property. Students are advised not to give out their locker combinations to anyone.

## **TARDINESS**

Students are to be in their first class by 8:00 a.m. Students arriving after 8:13 a.m. are expected to report directly to the Security Desk in order to sign-in. Lateness to class will be dealt with by the teacher unless the student has a pass from a teacher who may have detained that student. Students who are habitually late to school or to class will be referred to the respective assistant principal. Failure to correct the situation may result in the involvement of the parents. Continued lateness will also result in disciplinary action.

## **TESTING PROGRAM**

In addition to the testing administered in relation to specific courses or subjects, mandated PSSA assessments will be given to aid in educational decision-making.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

The school district provides textbooks for all students. Students should place a book cover on the textbooks. The book which the student receives is a numbered book. This same book must be returned at the end of the course, allowing for normal wear and tear. Excessive or unnecessary damage to books will result in a charge to the student. All books must be returned when a student withdraws from school in order that his records may be cleared. No transcripts will be sent until a student has met his obligations. At the end of each marking period, students who have unresolved obligations will not receive their report cards until the lost or damaged items are paid for at the office.

\*Parents/Guardians should be aware that in this age of technologically advanced education, many of your student's textbooks may be available online or may only exist in online or digital format. Please consult students or their classroom teachers for questions regarding the use of textbooks or supplemental material online.

## **TELEPHONE**

The office telephone is for emergency use only. Students must have permission from a principal to use the telephone.

## **TOBACCO**

Purpose: The Board recognizes that use of tobacco by students presents a health and safety hazard which can have serious consequences for both users and nonusers.



Definition: For purposes of this policy, **tobacco** shall be defined as a lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar and pipe, other lighted smoking product; and smokeless tobacco in any form.

Authority: The Board prohibits students from possessing and using tobacco at any time in a school building, on a school bus, and on school property. The school district shall initiate prosecution of a student who violates the tobacco use policy.

Delegation of Responsibility: The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify students and parent/guardians about the district's tobacco use policy by publishing such policy in other efficient means. The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures to implement this policy.

Guidelines: A student convicted of possessing or using tobacco in a school building or on a school bus or school property shall be fined up to \$50 plus court costs or admitted to alternative adjudication

Electronic Cigarettes/Vapor Cigarettes: Also included in the law are tobacco/smoking devices, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, vapor smoking devices, and smokeless tobacco.

## **TO AND FROM SCHOOL**

Students are expected to act in a positive and appropriate manner when traveling to and from the building. This entails respecting the property and rights of those who live and work in our communities. School rules apply to district-used bus stop areas. In short, school rules apply while students are enroute to and from school and may be subject to disciplinary action for negative behavior respectively.

## **VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL**

Visitors must be limited to parents and persons having legitimate business at the school. All Visitors must report to the office immediately where a visitor's pass will be issued if the person qualifies. Students from other schools will not be permitted to visit when their school is not in session. Unauthorized, uncooperative visitors will be asked to leave the building. Valid picture identification (preferably a driver's license) is required to enter the school building.

## **WEAPONS**

The Wyoming Valley West Middle School follows the district's School Board Weapon's Policy 218.1.

4. (Definition): The term weapon shall include but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchucks, firearm, shotgun, rifle, metal or imitation knuckles, straight razors, explosives, noxious, irritating, or poisonous gases, poisons, drugs, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury or items fashioned with the intent to use, sell, harm, threaten, or harass students, staff members, parents, and patrons.

5. (Guidelines; Act 26 of 1995 SC1317.2 Pol. 233): The school district shall expel, for a period of not less than one (1) year, any student who is determined to have brought a weapon onto any school property, any school-sponsored activity, or any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or school-sponsored activity.

## **WITHDRAWAL AND TRANSFER**

The procedure for withdrawal or transferring is as follows:

1. Secure authorization withdrawal or transfer note from your parent or guardian.
2. Obtain appropriate forms from the Guidance Office.
3. Have the forms filled out by teachers, return all school books, Chromebooks and property, and make sure all fees are paid.
4. Take completed forms to the Guidance Office for final clearance.

## **\*ADDITIONAL POLICIES**

### **DRUG AWARENESS**

#### **Purpose**

These policies have been designed so that the Wyoming Valley West School District can respond effectively and appropriately to drug and alcohol situations involving the student population; furthermore, these policies have been developed by The Wyoming Valley Alcohol and Drug Services Inc. in conjunction with the School Board, Administration, faculty, parents and students.

#### **Definition**

**DRUGS** - shall include alcohol or any malt beverage inclusive of wine coolers; non-beer; designer drug/s; any over-the-counter drug not authorized by parent and school nurse; anabolic steroids; any drug from any of the four (4) classes of drugs, hallucinogens, narcotics, amphetamines, barbiturates; any volatile solvents or inhalants such as but not limited to glue, varnish remover, etc.; any chemical manufactured in a clandestine laboratory such as but not limited to amyl and butyl nitrite.

**NOTE:** *The above defined drugs and drug use in particular is prohibited on school grounds, at school sponsored functions and while students are representing the school.*

#### **Examples of Drugs Covered Under This Policy**

##### ***INHALANTS***

Nitrous Oxide - Laughing Gas, Whippets, CO2 Cartridge  
Amyl Nitrite - Locker Room, Rush, Poppers, Snappers  
Butyl Nitrite - Bullet, Climax  
Chlorohydrocarbons - Aerosol Paint Cans, Cleaning Fluids  
Hydrocarbons - Aerosol Propellants, Gasoline, Glue, Butane

##### ***STIMULANTS***

Cocaine  
Crack Cocaine  
Amphetamines - capsules, pills, tablets  
Methamphetamines - "ice", crock  
Additional Stimulants - Preludin, Didrex, Tenuate, etc.

##### ***DEPRESSANTS***

Barbiturates  
Tranquilizers

## **Alcohol**

### ***HALLUCINOGENS***

**Marijuana**  
**PCP**  
**LSD**  
**Mescaline**  
**Peyote**  
**Psilocybin**

### ***NARCOTICS*** Heroin

**Methadone**  
**Codeine**  
**Morphine**  
**Meperidine**  
**Other Narcotics**  
*Percodan*  
*Darvon*  
*Percocet*  
*Lomotil*  
*Fentanyl*

**DISTRIBUTION** - to deliver, sell, pass, share or give any drug and/or alcohol, as defined by this policy, from one student to another.

**POSSESSION** - possess or hold or have within immediate control any alcohol or drug defined by this policy. It should be noted that students found with alcohol/drugs in school lockers, desks, student automobiles are in direct violation of this drug policy and will be charged with possession.

**DRUG PARAPHERNALIA** - any equipment, products, and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use, or designated for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing, concealing, injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing into the body a controlled substance in violation of the Controlled Substances Act.

Drug Paraphernalia items include but are not limited to:

**Roach Clips**  
**Rolling Papers**  
**Amyl Nitrite (*Rush, Locker Room, Jock*)**  
**Butyl Nitrite (*Bullet, Toilet Water*)**  
**Hypodermic Syringes**  
**Cocaine Spoons**  
**Water Pipes, Marijuana Pipes, Crack Pipes**  
**Drug Conversion Kits**  
**Razor Blade(s)**  
**Other Related Items:**  
*Clothing or accessories that espouse drugs and/or alcohol*

## Authority

**SCHOOL JURISDICTION** - School property, its surroundings, and all school-related events, such as proms, class trips, football games, and the like.

**ASSESSMENT/TREATMENT** - The Wyoming Valley West School District has a signed “Affiliation Agreement” with Wyoming Valley Alcohol and Drug Services, Inc. for purposes of providing confidential assessment services to students and their family.

**NOTE:** *The decision of the Supreme Court of 1985 in NJ vs. TLO have guided the Wyoming Valley West School District in the formulation of its drug/alcohol policies and shall apply to this policy.*

**REASONABLE SUSPICION** - means more than “mere” suspicion. The school authorities must apply an objective test in determining whether reasonable suspicion exists. The basis for reasonable suspicion will include:

1. eyewitness testimony,
2. a student’s past record or reputation for use or possession of drugs and alcohol,
3. information obtained through an informant or through reliable statements which incriminate the student,
4. Any other independent evidence which gives rise to a reasonable conclusion that the student has engaged in a violation of the policy.

**NOTE:** *While the above factors, standing alone, may not always suffice in supporting a reasonable suspicion of a substance, a combination of these factors will strengthen the school’s position of “Reasonable Suspicion.”*

**REASONABLE SCOPE OF SEARCH** - A personal search of the student must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and must be the least intrusive means of maintaining order and safety in the school. A personal search includes a pat-down or frisk; a search of a student’s personal belongings (i.e., a purse); a strip search; blood or urine screening; and the use of dogs to “sniff-out” drugs located on a student.

As a general principle, personal searches should not be the initial means of determining whether a student is in violation of the substance abuse policy. Instead, personal searches should be used as a last resort.

**NOTE:** *The intrusiveness of the search must be reasonably related to the suspected violation. For example, a strip search or a drug screening of a thirteen-year-old student found smoking a cigarette in the restroom, without more, would be unreasonable in the light of the age of the student and the nature of the infraction.*

Of course, once the school has obtained sufficient evidence to discipline a student, there is really no need to continue with further searches. For example, if school authorities have reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the substance abuse policy, and drugs are found in that student’s locker, there might be no further need for a personal search of that student or to require that student undergo drug testing. If the drugs found in the student’s locker provide sufficient evidence to discipline the student, any further search would be considered excessively intrusive.

**TESTING FOR DRUGS** - While a number of school districts are implementing substance abuse policies which include screening students for drugs or alcohol, such testing raises a number of legal questions which school districts cannot afford to ignore. To date, there are two (2) court cases which address the issue of testing of students.

**Case 1.**        A Board of Education implemented a policy requiring urine samples from all students for the purpose of screening for drug use.

**Ruling:** Absent of clear, factual, or policy justification, the Court found that the school board's policy of mandatory across-the-board testing violated the student's right to be free from:

1. Unreasonable searches and seizures under the 4th Amendment,
2. Student's right to due process, and,
3. Student's legitimate expectation of privacy and personal security.

**Case 2.**        School authorities had reasonable suspicion to believe that a student had been smoking marijuana in the rest room. In accordance with the school policy, the student was requested to undergo urinalysis to test for the presence of marijuana. This test was given three days after the student was accused of violating the school's substance abuse policy.

**Ruling:** The Court found that the urinalysis was an overly intrusive search because the test could not document when the drug was ingested, nor would it show whether or not the person was under the influence of the drug while at school. Because the test could not show whether, in fact, the student used drugs during school hours or was under the influence of drugs during school hours, the Court stated that the school was, in effect, attempting to regulate out-of-school conduct. Furthermore, the Court stated that any such test would require a high probability that the test would disclose evidence of a violation of the school's substance abuse policy. Assuming the school authorities would have had evidence giving rise to a high probability that the student violated school policies, the Court stated the testing was unnecessary because there would already have been sufficient evidence to justify the imposition of sanctions.

**LOCKERS AND DESK SEARCHES** - Because students' lockers and desks are school property and remain under the control of the school, students have a reduced expectation of privacy. The student's expectation of privacy can be entirely defeated by a school policy which expressly states that the school retains ultimate control over student lockers and reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time without notice and without student consent. However, if possible, the District will make every attempt to have the student present during this search.

**AUTOMOBILE SEARCHES** - The 4th Amendment prohibits a general search of a student's vehicle, absent the student's consent or a reasonable suspicion the car contains prohibited substances.

However, it is lawful for school officials to patrol school parking lots and to look into a student's car without the student's consent or a showing of reasonable suspicion. If the school officials observe an item which would create a reasonable inference that the student is violating school policy, the officials may search the inside of the car. Once again, if possible, the District will make every attempt to have the student present during this search. If the student refuses to turn over keys, parents will be asked to unlock the automobile. If the parent then refuses, law enforcement authorities will be requested immediately.

**UNDERCOVER AGENTS** - A school's use of an undercover agent to enforce its substance abuse policy will be subject to close scrutiny by the courts, if challenged, and should be used only as a last resort.

There is an assumption that undercover agents have a vested interest in 'catching' violators. This underlying bias may taint the effectiveness of the agent. Similarly, the use of an undercover agent may lead to claims of entrapment, further undermining the effectiveness of the means of enforcement.

**DOG-SNIFFES** - The use of dogs to detect drugs on a student falls within the category of a personal search. Consequently, this means of ferreting out substance abuse is considered intrusive and will be used only as a last resort.

**USE OF CANINES** - The administration is authorized to utilize canines whose reliability and accuracy for sniffing out contraband has been established to aid in the search for contraband in school-owned property and automobiles parked on school property. The use of dogs to detect drugs on a student falls within the category of a personal search. Consequently, this means of ferreting out substance abuse is considered intrusive and will be used only as a last resort. Canines shall not be used to search students unless school officials have established independently that there is reasonable cause to believe the student possesses contraband on his or her person. The canines must be accompanied by a qualified and authorized trainer who will be responsible for the dog's actions. An indication by the dog that contraband is present on school property or an automobile shall be reasonable cause for further search by school officials.

**DUE PROCESS REQUIREMENTS** - These review procedures provide for student and/or parent or guardian the right to contest a charge that the student has violated the district drug and alcohol policy.

1. The student and parents will be entitled to meet with the appropriate school personnel at an initial informal hearing.
2. Should a formal hearing before the School Board be in order, the following will be adhered to:
  - A reasonable time and date for the hearing
  - Notice of the hearing
  - The charges to be stated in clear, concise terms
  - Opportunity to offer evidence and cross examine witnesses
  - The right to have an attorney present at the hearing

**SIGN SAMPLE FOR SCHOOL PROPERTY** - Entry onto school property is deemed consent to an inspection of person, vehicle, and personal effects at any time while entering on, or leaving the property. Inspections will be conducted upon reasonable suspicion of use, possession, or sale of alcohol/drugs on school property.

**BULLETIN BOARD NOTICE** - Upon reasonable suspicion that a violation of the school's substance abuse policy has occurred, authorized school officials may inspect anyone entering, on, or leaving, school property, including school employees, employees of contractors or their subcontractors or agents doing business with the school, and others such as visitors or guests.

Entry on school property is deemed consent to inspection, of person, vehicle, and personal effects. If you do not consent to inspection, please do not enter or remain on the property.

The use, possession, sale, transfer or purchase of illegal drugs is not allowed on school property. When appropriate items violating this policy are found in the course of an inspection, they will be taken into custody and may be turned over to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

**STUDENT ATHLETES** - If a student athlete violates the Wyoming Valley West School District Drug Awareness Policy, s/he will be referred to the Student Assistance Team by the principal. Further, s/he will be subject to all the provisions that are covered under the Wyoming Valley West Drug Awareness Policy.

This policy also covers substance abuse in school and out of school as well as in an athletic season and outside of an athletic season. This policy shall apply throughout a full calendar year. All substance abuse violations shall be cumulative. They shall be carried over from year to year throughout the student athletes P.I.A.A. career from Grade 7 to Grade 12. The following policy shall apply accordingly:

1. 1. Any student athlete who is found to possess or use drugs or alcohol the first time will be suspended from interscholastic athletic competition for a period of ten (10) calendar days. During the suspended period the athlete can practice in his/her sport with the permission of their coach. The athlete cannot dress or participate in any interscholastic game or scrimmage. After ten (10) calendar days the athlete can return to his/her sport on a full time basis with the approval of their coach. However, should the parent and student be uncooperative with the school officials, the student will be suspended from interscholastic athletic competition for a period of thirty (30) calendar days.
2. 2. Any student athlete who is found to possess or use drugs or alcohol the second time will be suspended from interscholastic athletic competition for thirty (30) calendar days. During the suspended period the athlete can practice in his/her sport with the permission of coach. The athlete cannot dress or participate in any interscholastic game or scrimmages. After thirty (30) calendar days the athlete can return to his/ her sport on a full time basis with the approval of their coach.
3. Any student athlete who is found to possess or use drugs or alcohol the third time will be suspended from further interscholastic participation.
4. A student athlete who has been suspended three (3) times may request reinstatement ninety (90) calendar days after his/her third offense. The athlete must give evidence of a rehabilitation program before the request can be reviewed. If a review is granted, a committee of five (5), made up of the high school principal or his/her designated representative, an assistant principal, the athletic director, the president of the coaches association, and a coach selected by the coaches association will review the case. A unanimous vote of the committee is necessary for reinstatement.
5. When substance violations occur out of season the suspensions shall begin with the first P.I.A.A. legal practice date of the next sports season.
6. Any student athlete distributing drugs in school or out of school as well as in an athletic season or outside of an athletic season will receive a ten (10) day out of school suspension, be referred to the School Board for an expulsion hearing and be suspended from interscholastic athletic competition for a full calendar year.
7. Pennsylvania Act 1989-93 prohibits the use of anabolic steroids, except for a valid medical purpose, by any pupil involved in school-related athletics. The Act also requires the School Board to prescribe the following minimum penalties for any pupil found in violation of the rules and regulations adopted by the School Board:
8. Prohibition of anabolic Steroids

Eligibility for participation in school athletics shall be limited. No student shall be eligible to resume participation in school athletics unless there has been a medical determination that no residual evidence of steroids exists. The Board may require participation in nay drug counseling, rehabilitation, testing or other programs as a condition of reinstatement into a school athletic program.

The use of steroids by students involved in athletics is prohibited. In addition to the prohibition of use, the board directs the administration to develop education plans regarding the use of anabolic steroids.

The Superintendent shall prescribe, implement and enforce rules and regulations to prohibit the use of anabolic steroids, except for a valid medical purpose, by any student involved in school-related athletics. Body building and muscle enhancement of athletic ability are not valid medical purposes. Human Growth Hormone (HGH) shall not be included as an anabolic steroid under the provisions of the law.

Education regarding the dangers of anabolic steroids shall be provided in other district drug and alcohol programs.

- (1) For a first violation, suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the season.
- (2) For a second violation, suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the season and for the following season.
- (3) For a third violation, permanent suspension from school athletics.

Students should be made aware that anabolic steroids are classified as controlled substances and that the use, unauthorized possession, purchasing, or selling could subject them to suspension, expulsion, and/or criminal prosecution.

A student who has been suspended for violation of the School Board regulations shall not be eligible to resume participation in school athletics unless there has been a medical determination that no residual evidence of steroids exists.

#### **Use of Canines to Search School Property**

**PURPOSE** - The district supports the elimination of the possession or use of illegal substances. The Board wants to convey a strong message to the community, faculty, staff and student body concerning the use or possession of illegal substances. It is also the intent of the Board to exhaust all means in order to ensure everyone that the district schools are a safe and nurturing environment that is conducive to learning.

**GUIDELINES** - It shall be the policy of the school district to permit the administration to periodically invite law enforcement agencies to search school property with canines trained for the purpose of finding illegal substances.

1. The Superintendent shall authorize the search and have a school designee on hand while the search is taking place. The designee will accompany the law enforcement agency and canine in the search of school property.
2. Notification of this policy shall be given to parents and students at the beginning of each school year. It shall be included in at least one (1) newspaper article of general local circulation.



3. All school property such as lockers, classrooms and storage areas may be searched.
4. All vehicles parked on school property may be searched
5. Individuals will not be subjected to a search by canines.
6. Once notification has been given to parents and students, the school district will have met its obligation to advertise the searches. Actual times or dates of planned searches will not be released in advance.
7. The law enforcement agency will be given full authorization to investigate and prosecute any person found to be responsible for illegal substance on school property.

**Note:** An administrator may seize any evidence indicating that a student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule that the administrator may find as a result of a reasonable search of a student or their property. A student who refuses the request for a search that is proper and reasonable may be disciplined under the district's policy and may include suspension or expulsion.

## WYOMING VALLEY WEST SCHOOL DISTRICT

Situational Category	Immediate Action	Investigation	Notification of Parents/Guardians	Disposition of Substance	Notification of Police	Discipline
The student is caught with drugs and/or alcohol for the first time.	Staff member will confiscate drug(s) and/or alcohol. Student is escorted to administrative offices.	The student, his/her locker, and other possessions will be searched.	Yes. An attempt will be made to provide an opportunity for the parent(s)/guardian(s) to be present when the police are involved.	Provided to law enforcement.	Required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten (10) days out-of-school suspension with a due process hearing.</li> <li>• Mandatory drug/alcohol counseling.</li> <li>• Mandatory forty-five (45) day expulsion at the Alternative Learning Center (ALC). (Return contingent on behavior and academic progress.)</li> </ul>
The student is caught with drugs and/or alcohol a second time.	Staff member will confiscate drug(s) and/or alcohol. Student is escorted to administrative offices.	The student, his/her locker, and other possessions will be searched.	Yes. An attempt will be made to provide an opportunity for the parent(s)/guardian(s) to be present when the police are involved.	Provided to law enforcement.	Required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten (10) day out-of-school suspension with a due process hearing.</li> <li>• Mandatory one (1) year expulsion.</li> </ul>

Situation:     In possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia

1st time:     Mandatory ten (10) day out-of-school suspension/due process hearing.  
Mandatory drug/alcohol rehabilitation.  
Mandatory forty-five (45) day expulsion at the Alternative Learning Center (ALC).

2nd time:     Mandatory ten (10) day out-of-school suspension/due process hearing.  
Expulsion of one (1) year.

Situation:     Distribution

1st time:     Mandatory expulsion for one (1) year.

- \* The Superintendent of Schools may recommend discipline short of expulsion on a case-by-case basis. In the case of an exceptional student, all steps necessary to comply with the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Act are to be taken.
- \* Students who seek assistance from the district, and who have not violated the district's drug and alcohol policy, will not face disciplinary action.
- \* When students voluntarily request assistance for their own drug and/or alcohol use, they shall be fully informed of services available. Wyoming Valley Alcohol and Drug Services, Inc., 437 North Main Street, Wilkes-Barre, works cooperatively with the Wyoming Valley West School District to ensure access to assessment and treatment in a timely manner. Students will be encouraged to include their parent(s)/guardian(s) in any treatment experience.

**815. ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

The Board supports use of the Internet and other computer networks 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 use of technology facilities shall be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the school district as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of students.

The electronic information available to students and staff 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.

The district reserves the right to restrict or prevent access via its network and other technology to sources or sites deemed inappropriate, by any means, including filtering software or services, the right to log network use, the right to monitor file server space utilization by district users, and the right to view file content. Users should have no expectation of privacy with respect to district access to or review of file content or network utilization.

The Board establishes that network use is a privilege, not a right; inappropriate, unauthorized and illegal use will result in cancellation of those privileges and appropriate disciplinary action.

The Board establishes that certain materials, in addition to those stated in law, are inappropriate for access by minors via district networks. (Filter List Category examples: violence/profanity, partial nudity, full nudity, sexual acts, gross depictions, intolerance, satanic/cult, drug culture, militant/extremist, gambling/illegal.) In addition to the filter list, keywords, and custom domain restriction, the firewall provides port-level filtering, to allow or disallow services such as Instant Messenger, IRC (Internet Relay Chat), FTP (File Transfer Protocol), etc.

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

Administrators, teachers and staff have a professional responsibility to work together to help students develop the intellectual skills necessary to discriminate among information sources, to identify information appropriate to their age and

## Authority

## Delegation of Responsibility

developmental levels, and to evaluate and use the information to meet their educational goals.

The district Acceptable Use Policy contains restrictions on accessing inappropriate material. There is a wide range of material available on the Internet, some of which may not be fitting with the particular values of the families of students. It is not practically possible for the district to monitor and enforce a wide range of social values in student use of the Internet. Further, the district recognizes that parents bear primary responsibility for transmitting their particular set of family values to their children. The district will encourage parents to specify to their child(ren) what material is and is not acceptable for their child(ren) to access through the district system.

Students and staff have the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user in the district and on the Internet.

The building administrator may terminate an account at any time as required. School district administration, faculty and staff may request the building administrator to deny, revoke or suspend specific user accounts. The building administrator shall have the authority to determine what is inappropriate use, and his/her decision is final.

P.L. 106-554  
Sec. 1711, 1721

The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for implementing technology and procedures to determine whether the district's computers are being used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The procedure shall include but not be limited to:

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.

Guidelines

Network accounts shall be used only by the authorized owner of the account for its approved purpose. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property and shall not be disclosed. Network users shall respect the privacy of other users on the system.

The district will notify parents about the district network and policies governing its use. Parents and students must sign an Acceptable Use Agreement before a student may have network and Internet access. Once signed, the agreement remains in effect for all students in grades 6 through 12 until further notice.

Parents may request alternative activities for their child(ren) that do not require Internet access.

Parents have the right at any time to investigate the contents of their child(ren)'s e-mail for files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child(ren)'s individual account at any time.

### General Statement

1. The network and Internet are provided for the education of and the improved delivery of curriculum material(s). Students and staff are encouraged to make use of the services to this end.
2. School management and the Board of Trustees/Management reserve the right to make random audits of the history files that record which web sites that students/staff have visited.
3. Regular audits will be conducted of which sites have been visited by staff and students. Staff/Students accessing inappropriate sites will be dealt with as per school policy.

### Staff E-Mail

1. E-mail is provided for the staff to make contact with others in the interest of education.
2. Information sent via e-mail shall be constructive, informative or inquiring in the interest of both the sender and the receiver.

### Prohibitions

Students and staff are expected to act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner in accordance with district policy, accepted rules of network etiquette, and federal and state law. Specifically, the following uses are prohibited:

1. To facilitate illegal activity.
2. Commercial or for-profit purposes.
3. Non-work or non-school related work.
4. Product advertisement or political lobbying.
5. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive or inflammatory communication.
6. Unauthorized or illegal installation, distribution, reproduction, or use of copyrighted materials.
7. Access or attempts to gain access to obscene, pornographic, or illegal material.
8. Access by students and minors to material that is harmful to minors or is

determined inappropriate for minors in accordance with Board policy.

9. Inappropriate language or profanity.
10. Transmission of material likely to be offensive or objectionable to recipients.
11. Intentional obtaining or modifying of files, passwords, and data belonging to other users.
12. Impersonation of another user, anonymity, and pseudonyms.
13. Fraudulent copying, communications, or modification of materials in violation of copyright laws.
14. Loading or using of unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media on district equipment.
15. Disruption of the work of other users.
16. Destruction, modification, abuse or unauthorized access to network hardware, software and files.
17. Quoting of personal communications in a public forum without the original author's prior consent.
18. Copying or downloading of any software or data licensed to the Wyoming Valley West School District.
19. Physical abuse of technology equipment including but not limited to computers, head phones, cables, printers, scanners, servers, etc.

### Security

System security is protected through the use of passwords. Failure to adequately protect or update passwords could result in unauthorized access to personal or district files. To protect the integrity of the system, the following guidelines shall be followed:

1. Employees and students shall not reveal their passwords to another individual.
2. Users are not to use a computer that has been logged in under another student's or employee's name.
3. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the network.
4. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the district system or to any other computer system through the district system or go beyond their authorized

access.

5. Users will immediately notify the building administrator if they have identified a possible security problem.
6. All e-mail sent to Wyoming Valley West School District mail server is not subject to privacy and may be viewed by multiple parties other than the intended party the e-mail was directed to. Wyoming Valley West School District reserves the right to use/delete incoming e-mail for purposes other than the sender's original intent, including but not limited to deletion, redirection or reposting.

#### Consequences For Inappropriate Use

The network user shall be responsible for damages to the equipment, systems, and software resulting from deliberate or willful acts.

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

General rules for behavior and communications apply when using the Internet, in addition to the stipulations of this policy. Loss of access and other disciplinary actions shall be consequences for inappropriate use.

Vandalism will result in cancellation of access privileges. **Vandalism** is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet or other networks; this includes but is not limited to uploading or creating computer viruses.

The district will cooperate fully with local, state or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the district's computer system.

#### Copyright

The illegal use of copyrighted software by students and staff is prohibited. Any data uploaded to or downloaded from the network shall be subject to fair use guidelines.

#### Safety

To the greatest extent possible, users of the network will be protected from harassment and unwanted or unsolicited communication. Any network user who receives threatening or unwelcome communications shall report such immediately to a teacher or administrator.

Network users shall not reveal personal information, including but not limited to addresses or telephone numbers to other users on the network, including chat rooms, e-mail, Internet, etc.



P.L. 106-554  
Sec. 1732

Any district computer/server utilized by students and staff shall employ Internet blocking/filtering software.

Internet safety measures shall effectively address the following:

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, 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.
5. Restriction of minor's access to materials harmful to them.

P.L. 94-553 Sec. 107P.L. 106-554 Sec. 1711, 1721, 1732

**20 U.S.C. Sec. 6777Board Policy 814**

## **49. BULLYING**

Purpose	<p>The Wyoming Valley West School District will be committed to providing a compassionate, receptive, and non-threatening atmosphere for each and every one of our pupils to learn and succeed. If bullying does occur, students should be assured of the fact that all incidents will be addressed quickly, thoroughly, and efficiently. It is expected that anyone - whether student, educator, family member, or other school party - who witnesses or has other knowledge of an incident of bullying, will report the incident to a staff member immediately and with the promise of confidentiality, if desired.</p> <p>Creating and maintaining a safe and welcoming learning environment for all students is a high priority in all district schools. A safe school environment free from bullying is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Bullying behavior disrupts the educational process; therefore, it will not be tolerated on school property, in school vehicles, school grounds, at school-sponsored events, or during travel to and from school.</p>
Definition	<p>Under this policy, bullying is a form a harassment in which behavior is intended, or perceived to intend, to harm or cause distress to another. The action occurs repeatedly over time and, in addition to causing harm or distress, has the effect of insulting or demeaning a student or group of students in such a way as to cause disruption of the orderly operation of the school. Bullying may be physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted or psychological. It may include, but is not limited to, actions such as verbal taunts, physical aggression, extortion of money or possessions, exclusion from peer groups within the school, name-calling, and derogatory statements, including any discriminatory statement. Bullying is not a mutual confrontation between two (2) students or a group of students (i.e. fighting with another student in which the altercation is mutual, requiring restraint or resulting in injury or property damage).</p>
Authority Pol. 218	<p>The School Board prohibits all forms of bullying behavior on school property, in school vehicles, at school-sponsored events, or during travel to and from school. Any violation of this policy shall be considered an infraction of the Student Code of Conduct, with discipline implemented accordingly. All bullying behavior that is a violation of the PA Crimes Code will be reported to law enforcement.</p>
Delegation Of Responsibility	<p>Any person discovering bullying shall report the incident to a school teacher, counselor or administrator. School staff will provide immediate interventions consistent with this school policy. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying.</p>
Guidelines	<p>When a student believes that s/he is a victim of bullying, the student shall report a complaint of bullying, orally or in writing, to the building principal, counselor, teacher, or another school employee.</p> <p>All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the building principal or the principal's designee.</p>

The principal or the principal's designee will investigate the incident and maintain a confidential record in the discipline file of both the victim(s) and bully(ies).

The building principal or designee will contact the parent/guardian of both the bully and victim.

Appropriate consequences and remedial actions range from positive behavioral interventions to and including suspension, and may include separating the student(s) being bullied from the perpetrator(s). Any violation of the PA Crimes Code will be reported to law enforcement.

Victims and their parents/guardians shall be made aware of appropriate counseling and agency services available.

The district prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports a relevant act of bullying. The principal will determine the consequences and remedial actions. Any violation of the PA Crimes Code will be reported to law enforcement.

The principal will determine the consequences and remedial actions for a pupil found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Any violation of the PA Crimes Code will be reported to law enforcement.

The following are specific things that teachers can do to help prevent bullying:

1. Make it clear to students that bullying will not be tolerated in the classroom, in the hallways, on the playground, or anywhere at school.
2. Ensure students that if anyone has a problem with bullying, that s/he can talk to you about it in person or by writing you a note about what happened.
3. Immediately take action when you see bullying, name calling, or harassment happen in your presence.
4. Help students identify themselves as allies for victimized students.
5. If students report bullying, make sure that the bullies are confronted and that the victims, bystanders, and allies are protected.
6. Have students write what they think a bully is and discuss it out loud.
7. Work with other teachers to share ideas on what you are doing in your classroom to teach about and prevent bullying.
8. Compile with your students a list of strategies for dealing with bullies and post them in your classroom.

The following is a list of strategies to help students deal with bullies:

1. Walk away from a bully.
2. Ignore the bully.
3. Tell someone like a teacher, parent/guardian, or friend that can help.
4. Try to be nice to the bully.
5. Try to be tricky.
6. Go to class to talk about problems with bullies.
7. Stand behind the person being bullied.
8. Go out of your way to make new friends to make yourself feel better.
9. Use humor.
10. Stay with other people so that you are not alone.
11. Do not give the bully the power to change your life.
12. Do not fight back.

The administrators' role in bully prevention:

1. Administration must make it clear that any form of bullying will not be tolerated.
2. Students will be made aware of the faculty and staff's attitudes toward bullying.
3. There will be appropriate consequences for students who choose to be bullies.
4. A full investigation will take place when bullying issues are reported, and everyone involved will be treated fairly.
5. Parents/Guardians will be informed of bullying incidents regarding their child.
6. All campus monitors, janitorial staff, office staff, and cafeteria staff will be notified on what to do if a child reports a bullying incident to them.

#### Disposition Of A Bully

Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the victim. This includes age-appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims, as well as others impacted.

References: School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 510 Board Policy – 218

Wyoming Valley West School District  
**Medication Policy**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Wyoming Valley West School District recognizes that it is more desirable for medication to be administered in the home. However, any student who is required to take medication during school hours must comply with school district regulations.

The following policy for administering medication by school personnel shall be adhered to:

1. Medication required by students shall be given by parents whenever possible. Medication prescribed 3 times a day shall be given at home unless indicated by a physician. **Morning medication is the responsibility of the parents.**
2. The self administration of medication by students during school hours shall be done only in exceptional circumstances wherein the child's health may be jeopardized without it. It is preferred that times of medication be adjusted so that only one dose is administered in school during lunch.
3. Initial dose of medication is not to be self administered in school.
4. It shall be the responsibility of both the parent and the student to inform the school nurse of any medication, inhaler or medical equipment brought to or used in school. At no time are **students** permitted to transport medication to or from school on any level. If a student is to receive medication during school hours, the medication must be delivered to the school by the parent or guardian. Prescription medication must be in the original container. This policy includes over the counter items such as Tylenol, Motrin, etc.
5. Medication is to be accompanied by a physician's written statement which shall include a diagnosis, type of medication, dosage, duration, instructions for administering and possible side effects, along with written parental consent with the school nurse. Such prescribed medication shall include patented drug, over-the-counter medicine, vitamins, herbal medicines, and cough drops. This document will be kept on file with the school nurse. Medication is to be received by the school in packaging according to current pharmacy standards. **No narcotic pain relievers will be administered at any time. Any medication(s) that do not follow the above guidelines will not be administered. In addition, each student MUST provide the school nurse with a medication administration consent form.**
6. Daily prescribed medications will not be administered on days with 2 and 3 hour delays.
7. The parent shall be responsible for supplying the medication and the "Request for Administration of Medication" form to the school. The "Request for Administration of Medication" form includes the physician's statements and the parent's authorization. These statements will release school personnel from liability should reactions result from medication.
8. The parent of a child with a known severe allergic reaction to stinging insects or other allergies requiring medication must notify the School District and complete a "Request for Administration of Medication" form. Parents should supply their child's medication and maintain current shelf life.
9. Students are not permitted to carry Epipens or inhalers in school unless absolutely necessary and with knowledge of the school nurse. The Physician's order must state that the child will carry the medication.

**10. Under no circumstances should school personnel provide any medication to students including cough drops.**

**11. At the end of the school year, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pick up any leftover medication; otherwise it will be disposed of.**

**If you have any questions concerning the above policy, please contact the school nurse or building principal.**

- ***Note:* The ultimate responsibility for administration of medication belongs to the parent/guardian. As such, the parent/guardian is responsible to insure that the school nurse has the correct medication in the pharmacy-dispensed container, the correct dosage, and the correct documentation on file.**

Revised: April, 2011

## **HEALTH OFFICE**

1. All emergency forms must be complete and up to date. If no form is available and the condition is not serious the child will remain in school in the classroom until dismissal.
2. The school health programs are neither a medical care service nor a clinic. At home injury or illness is the responsibility of the parent.
3. If a child is ill, the child must be kept home until symptom free (vomiting, diarrhea, fever) for 24 hours before returning to school.
4. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the school nurse of any new medical concerns.
5. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide any emergency medications (inhalers, Epipens, etc.) to the health office for emergency preparedness. These must be accompanied by a physician order and parent consent form. These forms may be obtained from the school nurse.
6. Medications sent to school not in compliance with the medication policy **will not** be given.

## **Attendance Policy**

204. ATTENDANCE	
1. Purpose	<p>The Board of Education requires that school aged pupils enrolled in the schools of this district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. The educational program offered by this district is predicated upon the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation.</p> <p>Regular attendance shall be defined as attending school for the full day of each day during which school is in session. Students are expected to attend all sessions unless properly excused by school authorities.</p> <p>Teachers shall check all classes for absenteeism and tardiness and record and report to the office the names of those students who are absent or tardy.</p> <p>Student absences shall be recorded on the Skyward student information management</p>

system.

## 2. Authority

The Board considers the following conditions to constitute reasonable cause for absence from illness, quarantine, death in family, and exceptional urgent reasons.

The term "exceptional urgent reasons" shall include inclement weather when it is impossible or dangerous for the pupil to attend school, but shall not be construed to include domestic service, baby sitting, trips, or similar activities.

Definition of Excused Absences for Temporary Periods:

### Religious Holidays and Religious Instruction

1. Upon written parental request, students may be excused from school for religious holidays observed by bona fied religious groups.
2. Upon written parental request, a student shall be excused from school to attend classes for religious instruction under section 1546 of the Public School Code of 1949. The excusal shall be limited to a total of not more than 36 hours per school year.
3. A student's absence from school for religious holidays, or for religious instruction shall be recorded as an excused absence.

### Tutorial Work

1. Upon written parental request, a student may be excused during school hours for the purpose of receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in the district's curricula, only if the following requirements are met:
  - a. The excusal does not interfere with the student's regular program of studies.
  - b. The qualifications of the instructor are approved by the district superintendent.

### Health Care

1. Upon written parental request, a student may be excused during school hours for the purpose of obtaining professional health care or therapy service, only if the following requirements are met:
  - a. The health or therapeutic services are to be rendered by Commonwealth licensed practitioners.
  - b. It is not practical or possible for the student to receive the services outside of school hours.
  - c. The time of necessary absence from school involves a minimum of interference with the student's regular program of studies.

Death in the student's immediate family

Pre-approved educational trips by the principal. Approval forms provided via Main Office.

**Definition of Unlawful Absence:**

Students under the compulsory school age of 17, and whose absence does not meet the acceptable criteria for an excused absence, will be considered as having an unlawful absence from school. Absences are determined by the superintendent or his designee.

The following constitute, but are not limited to examples of unlawful absences:

- Failure to get up for school.
- Missing a scheduled school bus or not having a ride to school.
- Absence without a parent/guardian's knowledge.
- Babysitting
- Running errands and/or shopping.
- Temporary employment during school hours.

**Unlawful Absence Procedure**

Note: All absences will be considered Unlawful until a written excuse is received by district. (See below)

- Ten (10/one for each day absent) Health Care absences may be provided by parent/guardian or doctor throughout the school year.
- Subsequent Health Care absences will not be excused by parent note. Subsequent Health Care absences will only be excused by a note from a Commonwealth licensed practitioner.
- All written excuses, regardless of absence type, must be submitted within five (5) school days from date of absence.

Number of Offense	Procedure
3 <sup>rd</sup> Unlawful Absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Parent/Guardian will receive Legal Notice</li></ul>
4 <sup>th</sup> Unlawful Absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Student, parent/guardian, and school officials will meet and write a Truancy Elimination Plan</li></ul>
5 <sup>th</sup> and subsequent Unlawful Absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Citation issued by School Truant Officer</li><li>● If a student is found in contempt of the local magistrate's directive, the District will pursue dependency proceedings</li></ul>



Truancy includes the following:

1. Absence from school without knowledge or permission of parents. (Parents shall be informed)
2. Absence from school without knowledge or permission of school authorities.

Students who have excused or unexcused absences shall be given an opportunity to make up missed work if prior approval is requested by the parent(s).

Attendance and Tardiness:

1. Students are not to be counted tardy whenever a bus arrives late.
2. Students who miss their bus should be counted tardy and/or absent in the same manner as non-bus students.
3. Students are not to be detained by teachers after school unless plans have been made by teachers to provide transportation of students home. Building principal should always be contacted for his or her approval.

Suspension of bus privileges:

1. Suspension from the privilege of riding a bus is different from suspension from school. Bus privilege may be taken away but the student must find his/her own method of transportation in getting to and from school.
2. Bus students who have been suspended and who have not reported to school for reasons other than illness will be marked illegally absent.

All absences occasioned by the observance of the student's religion on a day approved by the Board as a religious holiday shall be excused, and no student so excused shall be deprived of an award or eligibility to compete for an award or the opportunity to make up a test given on the religious holiday.

Attendance need not always be within the school facilities, but a student will be considered to be in attendance if present at any place where school is in session by authority of the Board, or at the place where the student is receiving approved tutorial instruction or health care, or at the place where the student is engaged in an approved and properly supervised work-study or career education program, or at

home when the student is receiving approved homebound instruction.

The Board shall consider each student assigned to a program of independent study to be in regular attendance for the program, provided that s/he is under the guidance of a staff member so assigned and reports weekly to such staff member the place in which s/he is conducting study, and regularly demonstrates progress toward the objectives of the course of study.

Repeated infractions of Board policy requiring the attendance of enrolled students may constitute such misconduct and disobedience as to warrant the suspension or expulsion of the student from the regular school program.

It shall be the policy of the Board to consider the effectiveness and appropriateness to the pupil's needs of the educational program that is offered each child who habitually and repeatedly absents him/herself from such program.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to suspend a student from a particular class or from school in accordance with the policies of the Board, if sincere efforts by the staff and parents cannot rectify the pattern of absence. The Superintendent is authorized to establish the criteria to implement this policy.

The Board shall excuse the following students from the requirements of attendance at the schools of this district:

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 so urgent as to preclude regular attendance.

Students enrolled in nonpublic or private schools in which the subjects and activities prescribed by law are taught, except that such students and students attending college who are also enrolled part-time in the schools of this district shall be counted as being in attendance in this district.

Students 16 or 17 years of age whose enrollments in a private trade or business school have been approved.

Children 15 years of age, and 14 years of age who have completed sixth grade, who are engaged in farm work or private domestic service under duly issued permits.

Children 16 years of age regularly employed during the school session and holding a lawfully issued employment certificate.

General Employment Certificates Of 16/17 Year Olds

1. The request for such a certificate must originate from the parent through a personal interview. The personal interview is recommended since the Child Labor Law requires the parent to apply in person.
2. The applicant for the working certificate shall receive from the principal a Promise of Employment Certificate.
3. This Promise of Employment, completely signed by parent and medical examiner, shall be taken to the high school or middle school which issued the Promise of Employment Form. Working certificates will be approved by the School Social Worker, issued by the designated school personnel, and sent by mail to the employer.
4. The applicant will then bring to the School Social Worker the release which will entitle the pupil to turn in his/ her books and have his/her name taken from the active roll.

#### Issuance Of Exemption Permits Domestic Or Farm

1. Application must be made by the parent through a personal interview, followed by a visit to the home by the School Social Worker.
2. After the completion of this form, under the direction of the School Social Worker, the applicant will bring said form to the School Administration Building for signature by the Superintendent.

#### Vacation Certificates

Application for and issuance of all vacation certificates shall be handled through the Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Pupil Services. Each time a child changes jobs, s/he must re-apply to the high school or middle school for a new certificate. New working papers are drawn up and sent to the new employer.

The Board may excuse the following students from the requirements of attendance at the schools of this district:

Students receiving private instruction from a properly qualified tutor.

Homebound children unable on the recommendation of the school physician and/or the school psychologist and/or community psychiatrist.

Students enrolled in special schools conducted by the Luzerne Intermediate Unit or by the Department of Education.

3. Delegation  
of Responsibility

The Board may report to appropriate authorities infractions of the law regarding the attendance of students below the age of 17. The Board shall issue notice to those parents and guardians who fail to comply with the statutory requirements of compulsory attendance that such infractions of the statute will be prosecuted.

The Superintendent shall develop procedures for the attendance of students which:

Insure a school system which is in conformity with requirements of the rules of the State Board.

Govern the keeping of attendance records in accordance with rules of the State Board.

Issue written notice to any parent or guardian who fails to comply with the compulsory attendance statute within three days of any proceeding brought under that statute. Such notice shall inform the parent or guardian of the date(s) on which the absence occurred, that the absence was unexcused and in violation of law, that the parent must be so notified and informed of his/her liability under law for the absence of the student, and further violation during the school term will be prosecuted without notice.

The Board shall, upon written request of the parents or guardians, release from attendance a student participating in a religious instruction program acknowledged by the Board. Such instruction shall not require the child's absence from school for more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year, and its organizers must inform the Board of the child's attendance record. The Board shall not provide transportation to religious instruction.

1. No school or grade may be dismissed before the regular hour for dismissal except with the approval of the office of the Superintendent of Schools.
2. No teacher may permit any individual pupil to leave school prior to the regular hour of dismissal except by permission of the principal.
3. Since the school is responsible to the parent for those hours the child is in school, these rules shall be observed:
  - a. Children shall be released from school only to their parents/guardians or to persons authorized by their parents/guardians.
  - b. In case of illness, it shall be determined that the parent or another person

authorized by the parent is available to receive the child.

- c. If any police or court official requests the dismissal of a pupil during school hours, parents should be notified at once.
  - d. Requests for released time for dental and medical appointments shall be honored when impossible to arrange them on non-school time. A written request from the pupil's parents is necessary.
  - e. Children shall not be dismissed during school hours for non-school activities such as private music lessons, dancing lessons, scouts, etc., except with the approval of the principal.
4. Students may elect to participate in a work experience program for an hourly rate of pay.
5. If a student withdraws from the Wyoming Valley West School District, the parent(s) shall appear with the student in the office prior to withdrawal to complete appropriate withdrawal procedures.

#### Absences Automatic Course Failure

Middle School and High School students who miss twenty (20) classes for full year courses or twelve (12) days for other classes will automatically be referred to the building principal or his/her designee for a review of the reasons for missing the classes. If the reviewer determines that the absences were the result, without exception, of general absence from school or being tardy for school, s/he will inform the student that s/he will receive an automatic failure in the course.

A warning letter will be sent to the parents or guardian when a student has missed fifteen (15) classes in a full year course and eight (8) days for all other courses. A copy of the warning letter will also go to the appropriate guidance counselor and assistant principal. Each student will be advised by his/her guidance counselor.

When the failure point is reached (20 or 12 classes as the case may be), a notification letter will be sent to the parents or guardian advising them of the failure due to absence, and of their opportunity to appeal.

At the end of each marking period, the principal or his/her designee will hear appeals as regards reasons for absences, compliance with this policy, and the student's status in the courses affected. During the 4th marking period, appeals will be heard before final examinations begin.

The classroom teacher will have the responsibility for notifying the school administration when a student is missing excessive time in a class.

<p>School Code 510, 1318, 1327, 1329, 1330, 1332, 1333, 1339, 1354, 1546</p> <p>PA Code Title 11.34 11.32, 11.28, 11.5, 11.22, 11.1, 11.3, Sec. 5.11 22</p>	<p>Students who reach or exceed the failure point (20 or 12 days as the case may be) will receive an incomplete, Comment #63, in the course(s) affected.</p>
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Book	Policy Manual
Section	900 Community
Title	School Visitors
Number	907
Status	Active
Adopted	November 13, 1985
Last Revised	April 12, 2017

### **Authority**

The Board welcomes and encourages interest in district educational programs and other school-related activities. The Board recognizes that such interest may result in visits to school by parents/guardians, adult residents, educators and other officials. To ensure order in the schools and to protect students and employees, it is necessary for the Board to establish policy governing school visits.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent or designee and building principal have the authority to prohibit the entry of any individual to a district school, in accordance with Board guidelines and state and federal law and regulations.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy and control access to school buildings and school classrooms.

### **Guidelines**

Persons wishing to visit a school should make arrangements in advance with the school office in that building.

Upon arrival at the school, visitors must register at the office where they will receive a pass.

Visitors may be required to provide identification credentials upon entering school property.

Visitors may be required to turn off their cell phones upon entering the school to maintain an appropriate educational environment.

All staff members shall be responsible for requiring a visitor demonstrate that s/he has a visitor's pass.

No visitor may confer with a student in school without the approval of the principal.

Should an emergency require that a student be called to the school office to meet a visitor, the principal or designee shall be present during the meeting.

Failure to comply with these procedures shall result in more limited access to the school as determined by the building principal, consistent with Board policies, school rules and federal and state law and regulations.

### **Classroom Visitations**

Parents/Guardians may request to visit their child's classroom, but the request must be made prior to the visit, in accordance with established administrative regulations. [\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)

The building principal or program supervisor must grant prior approval for the visit, and shall notify the classroom teacher prior to the visit.

Parents/Guardians shall be limited to one (1) class period per month, per child in school for classroom visitations, in order to minimize disruption of the classroom schedule and the educational program. Parental participation in classroom activities or programs such as room parents, back-to-school events, and chaperones for field trips shall not constitute a classroom visit for purposes of this policy.

The building principal or program supervisor and classroom teacher have the authority to ask a visitor to leave if the visitor disrupts the classroom routine, educational program or daily schedule, or if a visitor violates Board policy. Failure to leave when asked or repeated, documented disruptions may result in loss of classroom visitation privileges.

Under exceptional circumstances and upon request of the building principal, program supervisor, classroom teach or parent/guardian, the Superintendent may authorize additional or longer classroom visits by a parent/guardian.

### **Military Personnel**

Members of the active and retired Armed Forces, including the National Guard and Reserves, shall be permitted to: [\[3\]](#) [\[4\]](#)

1. Visit and meet with district employees and students when such visit is in compliance with Board policy and district procedures.
2. Wear official military uniforms while on district property.

Legal

[1. 22 PA Code 14.108](#)

[2. 24 P.S. 510](#)

[3. 24 P.S. 2402 \(Military Uniform\)](#)

4. Pol. 250

### **Social Probation Policy**

#### **Philosophy**

The Wyoming Valley West School District maintains a policy that links consistently poor attendance and tardiness with the loss of the privilege to participate in extra-curricular activities. This includes, but is not limited to participation in District-sponsored athletic events, performances, clubs, field trips, class trips, semi-formal, prom or graduation ceremonies.

The Board of Education requires that school aged pupils enrolled in the schools of this district attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth. The educational program offered by this district is predicated upon the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation.

#### **Policy**

Each marking period consists of a nine (9) week period of time. If a student is absent from school for five (5) days within a marking period, without a written excuse, he/she will be considered unlawful. As a result, the student will be placed on "Social Probation" during the marking period in which the five (5) unlawful absences



occurred and the subsequent marking period. The student will be ineligible to participate in all extra-curricular activities as described in the philosophy section of this policy.

This policy will be implemented for all four marking periods. Any underclassman found in violation of the policy during the final marking period shall be subject to the consequences of the policy during the first marking period of the following school year.

## TITLE IX

The Wyoming Valley West School District affirms that no person shall, on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, age, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, veteran's status or genetic information be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity. In addition, no person shall, on any of these bases, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in employment, or recruitment, or consideration, or selection, therefore, whether full-time or part-time, under any educational program or activity operated by the district. The district shall make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request.

### **Do you need to file a complaint?**

Any student, staff member, or third party who believes he or she has been subject to sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation is encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator using the contact information detailed below.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Mrs. Deborah Troy  
570-288-6551 ext 10408  
[dtroy@wvwsd.org](mailto:dtroy@wvwsd.org)

Mr. Nick Gill  
570-779-5361 ext 12960  
[ngill@wvwsd.org](mailto:ngill@wvwsd.org)

## **McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program**

### **MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT:**

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is authorized under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) (McKinney-Vento Act). The McKinney-Vento Act was originally authorized in 1987 and most recently re-authorized in December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).<sup>1</sup> The McKinney-Vento Act is designed to address the challenges that homeless children and youths have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youths. Homeless children and youths must have access to the educational and related services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. Local Educational Agencies are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths.

The law indicates that the LEA liaison shall ensure that all homeless children, youth and families are identified through coordinated activities with other entities.

### **DEFINITION OF HOMELESS (MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT SEC. 725(2); 42 U.S.C 11435(2)): CHILDREN WHO LACK A FIXED, REGULAR, AND ADEQUATE NIGHT TIME RESIDENCE:**

"Doubled up" - Sharing the housing of others due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons.

Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations.

Living in emergency or transitional shelters.

Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live.

Migratory children living in above circumstances

Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings

Unaccompanied Youth - Children or youth who meets the definition of homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

### **Residency and Educational Rights:**

#### **Students who are in temporary, inadequate and homeless living situations have the following rights:**

Immediate enrollment in the school they last attended or the school in whose attendance area they are currently staying even if they do not have all of the documents normally required at the time of enrollment;

Access to free meals and textbooks, Title I and other educational programs and other comparable services including transportation;

Attendance in the same classes and activities that students in other living situations also participate in without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their housing situations.

#### **When a student is identified as being McKinney-Vento eligible, staff will:**

Assist with enrollment, monitor school attendance and arrange transportation (preK-8 students)

Provide school supplies and other school related materials as needed

Advocate for and support students and families through school and home visits

Set clear expectations for student behavior, attendance and academic performance

Assist students/families access with community services

Assist students/families with access to tutoring, special education, and English language learner resources

Assist students so they can participate in sports, field trips, and school activities regardless of their ability to pay or to provide their own transportation.

**For additional information, contact [LEA](#) Homeless Liaison at 000-000-0000.**

## *Notice of Special Education Services*

All of the public schools of Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 (LIU), 368 Tioga Ave., Kingston, Pennsylvania provides special education and related service to resident children with disabilities who are ages three through twenty-one. The purpose of this notice is to describe (1) the types of disabilities that might qualify the child for such programs and services, (2) the special education programs and related services that are available, (3) the process by which the public schools screen and evaluate such students to determine eligibility, and (4) the special rights that pertain to such children and their parents or legal guardians. The notice of Special Education Services is prepared annually by the Director of Special Education at the Luzerne Intermediate Unit and is reported each October on behalf of the member school districts. It is meant to inform the public as to the purpose and rights of special needs children and families.

### **What types of disability might qualify a child for special education and related services?**

Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or "IDEA," children qualify for special education and related services if they have one or more of the following disabilities and, as a result, need such services: (1) intellectual disabilities (formerly mental retardation); (2) hearing impairments, including deafness; (3) speech or language impairments; (4) visual impairments, including blindness; (5) serious emotional disturbance; (6) orthopedic impairments, or physical disabilities; (7) autism, including pervasive developmental disorders; (8) traumatic brain injury, or neurological impairment; (9) other health impairment; (10) specific learning disabilities. Children age three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need special education and related services. Children with more than one of the foregoing disabilities could qualify for special education and related services as having multiple disabilities. For infants, birth through three with special needs, contact the Luzerne County Mental Health / Mental Retardation Agency.

The legal definitions of these disabilities, which the public schools are required to apply under the IDEA, may differ from those used in medical or clinical practice. The legal definitions, moreover, could apply to children with disabilities that have very different medical or clinical disorders. A child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, for example, could qualify for special education and related services as a child with "other health impairments," "serious emotional disturbance," or "specific learning disabilities" if the child meets the eligibility criteria under one or more of these disability categories and if the child needs special education and related services as a result.

Under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, some school age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined above might nevertheless be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations if they have a mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

### **What programs and services are available for children with disabilities?**

Public schools must ensure that children with disabilities are educated to the maximum extent appropriate in the regular education environment, and that the instruction they receive conforms as much as possible to the instruction that non-disabled students receive. This practice is commonly referred to as Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Programs and services available to students with disabilities, in descending order of preference, are (1) regular class placement with supplementary aides and services provided as needed in that environment; (2) regular class placement for most of the school day with itinerant service by a special education teacher either in or out of the regular classroom; (3) regular class placement for most of the school day with instruction provided by a special education teacher in a resource classroom; (4) part time special education class placement in a regular public school or alternative setting; and (5) special education class placement or special education services provided outside the regular class for most or all of the school day, either in a regular public school or alternative setting.

Depending on the nature and severity of the disability, the public school can provide special education programs and services in (1) the public school the child would attend if not disabled, (2) an alternative regular public school either in or outside the school district of residence, (3) a special education center operated by a public school entity, (4) an approved private school or other private facility licensed to serve children with disabilities, (5) a residential school, (6) approved out-of-state program, or (7) the home.

Special education services are provided according to the primary educational needs of the child, not the category of disability. The types of service available are (1) learning support, for students who primarily need assistance with the acquisition of

academic skills; (2) life skills support, for students who primarily need assistance with development of skills for independent living; (3) emotional support, for students who primarily need assistance with social or emotional development; (4) deaf or hearing impaired support, for students who primarily need assistance with deafness; (5) blind or visually impaired support, for students who primarily need assistance with blindness; (6) physical support, for students who primarily require physical

assistance in the learning environment; (7) autistic support, for students who primarily need assistance in the areas affected by autism spectrum disorders; and (8) multiple disabilities support, for student who primarily need assistance in multiple areas affected by their disabilities.

Related services are designed to enable the child to participate in or access his or her program of special education. Examples of related services are speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing services, audiologist services, counseling including social work, and family training.

Within the Luzerne Intermediate Unit, children of preschool age are served by the Hazleton Area School District in a variety of home and school-based settings that take into account the chronological and developmental age and primary needs of the child. As with school age programs, preschool programs must ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with non-disabled peers.

The public school, in conjunction with the parents, determines the type and intensity of special education and related services that a particular child needs based exclusively on the unique program of special education and related services that the school develops for that child. The child's program is described in writing in an individualized education program, or "IEP," which is developed by an IEP team consisting of educators, parents, and other persons with special expertise or familiarity the child. The parents of the child have the right to be notified of and to participate in all meetings of their child's IEP team. The IEP is revised as often as circumstances warrant but at least annually. The law requires that the program and placement of the child, as described in the IEP, be reasonably calculated to ensure meaningful educational progress to the student at all times. IEPs contain, at a minimum, a statement of present levels of educational and functional performance, an enumeration of annual goals and, for some children, short-term objectives or benchmarks, and a statement of the special education, program modifications, and related services that the child needs to make meaningful educational progress. Transition planning begins at age fourteen. For children aged sixteen and older, the IEP must also include a transition plan to assist in the attainment of post-secondary objectives. The public school must invite the child to the IEP team meeting at which the transition plan is developed.

#### **How do the public schools screen and evaluate children to determine eligibility for special education and related services?**

##### ***Multidisciplinary team evaluation***

The public schools must conduct a multidisciplinary team evaluation of every child who is thought to have a disability. The multidisciplinary team is a group of professionals who are trained in and experienced with the testing, assessment, and observation of children to determine whether they have disabilities and, if so, to identify their primary educational strengths and needs. Parents are members of the multidisciplinary team. Public schools must reevaluate school-age students receiving special education services every three years and must reevaluate children with mental retardation and pre-school-age children receiving special education services every two years.

Parents may request a multidisciplinary team evaluation of their children at any time. They must do so in writing or in some cases an oral request can be made but must be followed up by permission to evaluate from the parent. Every public school within the Luzerne Intermediate Unit has a procedure in place by which parents can request an evaluation. For information about the procedures that apply in your public school, contact the public elementary, middle, or high school to which children in your area are assigned. Telephone numbers and addresses for these schools can be found in the blue pages section of the telephone book under the heading "Schools." Parents of preschool age children, age three through five, residing within the Luzerne Intermediate Unit may request an evaluation in writing by addressing a letter as follows: Hazleton Area School District, Early Intervention Services, 1515 West 23rd Street, Hazleton, PA 18202. The telephone number for the Early Intervention Program is (570) 459-8118.

Parents of children in private schools residing within the Luzerne Intermediate Unit may request a multidisciplinary team evaluation of their children from the public school district that they reside without enrolling in the public schools. While some services might be available to some private school children found eligible by public school multidisciplinary teams, the public schools are not required to provide all or any of the special education and related services that children enrolled in the public schools would receive. If, after an evaluation, the multidisciplinary team determines that the child is eligible for special education and related services, the public school must offer the parents a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and an IEP for a public school-sponsored placement. If parents wish to take advantage of such an offer, they might have to enroll or re-enroll their child in the public schools in order to receive services and/or dually enroll in both public and non-public setting. Some public schools may offer FAPE through a third party (LIU) in the non-public school. The Luzerne Intermediate Unit through IDEA acts as the Local Education Agent (LEA) for non-public schools under equitable participation (EP). Equitable Participation

services are determined annually by the non-public schools within the LIU. EP services are based on funding of student's in non-public schools who have known disabilities through appropriate evaluation and are not receiving FAPE through their local public schools. This identification process is called Child Find. Child find is the responsibility of the public schools. The LIU reports the data of child find for the public schools to PDE for IDEA data purposes.

Before the public school can proceed with any evaluation, it must notify the parents in writing of the specific types of testing and assessment it proposes to conduct, of the date and time of the evaluation, and of the parents' rights. The evaluation cannot begin until the parent has signed the written notice indicating that he or she consents to the proposed testing and assessments and has returned the notice to the public school.

### ***Screening***

Public schools undertake screening activities before referring most children for a multidisciplinary team evaluation. Screening activities consist of the following:

Ongoing analysis of the child's response to instruction and performance on State-wide and District-wide assessments.

Periodic vision and hearing assessments by the school nurse and review of the results of physical examinations by school or private physicians as Mandated by the Pennsylvania Public School Code.

Team-based baseline assessment and analysis of the child's response to individualized academic or behavioral intervention over a period of up to sixty (60) days. Such intervention-based screening occurs when requested by the child's teacher, parents, or other concerned school personnel.

For information about the dates of various screening activities in your local public school or to request screening activities for a particular child, contact the local public school directly. Telephone numbers and addresses for these schools can be found in the blue pages section of the telephone book under the heading "Schools." Parents of preschool age children, age three through five, residing within the Luzerne Intermediate Unit may obtain information about screening activities, or may request a screening of their children, by calling or writing the Hazleton Area School District, Early Intervention Services, 1515 West 23rd Street, Hazleton, PA 18202. The telephone number for the Early Intervention Program is (570) 459-8118.

Private school administrators, teachers, and parent groups, or individual parents of students in private schools, who are interested in establishing systems in those schools for locating and identifying children with disabilities who might need a multidisciplinary team evaluation may contact Ms. Elizabeth Krokos, Director of Special Education, Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18, 368 Tioga Avenue, Kingston, PA 18704, phone number 570-287-9681. Non-public school administrators are in-serviced yearly at the EP meeting as to the procedures for identification and responsibilities of the non-public, public school district and the LIU for parent privately placed children in non-public schools.

What special rights and protections do children with disabilities and their parents have?

State and federal law affords many rights and protections to children with disabilities and their parents. A summary of those rights and protections follows. Interested persons may obtain a complete written summary of the rights and protections afforded by the law, together with information about free or low cost legal services and advice, by contacting the special education or student services department of the school district in which they reside at the address and telephone number listed at the end of this notice, or through the principal of the local public school at the address and telephone number listed in the blue pages section of the telephone book under the heading "Schools." For pre-school identified students residing within the Luzerne Intermediate Unit a written summary is also available through the Hazleton Area School District, Early Intervention Services, 1515 West 23rd Street, Hazleton, PA 18202. The telephone number for the Early Intervention Program is (570) 459-8118.

### ***Rights and Protections***

**Prior Written Notice.** The public school must notify you in writing whenever it proposes to initiate or to change the identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement of a child or whenever it refuses to initiate or make a change in the identification, evaluation, educational program, or placement requested by a parent. Such notice must be accompanied by a written description of the reasons for the proposal or refusal, the options considered, if any, and the reasons why such options were rejected.



**Consent.** The public school cannot proceed with an evaluation or reevaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents. A public school may override the lack of consent for an initial evaluation by requesting the approval of an impartial hearing officer or judge following a hearing. If the parents fail to respond to a written request for permission to reevaluate, however, the public school may proceed with the proposed reevaluation without consent. A public school may not seek a hearing to override the refusal of a parent to consent to an initial placement in special education.

**Protection in Evaluation Procedures.** Evaluations to determine eligibility and current need for special education and related services must be administered in a manner that is free of racial, cultural, or linguistic bias. Evaluations cannot consist of a single test or assessment, and testing must be a valid measure of the psychological, social, emotional, or other learning characteristic or behavior that the school is using it to measure. Testing and assessment must be administered in accordance with professional standards and the criteria established by the publisher. It must be administered in the native language of the child.

**Independent Educational Evaluation.** If parents disagree with the evaluation conducted by the public school, they may request in writing an independent educational evaluation, or "IEE," at public expense. The policy of the public schools of Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 is to refuse to pay for such evaluations if the independent evaluator is not a Pennsylvania certified or Licensed professional, if the evaluation is not conducted in the same manner that the law requires of public school evaluations, or if the cost of the evaluation substantially exceeds the prevailing cost of similar evaluations in the region. Exceptions to these limitations will be granted only for compelling reasons. If the public school refuses to pay for the IEE, it must request an immediate special education due process hearing to defend the appropriateness of its evaluation.

### **Due Process Hearing Procedures**

The parent or local educational agency (LEA) may request a due process hearing with respect to any matter relating to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of a free appropriate public education ("FAPE"). The party requesting the hearing must submit a "Due Process Hearing Request" form to the Office for Dispute Resolution, 6340 Flank Drive, Suite 600, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17112; telephone (800) 222-3353; TTY (800) 654-5984. A due process hearing will not proceed until all required information is provided and procedures followed.

**Timeline for requesting Due Process.** The parent or LEA must request a due process hearing by filing a Due Process Hearing Request within two (2) years of the date to parent or the LEA knew or should have known about the alleged action that forms the basis of the request. There are limited exceptions to this timeline. This timeline will not apply to the parent if—the parent was prevented from requesting the due process hearing due to the specific misrepresentations by the LEA that it had resolved the problem forming the basis of the hearing request, or if the LEA withheld information from the parent that the LEA was required provide.

**Filing and Service of the Due Process Hearing Request.** The party requesting the hearing must send a copy of the Due Process Hearing Request to the other party and, at the same time, to the Office for Dispute Resolution by mail addressed to the Office for Dispute Resolution, 6340 Flank Drive, Suite 600, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17112, or by electronic mail addressed to [ODR.pattan.net](mailto:ODR.pattan.net), or by facsimile at (717) 657-5983.

**Contents of Due Process Hearing Request.** The Due Process Hearing Request must contain the following information:

1. The name of the child, the address where the child lives, and the name of the school the child is attending or, if the child is homeless, available contact information for the child and the name of the school the child is attending;
2. A description of the nature of the problem, including facts relating to such problem; and
3. A proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known and available to the party filing the Request.

**Challenging Sufficiency of the Due Process Hearing Request.** The Due Process Hearing Request will be considered to be sufficient unless the party receiving it notifies the Hearing Officer and the other party in writing within fifteen (15) days of receipt that the receiving party believes the Request does not meet the requirements listed above.

**Response to Request.** If the LEA has not sent a prior written notice ("NOREP") to the parent regarding the subject matter contained in the parent's Due Process Hearing Request, the LEA must send to the parent, within ten (10) days of receiving the Due Process Hearing Request, a response including the following information: an explanation of why the LEA proposed or refused to take the action raised in the Hearing Request; a description of other options the Individualized Education Program ("IEP") Team considered, if any, and the reasons why those options were rejected; a description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the LEA used as the basis for the proposed or refused action; and a description of the factors that are relevant to the proposal or refusal. Filing this response to the parent's Due Process Hearing Request does not prevent the LEA from challenging the sufficiency of the Due Process Hearing Request. If the LEA has already sent prior notice in the form of a

NOREP to the parent, or it is the parent receiving the Due Process Hearing Request then a response to the Due Process Hearing Request must be sent to the other side within ten (10) days of receipt of the request. The response should specifically address the issues raised in the Due Process Hearing Request.

**Hearing Officer Determination of Sufficiency of the Due Process Hearing Request.** Within five (5) days of receiving a party's challenge to the sufficiency of the Due Process Hearing Request, the Hearing Officer must make a determination based solely on the information contained within the Request whether the Request meets content requirements listed above. The Hearing Officer must immediately notify both parties in writing of his or her determination.

**Subject Matter of the Hearing.** The party requesting the due process hearing is not permitted to raise issues at the due process hearing that were not raised in the Due Process Hearing Request (or Amended Due Process Hearing Request) unless the other party agrees otherwise.

**Resolution Session.** Before a due process hearing can take place, the LEA must convene a preliminary meeting with the parent and the relevant member or members of the IEP Team who have specific knowledge of the facts identified in the Due Process Hearing Request in an attempt to resolve those issues without the need to proceed to a due process hearing. This preliminary meeting must be convened within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the Due Process Hearing Request. A representative of the LEA who has decision-making authority must be present at this meeting. The LEA may not have an attorney attend the meeting unless the parent is also accompanied by an attorney. At the meeting, the parent will discuss the Due Process Hearing Request, and the LEA will be provided the opportunity to resolve the Due Process Hearing Request unless the parent and the LEA agree, in writing, to waive this meeting, or agree to use the mediation process. If the parent and LEA resolve the issues in the Due Process Hearing Request at the preliminary meeting, they must put the agreement terms in writing, and both the parent and a representative of the LEA who has the authority to bind the LEA must sign the agreement. The agreement is a legally-binding document and may be enforced by a court. Either the parent or LEA may void the agreement within three (3) business days of the date of the agreement. After three (3) days, the agreement is binding on both parties.

**Amended Due Process Hearing Request.** Either the parent or a LEA may amend its Due Process Hearing Request only if the other party consents in writing to the amendment and is given the opportunity to resolve the issues raised in the Due Process Hearing Request through a resolution session, or the Hearing Officer grants permission for the party to amend the Due Process Hearing Request. However, the Hearing Officer may grant this permission not later than five (5) days before a due process hearing occurs.

**Timeline for Completion of Due Process Hearing.** If the LEA has not resolved the Due Process Hearing Request within thirty (30) days of receiving it, or within thirty (30) days of receiving the Amended Due Process Hearing Request the due process hearing may proceed and applicable timelines commence. The timeline for completion of due process hearings is forty-five (45) days, unless the Hearing Officer grants specific extensions of time at the request of either party.

**Disclosure of Evaluations and Recommendations.** Not less than five (5) business days prior to a due process hearing, each party must disclose to all other parties all evaluations completed by that date, and recommendations based on the offering party's evaluations that the party intends to use at the due process hearing. Failure to disclose this information may result in a Hearing Officer prohibiting the party from introducing the information at the hearing unless the other party consents to its introduction.

**Due Process Hearing Rights.** The hearing for a child with a disability or thought to have a disability must be conducted and held in the LEA at a place and time reasonably convenient to the parent and child involved. The hearing must be an oral, personal hearing and must be closed the public unless the parent requests an open hearing. If the hearing is open, the decision issued in the case, and only the decision, will be available to the public. If the hearing is closed, the decision will be treated as a record of the child and may not be available to the public. The decision of the Hearing Officer must include findings of fact, discussion, and conclusions of law. Although technical rules of evidence will not be followed, the decision must be based upon substantial evidence presented at the hearing. A written or, at the option of the parent, electronic verbatim record of the hearing will be provided to the parent at no cost. Parents may be represented by legal counsel and accompanied and advised by individuals with special knowledge or training with respect to the problems of children with disabilities. Parents or parent representatives must be given access to educational records, including any tests or reports upon which the proposed action is based. A party has the right to compel the attendance of and question witnesses who may have evidence upon which the proposed action might be based. A party has the right to present evidence and confront and cross-examine witnesses. A party has the right to present evidence and testimony, including expert medical, psychological, or educational testimony.

**Decision of Hearing Officer.** A decision made by a Hearing Officer must be made on substantive grounds, based upon a determination of whether the child received a FAPE. In disputes alleging procedural violations, a Hearing Officer may award remedies only if the procedural inadequacies impeded the child's right to a FAPE; significantly impeded the parents opportunity

to participate in the decision-making process regarding the provision of a FAPE to the child; or caused a deprivation of educational benefits. A Hearing Officer may still order a LEA to comply with procedural requirements even if the Hearing Officer determines that the child received a FAPE. The parent may still file a Complaint with the Bureau of Special Education within the Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding procedural violations.

The Due Process Hearing will service as the local and state level hearing: appeals may be made to the court of competent jurisdiction.

**Civil Action.** A party that disagrees with the findings and decision of the Hearing Officer (in the case of Section 504/Chapter 15 cases and early intervention cases) has the right to file an appeal in state or federal court. The party filing an appeal is encouraged to seek legal counsel to determine the appropriate court with which to file an appeal. A party filing an appeal to state or federal court has ninety (90) days from the date of the decision to do so.

**Attorney's Fees.** A court, in its discretion, may award reasonable attorney's fees to the parent of a child who is a prevailing party or to a State Educational Agency or LEA against the attorney of the parent who files a Due Process Hearing Request or subsequent cause of action that is frivolous, unreasonable, or without foundation, or against the attorney of the parent who continued to litigate after the litigation clearly became frivolous, unreasonable or without foundation; or to a prevailing State Educational Agency or LEA against the attorney of the parent, or against the parent, if the parent's Due Process Hearing Request or subsequent cause of action was presented for any improper purpose, such as to harass, to cause unnecessary delay, or to needlessly increase the cost of litigation. Fees awarded will be based on rates prevailing in the community in which the action or proceeding arose for the kind and quantity of attorney services furnished.

The federal law imposes certain requirements upon the parent and LEA and in some circumstances may limit attorney fee awards. Parents should consult with their legal counsel regarding these matters. The following rules apply: Attorney's fees may not be awarded and related costs may not be reimbursed in any action or proceeding for services performed subsequent to the time of a written offer of settlement to the parent if the offer is made within the time prescribed by Rule 68 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedures, or, in the case of an administrative hearing, at any time more than ten (10) days before the proceeding begins; the offer is not accepted within ten (10) days; and the court finds that the relief finally obtained by the parent is not more favorable to the parent than the offer of settlement. Attorney's fees may not be awarded for time spent attending any meeting of the IEP team unless the meeting is convened as a result of an administrative proceeding or judicial action. A due process resolution session is not considered to be a meeting convened as a result of an administrative hearing or judicial action, nor an administrative hearing or judicial action for purposes of reimbursing attorney's fees. The Court may reduce the amount of any attorney's fee award when: (a) the parent, or the parent's attorney, during the course of the action or proceeding unreasonably protracted the final resolution of the controversy; (b) the amount of the attorney's fees otherwise authorized to be awarded unreasonably exceeds the hourly rate prevailing in the community for similar services by attorneys of reasonably comparable skill, reputation, and experience; (c) the time spent and legal services furnished were excessive considering the nature of the action or proceeding; or (d) the attorney representing the parent did not provide to LEA the appropriate information in the Due Process Hearing Request. These reductions do not apply in any action or proceeding if the court finds that the State or LEA unreasonably protracted the final resolution of the action or proceeding.

**Child's Status during Administrative Proceedings.** Except for discipline cases, which have specific rules, while the due process case, the child must remain (pendency) in his or her present educational placement unless the parent and LEA or State agree otherwise. If the due process hearing involves an application for initial admission to public school, the child, with parental consent, must be placed in the public school program until completion of all the proceedings, unless the parent and LEA agree otherwise.

**Private School Tuition Reimbursement.** In some cases, parents of children who were identified by the public school as eligible for special education and related services and who received such services can recover in a due process hearing or from a court an award of private school tuition reimbursement. Parents can also receive such awards if their child was in need of special education and related services but were not offered such services in a timely manner. To obtain an award of tuition reimbursement, parents must notify their public school of their intent to enroll their child in a private school either verbally at the last IEP team meeting prior to withdrawing their child or in writing received by the public school at least ten days prior to the date on which the child is withdrawn from public school. Parents can obtain tuition only when they can prove at a special education due process hearing that (1) the public school failed to offer an appropriate program or placement to the child, (2) the parents therefore placed their child in a private school, and (3) the private school placement was proper. Tuition reimbursement awards can be denied or reduced if the parent's behavior was improper or if the parents delay unreasonably in asserting a claim against the public school in a due process hearing. Such awards can also be denied or reduced if the parents fail to do one of the following: (1) notify the public school of their intent to place the child in a private school at the last IEP team meeting prior to the planned placement or (2) notify the public school in writing of their intent to place the student in a private school at least ten days before withdrawing the student for that purpose.



**Mediation.** Parties may agree to submit their dispute to the mediation process by requesting mediation from the Office for Dispute Resolution. Mediation may be requested in place of or in addition to a due process hearing. If a hearing is also requested, mediation cannot delay the scheduling of the due process hearing, unless the Hearing Officer grants a continuance for that purpose at the request of a party. An impartial, trained mediator facilitates the mediation process, which is scheduled at a time and location convenient to the parties. The parties are not permitted to have attorneys participate in the process. Any resolution reached through mediation must be reduced to writing, which will be binding on the parties.

**Rights under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.** As noted above, some students with disabilities who are not in need of special education and related services are nevertheless entitled to adaptations and accommodations in their school program or in the physical environment of school buildings, grounds, vehicles, and equipment, when such adaptations or accommodations are required to enable the student to access and participate meaningfully in educational programming and extracurricular activities. Parents are entitled to a written description of the adaptations and accommodations that the public school is willing to offer. This written description is called a "service agreement" or "accommodation plan." The rights and protections described above under the headings "Notice," "Consent," "Protection in Evaluation Procedures," and "Maintenance of Placement" apply to students receiving adaptations and accommodations under Section 504. Parents who have complaints concerning the evaluation, program, placement, or provision of services to a student may request either an informal conference with the public school or a due process hearing. The hearing must be held before an impartial hearing officer at a time and location convenient to the parents. Parents have the right to request a free written or electronic transcript or recording of the proceedings, to present evidence and witnesses disclosed to the public school, to confront evidence and testimony presented by the public school, to review their child's complete educational record on request before the hearing, to receive a written decision from the hearing officer, and to be represented by counsel or an advocate of their choice. An appeal may be taken from the decision of the hearing officer to a court of competent jurisdiction.

**Compliance Complaints.** In addition to the above hearing rights, parents and others with complaints concerning the education of a child with disabilities or violations of rights guaranteed by either the IDEA or Section 504 may file complaints with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, which must investigate such complaints and issue written findings and conclusions. Information concerning such complaints can be obtained at the following address:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
Division of Compliance Monitoring and Planning  
333 Market Street, 7th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
(800) 879-2301

### **Student Records**

The public schools of Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 maintain records concerning all children enrolled in public school, including students with disabilities. Records containing personally identifiable information about or related to children with disabilities could include, but are not limited to, cumulative grade reports, discipline records, enrollment and attendance records, health records, individualized education programs, notices of recommended assignment, notices of intent to evaluate and reevaluate, comprehensive evaluation reports, other evaluation reports by public school staff and by outside evaluators, work samples, test data, data entered into the Penn Data system, PIMS, correspondence between school staff and home, instructional support team documents, referral data, memoranda, and other education-related documents. Records can be maintained on paper, on microfiche, on audio or videotape, and electronically. Records can be located in the central administrative offices of the public school, the school building or building at which the student attended or attends school, private schools and facilities at which the public school has placed the child for educational purposes, central storage facilities and electronic storage systems, and in the secure possession of teachers, building administrators, specialists, psychologists, counselors, and other school staff with a legitimate educational interest in the information contained therein. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality and adhere to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations.

Records are maintained as long as they remain educationally relevant. The purposes of collecting and maintaining records are (1) to ensure that the child receives programs and services consistent with his or her IEP; (2) to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of programming for the child; (3) to document for the public school and the parents that the student is making meaningful progress; (4) to satisfy the requirements of state and federal agencies who have an interest in inspecting or reviewing documents concerning particular students or groups of students for purposes of compliance monitoring, complaint investigation, and fiscal and program audits; and (5) to inform future programming for and evaluations of the child. When educational records, other than those which must be maintained, are no longer educationally relevant, the public school must so notify the parents in writing and may destroy the records or, at the request of the parents, must destroy them. Public schools are not required to destroy records that are no longer educationally relevant unless the parents so request in writing.

**Parent consent.** Parent consent is required in writing prior to the release of any personally identifiable information concerning a child with disabilities. Parent consent is not required, however, prior to the release of information (1) to a hearing officer in a special education due process hearing; (2) to public school staff and contractors with a legitimate educational interest in the information; (3) to officials or staff of other schools and school systems at which the student is enrolled or intends to enroll; (4) to federal or state education officials and agencies and to the Comptroller of the United States; (5) to accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions; (6) to comply with a lawful subpoena or judicial order; (7) in conjunction with a health or safety emergency to the extent necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or others; or (8) that the public schools have designated as "directory information." Disclosure without consent of the parent is subject to certain conditions more fully described in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C § 1332g, and its implementing regulation, 34 C.F.R. Part 99.

**Parent access.** Upon submitting a request to do so in writing, parents have the right to access the educational records of their child within forty five days or before any due process hearing or IEP team meeting, whichever is sooner. Access entitles the parent to the following: (1) an explanation and interpretation of the records by public school personnel; (2) copies of the records if providing copies is the only means by which the parent can effectively exercise his or her right of inspection and review; and (3) inspection and review of the records by a representative of the parent's choosing upon presentation to the records custodian of a written authorization from the parent. The public school can charge a fee not to exceed its actual costs for copying records.

**"Directory information."** Public school entities designate certain kinds of information as "directory information." The public schools of Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 typically designate the following as "directory information": (1) the name, address, telephone number, and photographs of the child; (2) the date and place of birth of the child; (3) participation in school clubs and extracurricular activities; (4) weight and height of members of athletic teams; (5) dates of attendance; (6) diplomas and awards received; (7) the most recent previous institution or school attended by the child; and (8) names of parents, siblings, and other family members. The District will provide this information to any interested person, including armed forces recruiters who request it, without seeking consent from the parents of the student or the student. Parents who do not want the District to disclose such information *must so notify the District in writing on or before the first day of the school term*. Written notice must identify the specific types of directory information that the parent does not want the District to disclose without consent. If the parent fails to notify the District in writing by the first day of the school term, the District may release directory information upon request and without consent.

**Disclosure of records containing personally identifiable information to other schools and institutions.** Public school entities disclose personally identifiable information concerning students to educational agencies or institutions at which the student seeks to enroll, intends to enroll, or is enrolled, or from which the student receives services, when that agency or institution requests such records.

**Access to records by school officials with a "legitimate educational interest."** School officials with a legitimate educational interest in the personally-identifiable information contained in education records can have access to personally identifiable information without parent or student consent. Each school entity designates in its education records policy those persons who have a "legitimate educational interest" that would allow such access to education records. Such persons typically include teachers of the child, building administrators, guidance counselors to whom the child is assigned, members of instructional support and multidisciplinary teams in the course of screening and evaluation activities, records custodians and clerks, public school administrators with responsibility for programs in which the student is enrolled or intends to be enrolled, school board members sitting in executive session in consideration of matters concerning the child upon which only the school board can act, program specialists and instructional aides working with the child, therapeutic staff working with the child, and substitutes for any of the foregoing persons

**Amendment of education records.** After reviewing records, a parent or a student who has attained the age of 18 can request that records be amended. The school will make the requested changes or reject the request within forty-five days of the receipt of the request in writing. If the school rejects the request, the parent or student may request an informal hearing. The hearing can be held before any public school official who does not have a direct interest in its outcome. If the parents are dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal hearing, they may submit to the public school a statement outlining their disagreement with the record. The school thereafter must attach a copy of that statement to all copies of the record disclosed to third parties.

**Complaints to the United States Department of Education.** Complaints concerning alleged failure of a public school entity to comply with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act may be addressed to the United States Department of Education as follows:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

This notice is only a summary of the special education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents. For more information or to request evaluation or screening of a public or private school child contact the public school nearest you. The number and addresses of all public schools in Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 are located in the blue pages of the telephone book under the heading "Schools." Information can also be obtained, and screenings and evaluations requested, by contacting the offices of special education or student services in each of the various school districts or, for preschool children, at Luzerne Intermediate Unit of Hazleton Area School District.

**Notice of Services for Gifted Students** While "gifted" is not one of the "disabilities" required under the Federal IDEA legislation, the State Board of Education's regulations as set forth in 22 Pa. Code Chapter 16 – Special Education for Gifted Students, provides recognition that gifted students are considered to be "children with exceptionalities" under the Public School Code of 1949 and are in need of special designed instruction.

A district shall conduct public awareness activities to inform the public of gifted education services and programs and the manner by which to request these services and programs. These awareness activities shall be designed to reach parents of students enrolled in the public schools.

#### ***Students Who are Mentally Gifted***

All Luzerne Intermediate Unit entities, except charter schools, also offer special education services, in the form of acceleration or enrichment, for students who are identified by a gifted multidisciplinary team (GMDT) as "mentally gifted". A child is considered mentally gifted when his or her cognitive ability or other factors, as determined by a multidisciplinary team evaluation, indicate that he or she has outstanding intellectual ability the development of which requires special programs and services not ordinarily available in the general education program. The school entity engages in screening activities during regular classroom instruction and uses the data thus generated to determine whether a GMDT evaluation is warranted. In addition, parents may request gifted screening or a GMDT evaluation at any time. Parents are part of the GMDT and, if their child is determined to be mentally gifted, are part of the development and annual review and revision of their child's gifted individualized education program (GIEP) as a member of the GIEP team. The GIEP describes the present levels, annual goals and measurable objectives, and specially designed instruction and related services through which the District will provide the enrichment or acceleration, or both, that is needed to develop the outstanding mental ability of the child. Parents of students who are mentally gifted have the right to request a special education due process hearing or to file a compliance complaint with the Pennsylvania Department of Education at the address listed below. Details concerning the procedures governing hearing requests can be found on the Website of the Office for Dispute Resolution at <http://www.pattan.k12.pa.us>.

A child can be identified as both a child with a disability and mentally gifted. In such cases, the rights of the child and his or her parents are governed by the rules applicable to children with disabilities and their parents, as described above.

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
Division of Compliance Monitoring and Planning  
333 Market Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
(800)879-2301

**Chapter 4** - The State Board of Education regulations as adopted under statutory authority in the School Code.

**Chapter 16**- Gifted education is separate from special education services.

**Dual Exceptionalities:** If a student is both gifted and eligible for special education, the procedures in Chapter 14 shall take precedence. For these students identified with dual exceptionalities, the needs established under the gifted status must be fully addressed in the procedures required in Chapter 14. (22 Pa. Code § 16.7(b))

For students who are gifted and eligible for special education, it is not necessary for school districts to conduct separate screening and evaluations, develop separate IEPs, or use separate procedural safeguards processes to provide for a student's needs as both a gifted and eligible student. (22 Pa. Code § 16.7(c))

**Education Placement** - The overall educational environment in which gifted education is provided to gifted students in all public schools of Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18. Placements and Programs may vary from school district to school district.

**GIEP** - Gifted Individualized Education Program.

**GMDT**– Gifted Multidisciplinary Team

**Gifted Education** - Specially designed instruction to meet the needs of a gifted student that is:

(i) Conducted in an instructional setting, (ii) Provided in an instructional or skill area, (iii) Provided at no cost to the parents, (iv) Provided under the authority of a school district, directly, by referral or by contract, (v) Provided by an agency, (vi) Individualized to meet the educational needs of the student, (vii) Reasonable calculated to yield meaningful educational benefit and student progress, (viii) Provided in conformity with GIEP.

**Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation** - A systematic process of testing, assessment, and other evaluative processes used by a team to develop a recommendation about whether or not a student is gifted or needs gifted education.

**Gifted Student** - A student who is exceptional under section 1372 of the School Code (24 P.S. §13-1371) because the student meets the definition of "mentally gifted" in this section, and needs specially designed instruction beyond that required in Chapter 4 (relating to academic standards and assessment.) This term applies on to students who are of "school age" as defined under § 11.12 (relating to academic standards and assessment.) This term applies only to students who are of "school age" as defined under § 11.12 (relating to school age.)

**Instruction setting** - A classroom or another setting in which gifted students are receiving gifted education.

**Mentally gifted** - Outstanding intellectual and creative ability the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, not ordinarily provided in the regular education program.

**Parents** - A natural or adoptive parent or parents, guardian or guardians, one or more persons acting as the parent or parents of a student.

**Party** - Parent or school district.

**Regular classroom** - A specific instructional grouping within the regular education environment.

**Regular education environment** - The regular classroom and other instructional settings in which students without a need for gifted education receive instruction programs and the full range of supportive services normally provided to these children.

**School Code** - The Public School Code of 1949 (24 P.S. §§1-101, 27-2702)

**School day** - A day that school is in session.

**Screening and evaluation process** - The systematic determination of whether or not a student is gifted or needs gifted education.

**Specially designed instruction** - Adaptations or modifications to the general curriculum, instruction, instructional environments, methods, materials, or a specialized curriculum for student who are gifted.

**Support services** - Services as required under § 16.33 (relating to support services) to assist a gifted student to benefit from gifted education. Examples of the term include:

- (i) Psychological services
- (ii) Parent counseling and education
- (iii) Counseling services
- (iv) Transportation to and from gifted programs to classroom in buildings operated by the school district.

This Public Notice Documentation has been submitted by the Luzerne Intermediate Unit on behalf of the LIU member school districts. Dr. Anthony Grieco, Executive Director, Dr. Gregory S. Koons, Assist. Executive Director. The documentation and preparation was completed by Ms. Elizabeth Krokos, Director of Special Education Services. Information is based on interpretation of Public Laws including "No Child Left Behind", Individuals Disabilities in Education Act", Pa. Chapter 14 Special Education Regulations, Chapter 4, Section 504, Chapter 15, and Chapter 16.

District Contacts for Information Concerning Special Education Services:

Crestwood School District.  
Mr. Brian Waite, Assistant Superintendent/Director Special Education.  
281 South Mountain Boulevard  
Mountaintop, PA 18707-1913

Dallas School District  
Ms. Dawn Keifer, Director Special Education  
2000 Conyngham Ave.  
Dallas, PA 18612-0720

Greater Nanticoke Area School District  
Susan Lipsey, Director Special Education  
Greater Nanticoke Area High School  
425 Kosciuszko Street  
Nanticoke, PA 18634-2690

Hanover Area School District  
Dr. Steven Greenfield, Director Special Education  
1600 Sans Souci Parkway  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702-2091

Hazleton Area School District  
Mr. Carl Manfredi, Director Special Education  
1515 West 23rd Street  
Hazleton, PA 18202

Lake Lehman School District  
Ms. Tina Antonello-Portee, Director Special Education  
P. O. Box 38  
Lehman, PA 18627-0038

Northwest Area School District  
Ms. Jennifer Oiler, Director Special Education  
243 Thorne Hill Rd.  
Shickshinny, PA 18655-9201

Pittston Area School District  
Ms. Amy Linnen, Director Special Education  
5 Stout Street  
Pittston, PA 18640-3399

Tunkhannock Area School District  
Ms. Mary Hvezda, Director Special Education  
41 Philadelphia Avenue  
Tunkhannock, PA 18607

Wilkes-Barre Area School District  
Mr. Robert Mehalick, Director Special Education  
730 South Main Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18711-0375

Wyoming Area School District  
Mr. Jeff Katra, Acting Director Special Education  
20 Memorial Street  
Exeter, PA 18643-2698

Wyoming Valley West School District  
Mr. Barry Rogers, Co-Director Special Education  
Ms. Mary Agnes Kratz, Co-Director Special Education  
450 North Maple Ave.  
Kingston, PA 18704-3683

Bear Creek Charter School  
Ms. Bridget Deeble, Coordinator  
2000 Bear Creek Boulevard  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

Detention Center in Pittston  
Pittston Area School District  
Ms. Amy Linnen, Director Special Education  
5 Stout Street  
Pittston, PA 18640-3399

Luzerne Intermediate Unit #18  
Ms. Elizabeth Krokos, Director Special Education  
368 Tioga Ave., P.O. Box 1649  
Kingston, PA 18704-0649