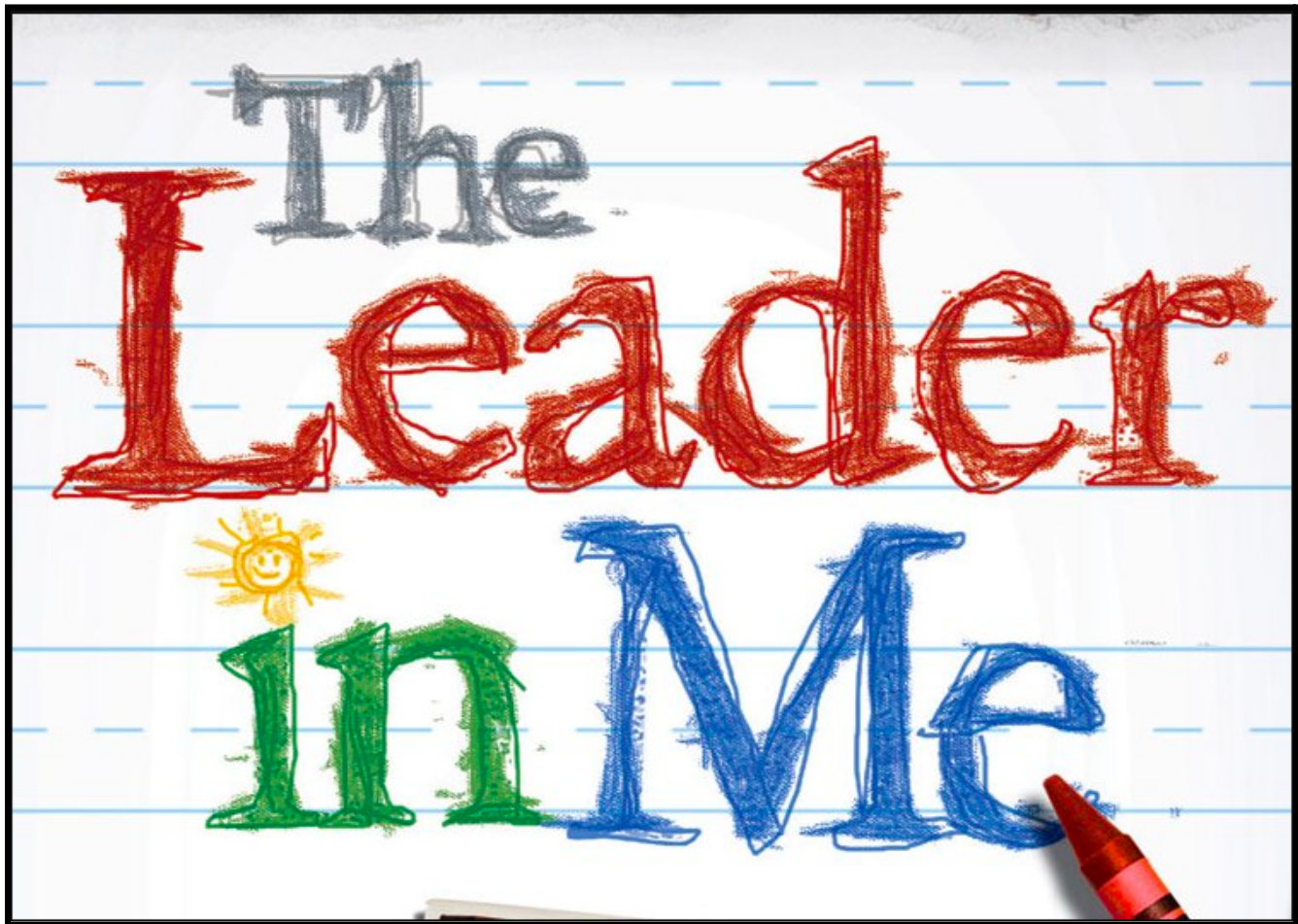




BETHLEHEM
AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Miller Heights Elementary School
A Leader In Me School

Student-Parent Handbook
2025-2026



Miller Heights Elementary School is proud to be a *Leader in Me* School.
Leader in Me is an evidence-based PK-12 model, developed in partnership with educators, designed to build resilience and leadership in students, create a high-trust

culture, and help improve academic achievement. This evidence-based approach empowers students with the leadership and life skills they need to thrive in college and careers. We focus on developing the whole child by:

- teaching **LEADERSHIP** to every student,
- creating a **CULTURE** of student empowerment,
- and aligning systems to drive results in **ACADEMICS**.

Miller Heights Mission Statement

We are kind friends.

We are respectful.

We are responsible learners and leaders.

We are Huskies



ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS

The school doors open at 8:55 a.m. School begins at 9:05 a.m. Students are not permitted in the building before 8:55 a.m. unless prior arrangements have been made with a teacher. **Students should not arrive at school before 8:50 a.m.** Childcare services at Miller Heights are available if you need care before that time.

The main entrance is to be used after 9:05 a.m. as the *outer wing doors will be locked for security purposes*. Students who arrive late are to be *accompanied to the Main Office and signed in* by a parent/guardian or designee.

Bussed students will both enter and exit the school through the multipurpose room.

- The driveway directly in front of the multipurpose room is the **one-way** bus channel. **No private vehicles are permitted there**
- There is a small parking area at the end of this driveway at the front of the school reserved for visitors during the school day.
- A parking lot at the rear of the building is provided for parent use. The entrance/exit for the lot is off Klein Street. **Parents in grades 1 - 5 should use the Klein Street parking lot.**
- **Your cooperation in helping to keep all students safe is greatly appreciated.**

Walkers in grades 1, 2, and 3 will enter and be dismissed from the playground area at the northern doors of the eastern primary grade wing of the school near the baseball field.

Walkers in grades 4 and 5 will enter and be dismissed from the playground area at the northern intermediate grade wing of the school near the soccer field.

Kindergarten students will enter and be dismissed from the entrance/exit nearest their rooms at the front of the building. Parents will **stay** in their cars to drop students off and pick them up.

- Use only 8th Street to enter the bus channel.
- Stay in your car and pull up to the drop-off point.
- Wait in your car until a staff member greets you.
- Have your student ready to get out of the car at the appropriate time.
- Continue to stay to the far right of the bus channel, closest to the curb.
- Carefully, cross the bus channel to leave the area via 7th Street.
- Siblings of kindergarten students may also arrive and be dismissed in this manner.

The front of the school must be reserved for the parents of kindergarten students and their siblings

See the [Attachment](#) for explicit drop-off procedures and diagram.

Alternate Dismissal Arrangements

Please review and follow the procedures below to facilitate the safe and orderly dismissal of each of our students to their destinations at the end of the school day.

• ***Students assigned to a bus for transportation home must go home on the scheduled bus unless written instructions stating otherwise have been sent to the teacher by the parent/guardian.***

Change from bus transportation home to Child Care

- *Since many students attend Child Care on a "drop-in" basis, you must communicate to the homeroom teacher, in writing, on any given day that you wish your child to be dismissed to Child Care instead of being transported home by bus.*
- *We cannot take verbal requests from students for this change. Without written notification of a change from the parent/guardian, it is our responsibility to see that your child goes home on the assigned school bus.*
- ***Change from bus transportation to other transportation home***
Written notification to the homeroom teacher is required on any given day you wish your child to be dismissed for car transportation home. Verbal, email or electronic requests from parents or students cannot be honored for this change.
- ***Office pick-up of students***
If you are picking up your child at the office at dismissal time rather than using bus transportation, please arrive by 3:25 p.m. so that we can call your child to the office before the school-wide dismissal begins.

Alternate Dismissal Arrangements

- *Temporary (one day) **bus change** for transportation from school.*
 - *This change is an accommodation made for true family emergencies by the transportation department and is done so on a space-available basis only. Students may not ride a bus to which they are not assigned for "play dates." Transportation cannot accommodate these requests.*
-
- ***Change of bus stop***
Please submit requests directly to the bus driver.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

There is a high correlation between student attendance and student achievement. For optimal learning to take place, a student must have a consistently high level of attendance. In addition, all children are required by law to attend school every day. Exceptions are made due to illness, religious observance, and other serious extenuating circumstances. If your child must stay home due to illness, please call the school office that morning to report the absence.

When your child returns from an absence, please send in a written excuse or email explaining why the child was absent within 3 days. Any illness verified by a physician's note submitted within three days of the student's return to school is not included in the ten days permitted for parental excuses in the elementary school. Absences verified by physicians are considered to be non-cumulative absences.

Students who arrive at their homeroom after 9:05 a.m. will be marked tardy. Please note that arriving to school late, due to attendance at a doctor or dentist appointment, is considered a non-cumulative tardy with proper documentation. A note explaining the reason for the late arrival at school must be submitted to the homeroom teacher within three days of the occurrence. Parents must accompany children into the school office when arriving late.

BAND and ORCHESTRA

Students in grades four and five are eligible to participate in an instrumental music program which includes "pull-out" lessons for beginners and band/orchestra rehearsals weekly.

BEHAVIOR (FRAMEWORK FOR CITIZENSHIP)

Miller Heights students are expected to behave appropriately throughout the school day in all activities. Student behavior in school is based on students' understanding that school is a special place and that everyone is entitled to be treated with kindness and respect. Learning is important and should be valued and appreciated. A positive learning climate is present when everyone follows school rules and works hard to complete assignments and participate in classroom activities to the best of their ability. School and classroom rules, part of the Bethlehem Area School District *Framework for Citizenship*, have been established and must be followed.

- Behavior in the classroom is every student's responsibility under the direction of the teacher. Classroom procedures are made to promote a positive learning atmosphere and a safe environment for everyone. Student cooperation and involvement in classroom governance are important. Every student is responsible for his/her behavior. Parents can play an important part by supporting a positive school climate.

- To make students' time in the cafeteria as relaxing and enjoyable as possible, and to maximize their recess time, good behavior is also important there.

Children are expected to:

- Be patient in line when getting trays and being served food.
- Safely move about the cafeteria and stay seated while eating.
- Keep food on trays or in lunch boxes.
- Reasonably clean their area when they are finished.
- Listen to teacher assistant directives.

The following cafeteria guidelines will be in place to ensure that all students may enjoy a relaxing lunch and the maximum amount of time possible for recess activities.

Talk quietly, don't shout or scream.
Show good sportsmanship and play safely.
Demonstrate respect for everyone.

Students will travel to and from the playground under the direction of the teacher assistants or classroom teacher. The teacher assistants are responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of all the children at recess time. Students are responsible for demonstrating kindness to others and playing fairly. Our Physical Education teachers will be instructing the children further about safety on the playground and appropriate games to play. Wearing sneakers is strongly recommended for the safety of the children and is required for physical education classes.

BIRTHDAYS

To align with District, State, National and Allergy Wellness Guidelines, all Bethlehem Area School District elementary schools are being directed to follow the practice outlined below for the 2025-2026 school year concerning birthdays.

“No food treats, for example, cupcakes, brownies, donuts, etc... or goodie bags should be offered to students.”

Party Invitations - The school is **not** to be involved in the distribution of home party invitations. We ask that you do not send party invitations to school with your child. By law, we are not able to distribute the names, addresses, or phone numbers of students.

BOOKS and CHROMEBOOKS

The Bethlehem Area School District supplies all textbooks needed by students. The Bethlehem Area School District also supplies a Chromebook for each student. Students are responsible for the care of the textbooks, library books, and Chromebooks issued to them. Chromebooks should be kept in their protective pouch at all times (when not in use) and should be brought to school each day. Grades 2-5 Chromebooks should be charged at home each night. Keep all food and drinks away from the Chromebook. **Grades K-1 Chromebooks will remain in school.**

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Students eligible for bus transportation receive a bus card and schedules before the opening of school. Questions concerning either should be referred to the Transportation Department at (610) 861-0360.

Bus transportation from an alternate site is available to students for various family needs. An “Alternate Transportation Form” is available at school, and all applicable guidelines are listed on the form.

BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS

Riding the school bus should be a safe and enjoyable time for everyone. The BASD Transportation Policy is also provided there.

It is each child's responsibility to act appropriately, in a way that will not hurt anyone. Children are expected to be reasonably quiet and to remain seated at all times. If problems between students arise, they should be reported to the bus driver.

Other rules for students who ride buses:

- Children must ride the bus to which they are assigned unless given permission to board another bus by written request from the parent and approved by the principal.
- Arms, legs, and any other body parts must remain inside the bus and not be extended out of doors, windows, etc.
- Roughhousing or throwing of objects is prohibited.
- Eating food on the bus is not permitted.
- Cell phone use on the bus is prohibited.

Individual bus drivers may enforce other requirements that ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all. Bus drivers are required to report infractions to the building principal. Students will sit in the seats assigned by the bus driver.

CALENDAR

[The Bethlehem Area School District Calendar](#) is directly attached to this link. Please refer to this calendar frequently for reminders about the school schedule, holidays, and NOON dismissal.

****Act 80 Days (12:00 NOON Dismissal Days)**

September 17, 2025

October 16, 2025

December 19, 2025

March 12, 2026

CELL PHONES

BASD cell phone policy

Students are strongly encouraged NOT to bring any personal communication devices to school. This includes but is not limited to cell phones, tablets, smartwatches, gaming devices, and two-way radios. These devices are not required and their damage or loss will not be the responsibility of the school.

If a parent or guardian wishes their child to carry a cell phone, the device must be turned OFF and remain in the child's book bag at all times during the school day. THIS INCLUDES DURING THE BUS RIDE TO AND FROM SCHOOL.

Students are NOT permitted to use cell phones during field trips. Students are NOT permitted to take pictures with cell phones during field trips.

Parents are encouraged not to text their child school hours. If you need to get a message to your child during the school day, please call the office.

CHILD CARE

The Bethlehem Area School District Child Care Program is available at Miller Heights from 6:15 a.m. until 6:15 p.m. If you have any questions or wish to enroll your child, please call the Child Care Supervisor at (610) 849-9183.

COMMUNICATION

Announcements and messages will be communicated through **Class Dojo** during the school year.

Children will also periodically bring home test papers or school work so parents become aware of his/her school performance. A parent may be requested to sign these for return to the classroom teacher. A parental signature indicates that you have seen the papers and are aware of your child's performance. If you have questions concerning your child's social or academic performance, please contact the teacher by calling the school or sending a note and making an appointment to discuss the concern. It is important to talk to the teacher first. However, if you still have questions, please call the school office. You may request a telephone conference or appointment with the principal.

CONFERENCES (Parent-Teacher) Early Dismissal

Regularly scheduled conferences are held twice a year. Parents are encouraged to attend conferences with their children's teacher(s) at these times.

Conference Dates:

Please note: Dismissal on conference days is **noon**, and lunch will **not** be served at school.

- **November 24 (afternoon) and November 25 (evening)**
- **April 13 (evening) and April 16 (afternoon)**

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:55 a.m. Doors open (Children should not arrive before 8:50 a.m)

9:05 a.m. School begins

9:05 a.m. Late bell - Students must report to the office accompanied by a parent or guardian. (Note: BASD policy concerning tardiness)

3:33 p.m. Dismissal for Kindergarten begins

3:35-3:40 Dismissal for walkers and bus students (grades 1 - 5)

DOCTOR AND DENTIST APPOINTMENTS

Dental and doctor appointments should be made for after school whenever possible. When this cannot be done, permission requests should be in **writing**, and children must be met in the school office where the "Sign-In/Out Book" will need to be documented. If children are returning to school after an appointment, they must also report to the office with their parent or guardian to

sign in before returning to class. For your convenience, it is suggested that the note provided by the doctor or dentist is brought to the school office at this time to ensure proper documentation.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Parents are required to fill out information for each child attending school. This is used whenever an emergency makes it necessary for the school to contact parents. **Please remember to include the name and phone number of a local individual other than the parent/guardian who can be contacted if you cannot be reached.** Please return the completed form immediately and notify the teacher or main office of any address or phone changes as they occur.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

From time to time, it may be necessary to close schools due to weather or other emergencies. The decision to close schools is made by the Superintendent of Schools. If schools are to be closed before the school day begins, announcements will be made on BASD Twitter, Class Dojo, and posted on the district website. In case of delayed openings, buses will run on the delayed schedule. (Ex. a 1-hour delay = a 1-hour delayed bus schedule, etc.) Early closings are also announced on BASD Twitter, Class Dojo, and the district website.

In addition, the BASD has instituted **Parent Link**, and **parents will be notified by phone of any closings, delays, or early dismissals.**

ENTERING THE BUILDING

All parents entering the building to perform volunteer services, or for any other purpose, **MUST** register in the office and be given a Visitor's badge to wear. You will be asked to provide a photo ID which will run through our screening system. Parents may **NOT** go directly to the classrooms.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be planned throughout the school year. The trips are always carefully planned to be both educational and engaging.

A Permission slip will be sent home for parental approval/signature. Your signature approves all field trips during the 2025 - 2026 school year. Parents will be notified whenever a trip is scheduled and teachers will arrange for chaperones when necessary.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are held once a month during school hours. It is important that students and staff practice so that everyone is prepared in the event of a true emergency. Teachers will be instructing students on proper safety procedures.

FIRST AID

Emergency first aid for other symptoms or injuries will be administered at school. First aid is provided by the nurse or health assistants, who staff the health room. In the case of an injury that appears to require medical attention, the school nurse will notify parents or other responsible parties noted on the student's emergency information, and appropriate arrangements will be made. In the event of serious emergencies, appropriate emergency personnel will be notified and immediate care will be secured to ensure the welfare of the child.

Please keep our school nurse informed of any medical conditions that exist for your child.

HEALTH REGULATIONS

MANDATED SCHOOL HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

Physical examinations are required for students upon their entry into school and again in grades 6 and 11.

Dental examinations are required in grades 3 and 7.

These examinations may be done by your child's private practitioner or by a physician/dentist employed by the Bethlehem Area School District.

Please refer to the BASD school calendar for additional health regulations and immunization information. Please contact our school nurse with any additional questions.

MEDICINE

Bethlehem Area School District Policy mandates that children who take prescription or other medication during the school day *must* have a form or note signed by the physician.

HOMEWORK

Homework will be based on the student's instructional level.

Teachers shall be responsible for following district guidelines when assigning homework.

Teachers will provide appropriate, relevant, and accessible assignments that: directly relate to the instructional objectives of the course, meet the developmental needs of their students, formatively assess skills learned in class, and provide timely, meaningful feedback to students.

Students will be responsible for completing the assignments according to the criteria established by, and/or with, the teacher.

LOST AND FOUND

All personal items brought to school should have the child's name on them. Items such as lunch boxes, backpacks, hats, and coats should be marked. Lost items are placed on the Lost and Found Rack near the multipurpose room. Children are asked to check the box if they have lost something. The Lost and Found is also made available during parent conferences when they are held in person. Items not claimed during the school year are either discarded or sent to human service agencies for distribution.

Students should not bring toys, or other valuables to school unless an item is requested by the teacher for educational purposes.

LUNCH

Students may choose to pack a lunch or participate in the federally funded lunch program. Students receiving lunch at school will use their School ID when going through the lunch line.

***See the [BASD website](#) for more information regarding dining services.**

Breakfast is also made available to students at Miller Heights Elementary School. Walkers may be brought to the cafeteria doors at 8:50 AM for breakfast, and bussed students will be served as they arrive.

MESSAGES

Children should be informed of any changes in dismissal routines (going to another child's home, being picked up instead of riding a bus, etc.) before coming to school. If there are changes of this kind, a written note is required. In an emergency, parents may call the school, and the teacher and child will be notified.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The education of our students is a cooperative venture between the home, the school, and the community. Close cooperation and understanding between the home and the school are most important. To help achieve this, Miller Heights has a very active parent-teacher organization. This organization meets monthly during the school year to discuss school needs, concerns, programs, and fundraising activities that benefit the educational program.

REPORT CARDS

Student report cards will be distributed four times during the school year.

November (Grades 1-5)

February

April

June - Report Cards Mailed

SAFE SCHOOL HOTLINE

One of the key methods for maintaining safety in schools is the Safe School Hotline. The hotline will contribute to the district's ability to quickly respond to various situations before they escalate to the crisis level. Students, school personnel, parents, and community members are encouraged to use the hotline as a tool to help maintain a safe and orderly school environment. Callers, who may remain anonymous, can use the hotline to report suspected drug dealing, observation of a weapon on school property, any information about a bomb threat, concern for the safety of a student or a staff member, harassment, abuse, or other similar situations.

BASD Hotline Number (610) 866 - 3000.

SCHOOL SECURITY POLICY

The Bethlehem Area School District requires all adults, either working, visiting, volunteering, or entering a school building for any reason, to wear proper identification at all times. All visitors are required to register in the Miller Heights office of the school building, state the reason for their visit, and obtain a visitor's badge from the school secretary before proceeding to the building. All staff members will also be required to wear proper identification badges. All employees, parents, and visitors are expected to comply with this requirement.

If it is necessary to deliver money, lunch, books, etc., for your child, please leave them in the office so that we can get them to the classroom for you. This is important so that we can provide the maximum amount of uninterrupted instructional time for students.

Your assistance in implementing these regulations is greatly appreciated.

SCHOOL STORE (Husky Hut)

A school store is located in our lobby for students. The store is operated as a convenience for students and parents for the purchase of school supplies, courtesy of the Miller Heights PTO. Schedules are sent home with the children periodically, with all purchases being completely optional.

VACATION / EDUCATIONAL TOURS AND TRIPS

The following guidelines, as established by the Board of School Directors, must be followed when applying for an educational / vacation tour or trip.

Students at the elementary level will be permitted to take 4 educational trips, up to a cumulative maximum of 15 school days during their tenure in elementary school. Educational trips may not exceed 5 days per year. Please note that these days are recorded as **cumulative absence days and must be approved by the principal.**

Any days beyond the maximum of the five days permitted will be considered **unexcused and unlawful** for students under 17, and appropriate legal action will be taken.

- The following factors will be taken into consideration by the principal in granting permission for the trip:
 - a) the student's academic standing
 - b) the student's attendance record
 - c) the effect the days of absence will have on the student's educational welfare
 - d) the exceptionality of the request
 - e) the student's code of conduct
- The *Application for Permission for Student Excusal Due to an Educational Trip or Tour* must be submitted to the principal **ten school days prior to the trip**.
- It will be the student's responsibility to contact teachers and make up assignments missed during the time of the trip.
- Permission will not be granted for trips/tours during the district's standardized testing period or the state's standardized testing period.

VOLUNTEERS

From time to time, parents are asked to assist in school activities. Room parents are identified through the PTO, and special events personnel are also recruited through the PTO.

Important message regarding volunteers:

*Per state requirements, in order to volunteer at any of our events at Miller Heights **including** Husky Hike, Book Fairs, Author Day, Holiday Shop, Field Day, Homeroom Parents - including class helpers at any party - and any field trips attended -- the following clearances must be completed and turned in to the Main Office **prior** to participating at any of these events.*

Instructions for Completing Certifications (Clearances)

A Child Abuse Clearance, PA Criminal History Clearance and Federal Criminal Clearance are required by law to be obtained by everyone who is employed by a School Entity and must be processed under the PA Department of Education. Directions for obtaining background certification (clearance) records are as follows:

PA Child Abuse History Clearance - The Child Abuse History Certificate can be completed online. Requests for clearance statements (now called "certifications") may be made online at <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>. The cost is \$8.00. Upon signing on to the Child Welfare Portal, you will be asked to "Create Individual Account" or "Individual Login". If this is your first time on the site, you will select "Create Individual Account". Here you will be asked to create your Keystone ID# (this is an ID that you will create for yourself and retain for later use). You will be given the option to have a copy mailed to you. Upon completion and submission of your application, you will be notified via email when your certification is ready to view online (anywhere from 1 day to 4 weeks). You will then log back into your account on the Child Welfare Portal and select "Individual Login" to access and print out the certificate. If you selected to have a copy mailed to you, it could take 4-8 weeks or longer.

PA State Police – Request for Criminal Record Check - The Pennsylvania Criminal History can be done online. The online results are available almost immediately. To complete the process online, go to <https://epatch.state.pa.us> and click on "Submit a New Record Check" and follow the

instructions. Please select “Employment” as the Reason for Request. The cost is \$22.00. At the end of the process, you will be shown a receipt on the screen (which you print if you want a receipt). In the middle of the receipt, you will see “Certification Form” in blue. Click on this and it will bring up your Criminal Background Certificate which you will then print.

Federal Criminal History Record through Identogo – The FBI Federal Criminal History requires individuals to have fingerprints digitally rolled at a registered fingerprinting site. You must first register for the process. This can be done either online at www.identogo.com/locations/pennsylvania or by entering **1KG6XN** as the Service code. Click on Schedule/Manage Employment. Go through the screens and enter information as required. You will have the ability to enter your zip code and the system will then take you to a screen with a local Identogo service centers. Click on one of those centers where you will go to be printed. You can make an appointment online or click walk in. Payment is taken at the Center. After making that choice, it will take you to a **Service Summary Page. Print that page** and remember to bring the identification document you indicated when registering. The cost is currently \$22.60.

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS

If you are moving or withdrawing your child from school, please call and/or come to school a few days prior to the withdrawal date, so that the necessary paperwork can be completed. You will be supplied with a transfer card and a copy of your child's immunization record to take to the new school when you enroll.

NOTIFICATION OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Bethlehem Area School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, veteran status, or any other legally protected classification in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI and Section 504.