

Dallas Middle School

Student/Parent Handbook

2023-2024

THE DALLAS SCHOOL DISTRICT IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION WHICH DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, GENDER, OR HANDICAP IN ITS ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS, OR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES AS REQUIRED BY TITLE VI, TITLE IX, AND SECTION 504.

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FOREWORD

The Dallas School District Board of School Directors, as prescribed in the Chapter 12 regulations of the State Board of Education of Pennsylvania, has adopted this handbook.

The School Board has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules governing the conduct of students in school. The rule-making power, however, is not unlimited; it must operate within statutory and constitutional restraints. A school board has only those powers which are enumerated in the statutes of this Commonwealth, or which may reasonably be implied or necessary for the orderly operation of the school.

School boards may not make rules which are arbitrary, capricious, or outside their grant of authority from the General Assembly. Their rules must stand the test of fairness and reasonableness. A rule is generally considered reasonable if it uses a rational means of accomplishing some legitimate school purpose.

Each board of school directors shall adopt a code of student conduct that shall include policies governing student discipline and a listing of student rights and responsibilities as outlined in this booklet. This conduct code shall be published and distributed to students and parents. Copies of the code shall also be available in each school library.

This book is for the use of parents and students of the Dallas Middle School.

Every student will have access to this handbook at the beginning of the school year. The handbook will be posted online at www.dsdhs.com {Dallas Middle School → Student/Parent Handbook (*on the left*)}. If necessary, a single copy can be printed upon request.

The handbook will be reviewed with the students at the beginning of each school year and at other times as circumstances warrant.

WELCOME

It is our privilege to welcome you to our school. Be proud of your school, take good care of it, and feel free to make suggestions for improving it. As a school citizen, you are expected to act responsibly and conduct yourself properly.

As citizens of this school, you will be expected to follow the rules that have been established for the welfare of the entire student body. Following the rules will help all students to become better school citizens, and will allow school to be a more enjoyable experience for everyone.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Dallas School District provides excellence in education to inspire all students to learn, lead, achieve, and succeed.

VISION STATEMENT

The Dallas School District has a vision focused on excellence in education. We utilize a rigorous, relevant, practical curriculum, technologically dynamic instruction, co-curricular opportunities, the workplace, and the community to help our students become collaborative, competitive, resourceful, and resilient. Our students will grow, learn, and develop through opportunities that support a variety of interests, preparing them to become responsible digital and global citizens, ready for college or a career. Our community values of responsibility, honesty, diversity, and strong work ethic will be central to our schools.

DALLAS MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The Dallas Middle School believes that a successful educational experience for our students is characterized by the following:

- A shared vision among all stakeholders that guides our decision making;
- Proactive and collaborative leadership that sustains the mission and values of our school and district;
- Maintaining a safe and secure environment for our students, faculty, and staff members;
- High expectations for every member of the school's learning community in academics, extracurricular activities, and social endeavors;
- Active engagement of students in their learning experiences in order to cultivate life-long learning;
- Fostering of school-initiated partnerships with community organizations and family members;
- Developing essential life-skills to prepare our students for the demands of the 21st century and beyond.

Therefore, Dallas Middle School strives to provide our students with the following:

- A curriculum that is rigorous, challenging, and exploratory;
- The integration of technologies in order to expand and deepen the learning experiences of students;

- Differentiated learning experiences in order to target a variety of learning styles and needs;
- Valid and reliable assessments to monitor student growth and development throughout the curriculum;
- Organizational structures that support the social development and well-being of our students;
- Opportunities for collaborative events with community and family members.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students gain admission to Dallas School District through the residency of their custodial parent/guardian. All students are required to follow all rules and regulations as set forth in this handbook.

1. Students are expected to be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves accordingly. Students must assume that until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed in writing, it is in effect. All the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as well as all local laws, are in effect on school property.
2. Students are expected to attend school daily and be on time for all classes, including homeroom, and other school functions. When absent, a student must make up all missed work in accordance with each teacher's make-up policy. Daily assignments are posted in teachers' Google Classrooms. Information can be found on the district website at www.dsdhs.com {Dallas Middle School → Faculty (*on the left*)}.
3. Students are expected to dress and groom themselves to meet fair standards of safety and health. Student personal hygiene should be appropriately maintained so as not to cause a disruption. The manner of dress must not cause a disruption of the educational process. All students must wear clothing that does not expose undergarments, stomachs, chests, and/or backs. All students must wear shirts that have sleeves, and students' shoulders must be covered. Shorts, dresses, and skirts must be mid-thigh in length or longer. Rips, holes, or tears that expose skin are not permitted in student clothing. **Any clothing, paraphernalia, or tattoo referring to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, weapons of any kind, sexual innuendo, or containing any other potentially offensive language is unacceptable and will not be permitted. This provision applies to the wearing of any Personal Protective Equipment (i.e. masks, face shields, gowns).** Leggings are permitted. Further explanation is discussed in the Dress/Grooming section of the handbook.
4. Students are expected to pursue and attempt to satisfactorily complete the courses of study prescribed by the Commonwealth and local school authorities.
5. Students are expected to assist the staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled. This includes volunteering information about matters that relate to the health, safety, and welfare of others, and the protection of school property.
6. Students are expected to express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner, both in the spoken and written word. The building principal must approve any student-initiated petition prior to circulation. Any student who desires to post or distribute any printed material must have the prior approval of the building principal.

7. Students attending field trips or any school-sponsored activity will be governed by the same rules that govern them while on school property. These activities are a privilege, not a right. Any student whose behavior has indicated a lack of discipline, failure to follow directions and rules, or has jeopardized the health and safety of others will not be permitted to participate in these activities. The building administrator reserves the right to make the final decision.
8. Any middle school student who rides home from school with a high school student must have written permission from a parent/guardian and approval of the building principal. These students are dismissed at regular time and allowed to proceed to the parking lot.

BUS CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

1. Students will only ride the buses to which they have been assigned. In the event of an emergency that requires a student to ride a different bus, the student's parent/guardian must make a written request to the building principal. If approved, office personnel will then issue a pass.
2. Students will board the bus in a single line in an orderly fashion.
3. Students will be seated and remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
4. No food or drink is permitted on the bus. The exception being a student who presents a documented need from a licensed practitioner.
5. Talking must be kept to a conversational level to allow the bus driver to safely operate the bus.
6. All Dallas School District policies concerning smoking, alcohol, drugs, firearms, etc. apply to the student transportation. Video cameras are used to monitor behavior. Misconduct will be cause for detention, suspension, payment for damaged property, and/or removal of transportation privileges.
7. All decisions by building administrators regarding consequences for violations of these transportation regulations are final.

CAMPUS, BUILDING, AND BUS SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

The Dallas School District wants to ensure the safety of its students while present on the campus, in buildings, and being transported to and from school and school-related activities on school buses. As part of its safety effort, the Dallas School District places surveillance cameras with audio and video capabilities on all school buses to deter and detect student misbehavior. Video (not audio) is recorded on the campus and in buildings.

The Dallas School District affirms that students should not have an expectation of privacy when present on the campus, within the building, or riding the district's buses, nor should they have an expectation that school bus surveillance cameras will not record their actions or words. The district asserts that students and their parents/guardians consent to the Dallas School District's audio/visual monitoring through the students' use of the school buses, presence on the campus, and in buildings.

VISITORS

All visitors are asked to report to the main office in the middle school, state their business, and obtain a visitor's pass, which must be clearly displayed at all times while in the building. Under no circumstances are visitors allowed to visit students for the purpose of socializing, or remain on school grounds once their business is completed. Visitors will be required to provide identification credentials upon entering school property. Visitors will also be required to complete an electronic/paper copy of the DSD Health Screening Tool prior to or upon arrival on campus.

RAPTOR SYSTEM

The Dallas Middle School uses the Raptor visitor management system. Raptor is a web-based software application that provides an effective and immediate method for tracking visitors and managing access to the Dallas Middle School. Raptor allows the Dallas Middle School to produce visitor badges, to monitor visitor hours, and to electronically check all visitors against public databases. We welcome visitors to our school. Our goal for the Raptor system and its safeguards is to keep our learning environment and school community as secure as possible. When visitors enter the Dallas Middle School during school hours and desire access beyond the main office, they are asked to present a valid state-issued ID. The visitor's ID is scanned into the system and checked against a database. The process is quick and efficient. Once entry is approved, the Raptor system will produce a badge that identifies the visitor, the date, and the purpose of the visit. If a visitor does not have identification, the building administrator has the discretion to allow the visitor access to the building, but the visitor must then be escorted by a school staff member.

GUIDANCE

The goal of the middle school guidance program is to help prepare students for the future academically, socially, and emotionally so that they will be conscientious and productive members of society. This program assists students in understanding themselves in relation to their environment by helping them develop good decision-making and coping skills. Students' needs are addressed through individual counseling, small group counseling, and classroom instruction. The counselors also direct coordination of services for at-risk and special needs students through consultation with school district personnel, intermediate unit staff, community agencies, and private counseling services.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

The Dallas School District SAP Teams have committed themselves to help identify students who are having problems that are affecting their learning. Each child is a special individual who is a product of his or her home, school, and community environments; therefore, for student assistance to be effective, a team effort is required. It is necessary that all significant adults in a child's life work together to guide and support him or her through this milestone of life called adolescence. The desired outcome is for the student and the family to receive the support needed to resolve problems.

SAP is an early intervention program for students who are having difficulty being successful in school. SAP involves the coordinated efforts of professionals (a building administrator, two or more classroom teachers, a school counselor, a social worker, a school nurse, and others) who comprise the Student Assistance Core Team. The core team is trained to recognize students in need, to determine the nature of the problem, and refer students to assistance.

Referrals come from students, parents, teachers, counselors, and administrators. If you have a concern for the physical and/or emotional well-being of a student, please submit a SAP referral form, which can be found on the website at www.dsdhs.com {Dallas Middle School → SAP Referral Form *(on the left)*}.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between school and families is paramount to students' success. Should you find it necessary to contact a teacher, the guidance department, or administration, contact the middle school office at 570-674-7243. Although our faculty and staff maintain email accounts, email communication should not be relied upon for effective communication. The middle school will not divulge confidential student information (grades, behavior reports, etc.) through unsecured email accounts.

ASSESSMENTS

Our assessment program is multifaceted. Middle school students are annually administered the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Also, students are given numerous diagnostic assessments throughout the year that resemble the PSSA. The purpose of our assessment program is to measure the performance of our students, as well as to aid in the planning of appropriate curriculum programs for all students. Information on the PSSA is distributed prior to each assessment being administered. Those students who are enrolled in Algebra I will also take the Algebra I Keystone Exam.

LIBRARY

The middle school has a well-equipped, technologically advanced library for the use of students and faculty to meet the curriculum needs of the school.

RULES

- The purpose of the Dallas Middle School Media Center Library is for school and personal research.
- No food or beverages are allowed in the library.

BORROWING MATERIALS AND RENEWALS

- Books may be borrowed for two-week periods.
- Reference and audio/visual materials (e.g. videotapes, CDs, etc.) may be borrowed overnight.

- All materials can be renewed unless someone has a reserve on the material(s). Materials must be brought to the library to be renewed.

OVERDUE AND LOST MATERIALS

Books are subject to a fine of \$0.10 per day, which will be assessed on each overdue item. Lost materials will be assessed full-replacement value.

COMPUTER USE

Use of school computers is a privilege, not a right. All district computers must be used according to the following rules:

1. Unless specifically authorized by the instructor, students may not exit the network program.
2. Students will not take software from the lab for any reason.
3. Students will not bring flash drives or other portable storage devices into the lab unless specifically authorized by the instructor.
4. Students will not make any changes to any program or software.
5. Students will not change any condition of the network or hard drive.
6. All students and parents must sign the Dallas School District Acceptable Use Policy to gain access to the district network. Students who violate the terms and conditions of the Dallas School District Acceptable Use Policy regarding internet usage will have their privileges revoked for a period of time deemed appropriate by the building administrator.
7. Students who tamper with Dallas School District computers and/or software will be referred to the building administrator. Damages will be billed to students.

COURSE DESCRIPTION BOOK

Course requirements for all students are outlined in the course description book issued in the spring of each academic year. The Dallas Middle School Course Description Book can be found online at www.dsdhs.com {Dallas Middle School → Course Description Book (*on the left*)}. The book contains information regarding subjects to be offered during the next school year, course descriptions, and promotion.

GRADING AND REPORTING

Student report cards are posted quarterly through the CSIU Parent Portal. Both quarterly grades and cumulative grades are reported in pure percentages.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice per year district-wide. Additional conferences can be scheduled as needed.

INCOMPLETES

It is the responsibility of the student to meet with his/her instructor to complete the required work for each course. Any student who receives an incomplete will not receive a course grade

until his or her work obligation is satisfied. Incompletes not satisfied within 5 days after the issuance of report cards will result in a failure.

HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS

HONORS WITH DISTINCTION – 98 or above with no grade lower than 74.

FIRST HONORS – 93 to 97 with no grade lower than 74.

SECOND HONORS – 88 to 92 with no grade lower than 74.

AWARDS ASSEMBLY

In order to recognize student success, an awards assembly is held quarterly. During these school-wide programs, academic and extracurricular accomplishments of our students are recognized. A final end-of-year assembly is held during the last week of school. In addition to our own, many community and civic organizations present awards to recognize outstanding student achievement throughout the school year.

SCHOOL ATHLETICS

CODE OF CONDUCT

An athlete is a representative of his or her school and is to follow the school's prescribed code of conduct. This code of conduct rests primarily on maintaining academic and attendance eligibility, exhibiting good sportsmanship, and representing the school and community in a positive light.

As a representative of the school, the school's rules and regulations apply to all athletes. A violation of the discipline code (as listed in the student/parent handbook) can warrant a form of punishment including nonparticipation in the sport for a specified period of time. At the coach's discretion, the discipline code with a set of in-house rules may be supplemented.

It is the coach's responsibility to prepare a set of in-house rules, include the above statement on the code, and issue to the athlete the first day of practice.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

An eligibility list will be formulated each week. Any student who is failing two or more subjects cannot participate in any extra or co-curricular activities (e.g. sports, drama, band, etc.) for the week that he/she is ineligible. Practice sessions are excluded.

The period of ineligibility will start each Monday afternoon and last until the following Monday. The weekend activities during this period are included.

Teachers submit a list of students who are failing their courses by 12:00 PM each Friday. A list of those students failing two or more subjects is compiled and distributed by the

athletic office. A student placed on the failure list cannot be removed until the next report period.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

A student must be in school before a half-day is completed to participate in a sport/extra or co-curricular activity for that day. Lateness to school beyond 9:40 AM is classified as a half-day absence. A student who arrives after 9:40 AM is not allowed to participate in any extra or co-curricular activities that day, unless a medical/practitioner excuse is presented. Participation in weekend activities is not permitted if the absence or lateness occurs on a Friday.

A pupil who has been absent from school during a semester for a total of twenty or more days is not eligible to participate in any athletic contest until he or she has been in attendance for a total of sixty school days following his twentieth day of absence. When computing total days absent during a semester, days absent during a period of out-of-school suspension shall count as part of the twenty-day absence total in a given semester.

PHYSICALS

No pupil shall be eligible to represent his or her high school in any interscholastic athletic contest unless he or she has been examined by a licensed physician of medicine or osteopathy before his or her first sports season of that academic year. Before each subsequent sports season of the same academic year, he or she shall be re-examined or certified by a physician that his or her condition is satisfactory before he or she commences to train or practice for the intended sport (PIAA By-laws: Article V, Section I).

HEALTH SERVICES

The school nurse provides first aid for all injuries occurring in school or en route to school in the health suite. A copy of each nurse's building schedule is posted in the principal's office. The nurse makes referrals and arrangements to the doctor or hospital when tetanus boosters or more extensive care is needed.

Any student too ill to remain in class must report immediately to the nurse. The nurse will assess the student's condition and make the appropriate medical determination. If the nurse is unavailable, the student should report to the main office. **Under no circumstances are students to contact parents/guardians regarding an illness without express direction from the nurse or building administrator.**

The decision for a student to leave school due to illness is the sole responsibility of the nurse or building administrator.

No medications are administered in school by the school nurse or teachers except by the direct order of a physician, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Health. For details, see MEDICATION POLICY, page 16.

MEDICATION POLICY

The following policy for administration of medication shall be followed:

1. Medication required by students shall be given by parents whenever possible.
2. Medications shall be administered to students during school hours only if the student's health is jeopardized without it. All medication must be taken to the nurse or office immediately upon arrival in the building.
3. It shall be the responsibility of the parent and student to inform the school nurse of any medication brought to, or to be administered in, the school.
4. The parent shall be responsible for submitting a Request for Administration of Medication form to the school nurse. This form shall include the physician's statement of the condition, the treatment prescribed, the directions for administration of medication, the physician's signature, the parent's authorization to administer, and a release of school personnel from liability.
5. Medications received by the school are to be packaged in accordance with pharmacy standards.
6. The parent of a child with a known allergic condition must inform the school of the condition in writing.
7. Under no circumstances should school personnel provide aspirin, Tylenol, antacid, or any other patent medication to the student.
8. Students in possession of unauthorized medication of any type will be dealt with through the Drug and Alcohol Policy.

DRESS/GROOMING

All students are expected to take pride in their personal appearance. Student personal hygiene should be appropriately maintained so as not to cause a disruption. Students should come to school well-groomed, wearing clothes that are neat, clean. All students must wear clothing that does not expose undergarments, stomachs, chests, and/or backs. Leggings are permitted. All students must wear shirts that have sleeves, and shoulders must be covered. Shorts, dresses, and skirts must be mid-thigh in length or longer. Rips, holes, or tears that expose skin are not permitted in student clothing. **Any clothing, paraphernalia, or tattoo referring to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, weapons of any kind, sexual innuendo, or containing any other potentially offensive language is unacceptable and will not be permitted. This provision applies to the wearing of any Personal Protective Equipment (i.e. masks, face shields, gowns).** The building administrator reserves the right to rule in those cases where attire is contrary to the health, safety, or educational well being of others. Also, see STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES, #3, page 9. (*DSD Policy 221*)

BACKPACKS/PURSES

Students are permitted to possess clear or mesh backpacks in Dallas Middle School. They are to be stored in the student's locker immediately upon entering the building. Athletic bags are to be stored in assigned bins in the commons upon entering the building. Personal bags or purses must be 10" x 10" or smaller.

LOCKERS

Each student is assigned the use of a locker throughout the year. Lock combinations are changed each year for the protection of your possessions. For further protection from theft, students should not give their combinations to other students. Lockers should be kept neat and clean at all times, and should only contain items necessary for school. **School lockers are the property of the Dallas School District, and as such, are subject to inspection by authorized school personnel at any time.** Students should not expect exclusive rights to privacy. School officials may conduct periodic sweeping searches. No personal locks are permitted on hallway lockers without the knowledge and permission of the building administrator. (*DSD Policy 226*)

During wellness and/or swim class students may secure valuables in a locker room locker. It is recommended that students bring a lock to be used on locker room lockers for the class period of wellness and/or swim classes. The lock must be removed at the conclusion of each class.

Students are encouraged not to store items of value in hallway or locker room lockers. Theft or loss of personal items is not the responsibility of the school.

TELEPHONE

Students are not allowed to use the office telephone unless it is an emergency and absolutely necessary.

VALUABLES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

No valuables (with the exception of cell phones) or money should be left in student lockers or desks. If it is necessary to have these items, they should be kept in the student's possession or turned over to the office for safekeeping. MP3 players, iPods, video recording devices, radios, digital cameras, video games, etc. are not to be brought to school without permission from a building administrator. A student in possession of any such device will have the device confiscated. It will remain in the possession of school officials until claimed by the parent/guardian or until the final day of school.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones may be brought to school. Phones must be turned off and remain in student lockers. Cell phone use is NOT ALLOWED during school hours. Cell phones that are seen or heard will be collected and sent to the office. Failure to comply with a staff member's request to turn over a cell phone will be subject to the insubordination provision of the discipline policy. Repeated violation of the cell phone policy will result in escalating disciplinary action.

POSSESSION

- 1st Offense:** Removal of the cell phone from the student. The student may acquire the cell phone at the end of the school day.
- 2nd Offense:** Removal of the cell phone from the student. A parent/guardian must pick up the cell phone in the main office after student dismissal.
- 3rd Offense:** Removal of the cell phone from the student. A parent/guardian must pick up the cell phone in the main office after student dismissal. Further discipline determined by the building administrator.

USAGE OF CELL PHONE

Removal of the cell phone from the student. A parent/guardian must pick up the cell phone in the main office after student dismissal. Further discipline determined by the building administrator.

OTHER POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

If a school official is informed of any potentially dangerous or inappropriate content contained on a student cell phone, the phone will be confiscated. Cell phone contents - including pictures, video, and text - may be reviewed by school administrator(s) if the allegation or suspicion of inappropriate material is reasonable. If objectionable material is found, parents will be informed, and school disciplinary action will result.

Student cell phones confiscated that are found to contain inappropriate material or evidence of apparent harassment will be referred to law enforcement agencies. Students transmitting inappropriate material via cellular communication devices may be subject to both state and federal charges.

FOOD

Food and beverages should be consumed only in the cafeteria and designated eating areas. Eating or drinking is not permitted in the hallways, gymnasium, pool, or auditorium. For the safety of numerous students who suffer from food allergies, outside food may not be brought into the school building, with the exception of student lunches from home.

It is the student's responsibility to dispose of all cans, bottles, and food wrappers in the trash after eating.

WORKING PAPERS

Those students who have secured part-time or vacation jobs can obtain applications for working papers in the office. In order to obtain an application for working papers, a parent/guardian must bring in one of the following three items: the student's birth certificate, baptismal certificate, or passport.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

SEVERE WEATHER CLOSINGS

In the event of a severe storm or emergency, the superintendent of schools will determine when it is necessary to close the schools. Local radio and television stations broadcast such announcements. Do not call the school. All of our lines must be kept open for emergency outgoing calls. Dallas School District will also inform participating families of weather-related schedule changes using One Call Now – an automated calling system.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the alarm sounds, everyone follows the directions of his/her teacher in order to safely clear the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible. Students should be quiet, stay with their group, and remain alert to further instruction.

INSURANCE

Pupil accident insurance is available only at the beginning of the school year for a nominal fee. Two types are available. One is for accidents at school, and the other covers the pupil on a 24-hour basis.

TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

The school provides student textbooks. Each student is responsible for caring for and returning all textbooks in the condition received, except for normal wear and tear. If lost, stolen, or damaged, textbooks must be paid for before the end of the school year.

Classroom materials and/or equipment provided for student use are also the student's responsibility. They are often more valuable than textbooks and more difficult to replace. If lost or damaged, it is the student's responsibility to pay for them.

HALLWAY TRAFFIC

In order to ensure orderly movement from one area to another and keep the noise and confusion at a minimum, students are expected to be especially quiet and courteous during the change of classes. There is enough time in the schedule to move from one class to another without delay. Excessive tardiness to class may result in disciplinary action. Certainly there will be no running, scuffling, or boisterous activity in the corridors, and every effort should be made to keep hallways clean and free of litter.

WELLNESS CLASS REQUIREMENTS

All students are expected to participate in wellness class. Non-participation is excused only with a physician's note. Any extended medical problem requires the student to have an adapted physical education form filled out and signed by the student's physician and parent.

Required attire for wellness class is shorts or sweatpants, t-shirt or sweatshirt, socks, and sneakers. Jewelry may not be worn during class. This includes body piercings. Valuables are not to be brought to wellness class; they should be left at home or secured in a locker room locker. It is recommended that students bring a lock to be used on locker room lockers for the class period of wellness classes. The lock must be removed at the conclusion of each class.

SWIM CLASS REQUIREMENTS

Students unable to participate in swimming for the day must provide a note from a parent/guardian. **Students may be excused from swimming with a note from a parent/guardian without academic penalty.**

Required attire for swim class is a school-appropriate bathing suit. Students should also bring a towel. Goggles and a swim cap are optional. Long hair must be tied back. Jewelry may not be worn during swim class. This includes body piercings. Valuables are not to be brought to swim class; they should be left at home or secured in a locker room locker. It is recommended that students bring a lock to be used on locker room lockers for the class period of swim classes. The lock must be removed at the conclusion of each class.

Please note: Bathing suits must be school appropriate. String bikinis are not permitted. Cut-off shorts are not permitted. For female students, one-piece bathing suits are recommended. If a bathing suit appears to be inappropriate, the student will receive a “zero” for participation and will not be allowed to swim. The use of temporary/rinse-out hair dye is also not permitted for students who intend to use the pool.

ATTENDANCE

PURPOSE

Enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws in the Dallas School District shall be in strict accordance with the school laws of Pennsylvania, and the regulations of the Department of Education.

AUTHORITY

Every child of compulsory school age residing in the Dallas School District is required to attend a state-approved day school program. Compulsory school age is the period of the child’s life from the time the child’s parents elect to have the child enter school, which shall be no later than the age of eight (8) years, until the age of seventeen (17) years, unless the child has graduated from high school prior to reaching age seventeen (17).

DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

The authority for notifying parents/guardians of their failure to comply with the provisions of the compulsory attendance act is hereby delegated to the student’s principal or home and school visitor.

INTRODUCTION

The laws of Pennsylvania have recently changed regarding student attendance (24 P.S. 13-1327), and local school districts are required to enforce attendance requirements as detailed in the PA School Code. The Dallas School District (DSD) supports the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) commitment to improving school attendance rates. In order for students to realize the opportunities and benefits from school, students have to not only be in attendance, but they must also be meaningfully connected to the school and experiencing success. To achieve this, the DSD works in collaboration with students, families and community resources to address the issues that result in truant behavior.

DSD is working with local organizations and agencies to provide creative and innovative approaches to ensure that children are active participants in their education. Every effort is made to keep youth in school and reduce the school district's referrals to the courts, child welfare, or juvenile justice systems. In order to effectively eliminate truant behavior, we call on parents to ensure that students attend school each day. To eliminate truancy, families, schools, and communities must work together. (*DSD Policy 204*)

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT

Compulsory school age refers to the period of a child's life from the time the child enters school as a beginner until the age of seventeen (17) or graduation from high school, whichever occurs first. It is MANDATORY for all children of compulsory school age, who have a legal residence in Pennsylvania, to attend school every day.

LAWFUL ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

DSD will consider a lawful absence any of the following: student illness, family emergency, religious holidays, medical or dental appointments, and educational travel with prior approval from the principal. A written excuse from the parent is required explaining the reason for the absence. Forms are available on our website at www.dsdhs.com {Dallas Middle School → Forms (*on the left*)}.

CUMULATIVE LAWFUL ABSENCES

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences, verified by written parental notification (forms, fax, notes, or email), may be permitted during a school year. Included in the ten (10) days are any family educational trips receiving approval.

All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days require a written excuse from a physician.

UNLAWFUL ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

The school district is responsible for monitoring and maintaining records of attendance of students. All absences are unlawful until the school receives a written note (forms, fax, notes, or email) from the parent explaining the reason(s) for an absence. Parents/guardians must submit the written explanation (forms, fax, notes, or email) within

three (3) calendar days of the absence. Failure to provide a written excuse for an absence after three (3) days will result in the absence being permanently counted as unlawful (unexcused).

Truant is defined as an incurred three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences.

Habitually Truant is defined as an incurred six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.

Students who are illegally absent from school will be assigned to two sessions of Saturday Alternative to Suspension for each day they are illegally absent.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

1. Schools will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of the 1st and 2nd unlawful absence(s).
2. Schools will notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of the 3rd unlawful absence by mail.
3. Following the 3rd unlawful absence, the district will coordinate a school/family conference to discuss truancy and develop a mutually agreed upon Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP). If the parent(s)/guardian(s) refuses to meet for the SAIP, the DSD designee will complete the SAIP without family input.
4. A 4th unlawful absence may result in a referral to the District Magistrate.
5. DSD will refer all future incidents of truancy, after the 4th unlawful absence, to either the District Magistrate or to Children and Youth of Luzerne County.
6. DSD will work with the family to provide support and referral information for assistance from community social service agencies. (*DSD Policy 204*)

STUDENT ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) is written at the school/family conference, which is held after the 3rd unlawful absence. During the conference, possible solutions to increase the student's school attendance will be explored. Participation by the student and family is an integral component of this conference.

Issues to be addressed at the school/family conference may include but are not limited to:

- Reason for absences;
- Appropriateness of student's educational setting;
- Possible elements of the school environment that inhibit student success;
- Student's current academic level and needs;
- Social, emotional, physical, mental, and behavioral health needs;
- Issues concerning family and home environment;
- Any other issues affecting the student's attendance.

EXCEPTIONS TO COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

All pupils between the age of eight (8) and seventeen (17), pursuant to the compulsory education laws of Pennsylvania, shall attend school regularly except those excused for the following reasons:

1. Homebound instruction, wherein homebound tutors are provided for any student who has secured written recommendation for such instruction, according to the diagnosis and prognosis of a medical doctor. The prognosis shall be stated in terms of the maximum length of time. A notation of such instruction will be placed in a cumulative folder. Students receiving homebound instruction are considered present.
2. Mental or physical disability diagnosed by a licensed practitioner.
3. Attendance at a non-public school approved by the State Department of Education.
4. Regular employment of children in compliance with child labor laws.

MISSED ASSIGNMENTS FROM ABSENCE

The guideline for completing missed assignments as a result of an EXCUSED absence is as follows:

of days of excused absence(s) = # number of school days permitted to complete assignment(s)

The exception to this may be an excused educational trip where the arrangements made with the teacher involve turning in assignments immediately upon return from the trip. **It is the responsibility of the student and/or parent/guardian to communicate directly with the faculty regarding missed assignments.**

In cases where mental or physical disability prevents a student from attending school, a qualified licensed practitioner of the healing arts must certify the student cannot attend school, and whenever possible, offer specific recommendations for appropriate alternative placement for the child. Every resource, including private and governmental social and welfare organizations, and the Intermediate Unit, should be explored in the effort to place the child in the appropriate program.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

An award will be given to those students who have achieved perfect attendance throughout the entire school year. These awards will be given at a special assembly at the end of the school year. Any half-day absences due to late arrival or early dismissal will disqualify a student from perfect attendance. Days missed due to educational trips will also be considered as absences.

HOMELESS STUDENTS

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act guarantees a free and appropriate public education for all homeless children and youth. Any students who "lack a fixed, regular, and

adequate nighttime residence" are entitled to a public education and educational services comparable to those provided to other students, according to the needs of the student. Please contact Jaclyn Degnan, Home and School Visitor, for further information. (*DSD Policy 251*)

DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

No school or grade may be dismissed before the regular hour for dismissal except with the approval of the superintendent of schools.

No pupil shall be permitted to leave school during school hours unless upon personal request of the parent/guardian, or when participating in a school-sponsored program with written permission of the parent/guardian.

Since the school is responsible to the parent/guardian for the child during the time he/she is in school, these rules shall be observed:

1. Students shall be released from school only to their custodial parent/guardian or persons authorized in writing by their parent/guardian on school district emergency forms. The building administrator must approve exceptions to this rule.
2. Written permission from parent/guardian is necessary for the student to be dismissed to any destination other than home.
3. Students who become ill or injured during the school day must report to the nurse, who will contact the student's parent/guardian. It shall be determined that a parent or reliable adult is at home before the student is sent home upon the recommendation of the school nurse. Students are not permitted to call parents without authorization of the nurse or administrator.
4. If any police or court official requests the dismissal of a student during school hours, the parents will be notified at once.
5. Requests for release time for dental and medical appointments shall be honored when impossible to arrange on non-school time. A written request from the student's parent/guardian is necessary. Whenever possible, an appointment confirmation on the doctor's stationery needs to accompany the request.
6. Students shall not be dismissed during school hours for non-school activities such as private music lessons, dancing lessons, scout meetings, and similar activities.

ABSENCES

Absences and late arrivals to school require written excuses from a parent/guardian. The fact that a parent/guardian has written an excuse or notifies the administration via phone does not necessarily mean that the absence is excused. The classification of absence (excused or unexcused) is determined by the school administration.

EXCUSES – HALF TO FULL DAY

The parent/guardian must sign an excuse form stating the student's name, grade, and date(s) of absence and reason for absence(s). Students returning to school without a

written excuse will be charged with an unexcused absence. An excuse to verify the absence must be turned in within three (3) days of returning to school or the absence will remain unexcused.

Being late for school (beyond 9:40 AM) is classified as a half-day absence.

Any student who arrives after 9:40 AM is not permitted to participate in any extra- or co-curricular activities that day, unless a medical excuse is presented. If the lateness occurs on a Friday, the student is ineligible for a weekend activity.

Consequences for unexcused absences are as follows:

- **1st Unexcused Absence** - One detention;
- **2nd Unexcused Absence** - Saturday Alternative to Suspension (SATS); referral to SAP team;
- **3rd (and Subsequent) Unexcused Absence** - Consequences will ensue at the discretion of the building administration, which may include referral to Magistrate.

LATE TO SCHOOL

For this policy, late is defined as arriving to school after 8:00 AM (10:00 AM for delayed starts). Late students will immediately report to homeroom or class after signing in at the main office. The reason for being late will be recorded in the Raptor system. Administration will determine whether the reason is excused or unexcused.

Consequences for unexcused lates are as follows:

- **5th Unexcused Late** - One detention;
- **8th Unexcused Late** - Two detentions;
- **12th (and Subsequent) Unexcused Late** - Determined by building administrator.

Excessive unexcused lateness may result in suspension.

EARLY DISMISSAL

The following procedures are to be followed when requesting an early dismissal of a student:

1. A written request that includes the reason and time for dismissal, a phone number at which a parent/guardian can be reached to confirm the request, and the signature of the parent/guardian must be submitted to the main office between 7:30 – 8:00 AM.
2. Once a request has been confirmed, it is placed on the Attendance & Early Dismissal Google Classroom. The student must report to the office to be signed out by a parent/guardian at the designated time of dismissal.
3. Parents are asked not to schedule an early dismissal unless unavoidable. Leaving school early interferes with the students' learning process and detracts from the

teachers' instructional efforts. Please make every effort to schedule appointments, visitations, etc. during non-school hours.

TARDY TO CLASS

Each student has three minutes to travel to the next class. A tardy is defined as any student not in his/her scheduled classroom before the bell rings.

Consequences for unexcused tardy to class are as follows:

- **1st Tardy** - Warning;
- **2nd Tardy** - After-school detention;
- **3rd Tardy** - Two after-school detentions;
- **4th Tardy** - Saturday Alternative to Suspension;
- **5th (and Subsequent) Tardy** - In-school suspension, and processing as a chronic discipline violation to be handled in accord with the discipline code described in this handbook.

CLASS CUTTING

A class cut results in a Saturday Alternative to Suspension and forfeits the opportunity to make up class work and/or tests. Discipline for multiple class cuts is at the discretion of the building administrators.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS/ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Parents desiring to take their children on an educational trip must submit to the administration a description of the educational value to be gained by the student. This request must be submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to departure for proper review. Students are responsible for making arrangements with their teachers to make up all work necessary to meet course requirements.

FIELD TRIPS/ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

Educational field trip experiences and enrichment activities (e.g. field day) can offer meaningful enrichment of classroom instruction. Such trips, however, are a privilege, and for students to be granted permission to participate, they need to meet the minimum requirements of academic performance, attendance, obligations, and behavior as follows:

- **Academic** - No lower failing grades for the most recent marking period;
- **Attendance** - No more than three unexcused lates or absences during the current semester;
- **Behavior** - No out-of-school suspensions and no more than three discipline referrals during the current semester;
- **Obligations** - No current obligations such as lost textbooks, library fines, health forms, etc.

Ultimately, a student's participation in educational field trip experiences and enrichment activities is at the discretion of the building administrator.

PLAGIARISM/CHEATING/DISHONEST ACADEMIC BEHAVIOR

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of words and/or ideas of any published work. The penalty for plagiarism, cheating, or contributing toward cheating will be a grade of "zero" in the examination, homework, research paper, or other type of evaluation. The parent/guardian will be notified and the student will be referred to the building administrator for disciplinary action.

INSUBORDINATION

Any student who willfully disobeys the reasonable direction by any building administrator, teacher, or other member of the Dallas School District staff will be considered insubordinate and will be suspended for a minimum of three (3) days. *(DSD Policy 233)*

DISCIPLINE CODE

The discipline code that follows is progressive. This means that violations of the policy at any level will be met with consequences of increasing severity. Options for consequences are after-school detention, Saturday Alternative to Suspension, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion. Furthermore, any violation of the policy's levels I-IV will be treated with consequences appropriate for its respective category. The building administrator will determine the "appropriateness" of a consequence.

The consequences have two purposes. First, the consequences are in place to hold the student accountable for his or her actions and, second and most importantly, to encourage the student to improve his or her behavior. Failure to improve behavior will cause a student to progress quickly through the discipline procedure set forth herein.

Recurring Level I, II, and III offenses will yield severe consequences, including out-of-school suspension, for students whose behavior does not improve. *(DSD Policy 218)*

DISCIPLINE CODE – LEVEL I

DESCRIPTION

A Level I offense is any behavior on the part of the student that is in violation of the classroom procedures established by the teacher. Level I violations include, but are not limited to: possession of non-instructional items (iPods, gaming technology, cell phones, etc.), excessive tardiness, excessive or inappropriate talking, etc.

PROCEDURES

Level I violations will be managed by the staff in a manner consistent with the behavior. Repeated Level I violations will be upgraded to Level II offenses.

DISCIPLINE CODE – LEVEL II

DESCRIPTION

A Level II offense is any behavior that disrupts the orderly climate and conduct of the school, and school-sponsored activities. Level II offenses require administrative intervention. Level II violations include, but are not limited to: cutting class, failure to attend assigned detention, leaving school without permission, etc.

PROCEDURES

Level II violations will be managed by building administrators in a manner consistent with the behavior and previous discipline violations. Repeated Level II violations will be upgraded to Level III offenses.

DISCIPLINE CODE – LEVEL III

DESCRIPTION

Level III offenses are acts or threats against persons or property that may endanger the health or safety of others in the school setting. Continuation of Level II behaviors is also included. Level III violations include, but are not limited to: fighting, threatening students or school personnel, etc.

PROCEDURES

Level III violations will be handled by the building administrators and/or the appropriate law enforcement agency. Repeated Level III violations will be upgraded to Level IV offenses.

DISCIPLINE CODE – LEVEL IV

DESCRIPTION

Level IV offenses are acts that are clearly criminal in nature or are continuations of Level III violations. Also, any action that endangers the health or welfare of any member of the school community is considered a Level IV offense.

PROCEDURES

All Level IV violations have a mandatory ten-day suspension with an informal hearing.

ACT 26

Act 26 of the Pennsylvania Legislature requires the following: “A 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 school property, or any school-sponsored activity.”

A weapon is defined as an “instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.”

“School Property” shall mean any public school grounds, any school-sponsored activity, or conveyance providing transportation to a school-sponsored activity.

“Weapon” shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon, and any other tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. (*DSD Policy 218.1*)

BULLYING

Bullying shall be defined as a pattern of abuse over time and involves a student being tormented. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, physical intimidation, assault, extortion, oral or written threats, teasing, put-downs, name calling, cyber bullying, threatening looks, gestures, or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation.

The Board prohibits bullying and shall not tolerate any bullying on district property or at any school-sponsored activity on or off campus.

DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

It shall be the responsibility of staff members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene, unless intervention would be a threat to staff members’ safety.

If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report the bullying to the building principal for further investigation.

It shall be the responsibility of students and parents/guardians who become aware of an act of bullying to report it to the building principal for further investigation. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to the disciplinary action set forth in this policy.

GUIDELINES

Upon learning about a bullying incident, the principal or designee shall interview both students, conduct a thorough investigation, and contact parents/guardians of the aggressor and victim. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents/guardians, and school staff, review of school records, and identification of parents/guardians and family issues.

Disciplinary action for students who bully others shall depend upon the results of the principal’s investigation and may include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Counseling;
2. Parent/guardian conference;
3. Detention;
4. Suspension;
5. Expulsion.

Depending on the severity of the incident, the principal may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety, which may include:

1. Implementation of a safety plan;
2. Separation and supervision of students involved;
3. Provision of staff support as necessary;
4. Referral of incident to law enforcement officials, as necessary;
5. Development of a supervision plan with the parents/guardians. (*DSD Policy 249*)

Students are encouraged to contact the Safe School Helpline or Safe2Say to report bullying. The report is totally anonymous and can be made any time of day or night. Call 1-800-418-6423 ext. 359, or text 66746 and type TIPS, or call 1-844-SAF-2SAY.

UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

The School Board strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the district to maintain an educational environment in which harassment in any form is not tolerated.

The Board prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment of students and third parties by all district students and staff members, contracted individuals, vendors, volunteers, and third parties in the schools. The Board encourages students and third parties who have been harassed to promptly report such incidents to the designated employees.

The Board directs that complaints of harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action be taken when allegations are substantiated. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the district's legal and investigative obligations.

No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of harassment.

For purposes of this policy, harassment shall consist of verbal, written, graphic, or physical conflict relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

For purposes of this policy, sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

A student or third party who believes she or he has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy is encouraged to immediately report the incident to the building principal or district employee. (*DSD Policy 104*)

Specific details regarding grievance procedures are available from guidance counselors, building administrators, or the Title IX coordinator.

HAZING

PURPOSE

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

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy, hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health, or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any organization recognized by the Board.

Endangering the mental health shall include any activity that would subject an individual to extreme mental stress, such as prolonged sleep deprivation, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, forced conduct, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual.

Endangering the physical health shall include but not be limited to any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, alcoholic beverage, drug, or controlled substance; or other forced physical activity that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual.

Any hazing activity, whether by an individual or a group, shall be presumed to be a forced activity, even if a student willingly participates.

AUTHORITY

The Board does not condone any form of initiation or harassment, known as hazing, as part of any school sponsored student activity. No student, coach, sponsor, volunteer, or district employee shall plan, direct, or encourage, assist, or engage in any hazing activity.

The Board directs that no administrator, coach, volunteer, sponsor, or district employee shall permit, condone, or tolerate any form of hazing. The district will investigate all complaints of hazing and will administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy.

The Board encourages students who have been subjected to hazing to promptly report such incidents to the building principal.

DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

District administrators shall promptly investigate all complaints of hazing and administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy.

Students, administrators, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, and district employees shall be alert to incidents of hazing and shall report such conduct to the building principal.

The district shall annually inform students, parents, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, and district staff that hazing of district students is prohibited by means of:

1. Distribution of written policy;
2. Publication in handbooks;
3. Presentation at an assembly;
4. Verbal instructions by the coach or sponsor at the start of the season or program;
5. Posting of notice/signs.

GUIDELINES

Complaint Procedures:

1. When a student believes that he/she has been subject to hazing, the student shall promptly report the incident, orally or in writing, to the building principal.
2. The principal shall conduct a timely, impartial, thorough, and comprehensive investigation.
3. The principal shall prepare a written report summarizing the investigation and recommending disposition of the complaint. Copies of the report shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, and others directly involved, as appropriate.
4. If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of hazing, the principal shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Additionally, the student may be subject to disciplinary action by the coach or sponsor, up to and including removal from the activity. *(DSD Policy 247)*

TOBACCO USE/POSSESSION

PURPOSE

The Board recognizes that smoking presents a health hazard, which can have serious consequences both for the smoker and the non-smoker and is, therefore, a concern of the Board.

DEFINITION

For the purposes of this policy, "smoking" shall mean possession or use of tobacco products or flavoring, and any delivery system for nicotine or other products that can be consumed, including but not limited to cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, and chewing tobacco. *(DSD Policy 222)*

AUTHORITY

In order to protect students and staff from the safety hazards of smoking and from an environment noxious to non-smokers, and because the Board cannot, even by indirection, condone the use of tobacco by students, the Board prohibits smoking by students on school property. Any student in violation of the anti-smoking rules will be subject to one (1) or more of the following:

1. Assignment to the Anti-Smoking Clinic;
2. Referral to the District Magistrate;
3. Suspension from school.

DRUG AWARENESS

PURPOSE

The Board recognizes that the misuse of drugs is a serious problem with legal, physical, and social implications for the whole school community. As the educational institution of this district, the schools should strive to prevent drug abuse.

DEFINITION

For purposes of this policy, "drugs" shall mean: All dangerous controlled substances prohibited by law, all alcoholic beverages, any inhalant or volatile solvent, any "look-alike" drugs, and any prescription or patent drug, except those for which permission to use in school has been granted, pursuant to Board policy.

AUTHORITY

The Board of School Directors prohibits any student, while on school property, from using or having in their possession alcoholic beverages or dangerous, illegal drugs. This policy shall also pertain to students while on school activities, and when acting as a representative of the school or district.

Any student found in possession of or under the influence of alcohol or drugs by a sponsor, chaperone, or other professional staff member at a school-sponsored affair, or during the school day, will be suspended from school for ten (10) days by the building administrator. Additional restrictions/requirements placed on the student are in accordance with the Controlled Substance Policy. (*DSD Policy 227*)

DETENTION AND SUSPENSION

PURPOSE

The Board of School Directors, within the authority of the General Assembly and at the direction of the State Board of Education, shall define and publish the types of offenses that lead to suspension and expulsion from school. Other means of enforcing discipline, such as in-school or after-school detentions, should be considered before suspension or expulsion.

DETENTION

Detention is held after school and shall not be more than one hour in length. Parents will be notified no less than twenty-four (24) hours before a student's assigned detention. Transportation is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

SATURDAY ALTERNATIVE TO SUSPENSION (SATS)

Saturday Alternative to Suspension (SATS) is assigned from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM in a designated school district building and is supervised by a professional employee of the Dallas School District. Other terms and conditions with which students must comply accompany written notification of assignment. Transportation is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

When a student's behavior is determined to be so unacceptable as to warrant removal from school, yet there is a need or desire to maintain the student's instructional program, in-school suspension may be assigned. When assigned, a student reports to school as usual and is transported to and from the designated in-school suspension building by school district transportation. Specific terms and conditions with which students must comply accompany written notification of assignment. Students are not permitted to participate in or attend any extra- or co-curricular activities (including practices) while assigned to in-school suspension.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

The building administrator can assign out-of-school suspension from one (1) to ten (10) days. The nature of an offense may be such that the removal from school is necessary. A student receiving a suspension will be informed of the reasons for the suspension and will be given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective. Parents of students being suspended will be notified of the reason for suspension and the effective time of the suspension. All suspensions of four (4) to ten (10) days in length require a prior informal hearing in accordance with established hearing procedures.

It is the responsibility of the student to make up all work missed while on suspension. Homework assignments are due on the day the student returns to school. While the absence is excused, it is not subject to the time provisions accorded for "Missed Assignments From Absence" on page 31. Tests and quizzes must be made up within three (3) days. Students are not permitted to participate in or attend any extra- or co-curricular activities (including practices) while suspended. (*DSD Policy 233*)

HEARINGS FOR STUDENTS

Education is a fundamental right and students must be afforded all appropriate elements of due process if they are to be excluded from school.

INFORMAL HEARINGS

The purpose of an informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended, to demonstrate that there is a case of mistaken identity, or to show that there is some compelling reason why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing also encourages the student's parents/guardians to meet with the principal to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.

The following due process procedures will be observed:

1. Notification of the reasons for the suspension will be given, in writing, to the parents/guardians and to the student.
2. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing.
3. The right to cross-examine any witness.
4. The student's right to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.

PUPIL PERSONNEL REVIEW BOARD

PURPOSE

1. To provide a positive step in our disciplinary policy that could provide an alternative program for potentially chronic disciplinary offenders in lieu of appearance before the disciplinary review board.
2. To clarify with the student and his/her parents/guardians the position of the school in regard to its responsibility and to affirm the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

MEMBERSHIP

The review board should be comprised of a combination of the following:

1. Building Administrator(s)
2. Home and School Visitor
3. School Counselor
4. Referring teacher(s)
5. Nurse

ELIGIBILITY

Two (2) suspensions.

DISCIPLINARY REVIEW BOARD

PURPOSE

1. To provide an additional step in our disciplinary policy that could establish an alternative program for chronic disciplinary offenders in lieu of taking immediate steps toward expulsion.

2. To clarify with the student and his/her parents/guardians the position of the school in regard to its responsibility and to affirm the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

MEMBERSHIP

The review board should be comprised of a combination of the following:

1. Superintendent
2. Building Administrator
3. Home and School Visitor
4. School Counselor
5. Teacher(s) involved in the case

ELIGIBILITY

1. Four (4) suspensions;
2. Previous referral to the Pupil Personnel Review Board.

FORMAL HEARINGS

In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing. A formal hearing may be held before the Board of School Directors, or a duly authorized committee of the Board, composed of no fewer than three (3) members of the Board. The hearing committee's decision is advisory to the School Board where expulsion is recommended. A majority of the entire School Board is required to expel a student.

The following due process procedures will be observed for formal hearings:

1. Education is a fundamental right - a student must be afforded all appropriate elements of due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing, which is a fundamental element of due process.
2. A formal hearing may be held before the Board of School Directors or a duly authorized committee of the Board, preferably composed of no fewer than three (3) members of the School Board. The hearing committee's decision is advisory to the School Board where expulsion is recommended. A majority vote of the entire School Board is recommended. A majority vote of the entire School Board is required to expel a student.
3. At the formal hearing, the following due process requirements are to be observed:
 - a. Notification of the charges in writing, sent to the parents/guardians by certified mail, and to the student.
 - b. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing.
 - c. The right to an impartial tribunal.
 - d. The right to be represented by counsel.
 - e. The right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.

- f. The right to demand that any such witness appears in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
 - g. The student's right to testify and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
 - h. A record must be kept of the hearing, either by a stenographer or by tape recorder. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.
 - i. The proceeding must be held with all reasonable speed.
- 4. The hearing shall be held in private, unless the student's parents/guardians request it to be public.
- 5. When the student is dissatisfied with the results of the hearing, the next recourse is to the appropriate state courts. If it is alleged that a constitutional issue is involved, the student may file a claim for relief in the appropriate federal district court.
- 6. Students who are less than seventeen (17) years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled, and must attend school. The responsibility for placing the student in school rests initially with the student's parent/guardian. However, if the student is unable to attend another public school, cannot afford to attend, or is unable to be accepted at a private school, the student's school district has the responsibility to make some provision for the child's education, either through instruction in the home or readmitting the child. If none of these alternatives is acceptable, the school district must take action in accordance with the provisions of the Juvenile Act of 1972 to ensure that the child will receive a proper education.

EXPULSION

Expulsion shall mean exclusion from school for an offense for a period exceeding ten (10) school days with periodic review by the School Board.

Expulsion from school shall be after a formal hearing in accordance with the policies and regulations established by the Board of School Directors.

If expulsion proceedings are initiated, it is determined after an informal hearing that the student's presence in his or her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others. If it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than ten (10) days. This is with the understanding that the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative instruction.

Students who are less than seventeen (17) years of age are still subject to compulsory school attendance law even though expelled, and must attend school. The responsibility for placing the student in school rests initially with the student's parent/guardian. If no suitable alternative arrangement is made for schooling, the district will take action in accordance with the provisions of the Juvenile Act of 1972 to ensure that the child will receive a proper education.

The maximum period a student may be suspended for an offense shall not exceed ten (10) school days. Suspension may not be cumulative or made to run consecutively beyond this ten (10) school-day limitation.

Until the case of a hearing and decision of the Board of School Directors in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his/her normal classes. Students shall be permitted to make up examinations and work missed while being disciplined by a suspension, within the guidelines established by the Board of School Directors. (*DSD Policy 233*)

CHILD FIND

The purpose of the Child Find notice is to describe the various types of support a student may have available to them within the school district.

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

IDEA

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 (3) 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 under early intervention support.

SECTION 504

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.

REFERRAL PROCESS

ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Each elementary building utilizes a child study team process. Through this process, parents become aware of special education services and interventions that would be available prior to qualifying for services. Title 1 services and interventions are utilized as well.

SECONDARY LEVEL

The secondary level utilizes the SAP program. SAP is an early intervention program for students who are having difficulty being successful in school. SAP involves the coordinated efforts of professionals (a building administrator, two or more classroom teachers, a school counselor, a social worker, a school nurse, and others) who comprise the Student Assistance Core Team. The core team is trained to recognize students in need, to determine the nature of the problem, and refer students for assistance.

POINTS OF CONTACT

If you feel your child is in need of support and services in the school district, please contact your child's teacher, counselor, as well as the building principal to begin the referral process. If you need additional assistance, please contact the special education department.

DSD Special Education Office -- 570-674-2888

Director: Andrea Dennis

Wycallis Primary Center (K-2) -- 570-674-7283

Building Principal: Brain Bradshaw

Counselor: Melissa Cordero

Nurse: Beth Viglone

Dallas Intermediate (3-5) -- 570-674-7271

Building Principal: Thomas Traver
Counselor: Betsy Jerome
Nurse: Beth Viglone

Dallas Middle School (6-8) -- 570-674-7243

Building Principal: Jeffrey Shaffer
Counselors: Julianna Borzell (*A-K*)
Karissa Peck (*L-Z*)
Nurse: Susan Flynn

Dallas High School (9-12) -- 570-674-7208

Building Principal: Greg Riley
Assistant Principal: Dan Natitus
Counselors: Cherilyn Keating (*A-J*)
Matthew Kelly (*K-V*)
Kristen Thomas (*W-Z; IEP & GIEP students*)
Nurse: April Klose

TYPES OF PROGRAMS & SERVICES

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;
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.

Related services are designed to enable the child to participate in or access his/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.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

Special Education Programs are available to those students in the district who meet the Pennsylvania Department of Education criteria as exceptional and in need of specially designed instruction. The Dallas School District provides a full continuum of special education services both in-district operated programs as well as programs provided by the Luzerne Intermediate Unit (LIU 18). The district services school age children in grades K-12.

Those students who are in need of early intervention, 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 following district-operated programs are available in the School District:

- Gifted Support, K-12
- Learning Support, K-12
- Autistic Support, K-12

Related Services:

- Speech and Language Support
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Vision Support

Parents/guardians who have questions regarding special education criteria are to contact their student's teacher, school counselor, building principal, or the district Special Education department.

ELIGIBILITY

The public school, in conjunction with the parents/guardians, 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/guardians, and other persons with special expertise or familiarity with the child. At a minimum, the team will meet annually to discuss the child's programming.

Transition planning begins at age fourteen (14). The public school must invite the child to the IEP team meeting at which the transition plan is developed.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM EVALUATION

Dallas School District conducts a multidisciplinary team evaluation of every child who is thought to have a disability. 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 intellectual disabilities 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.

PROTECTED PRAYER

The First Amendment forbids religious activity that is sponsored by the government, but protects religious activity that is initiated by private individuals, such as students. Therefore, among other things, students may read their Bibles or other scriptures, say grace before meals, and pray or study religious materials with fellow students during recess, lunch, or other non-instructional time to the same extent that they may engage in non-religious activities.

At the same time, school officials may not compel students to participate in prayer or other religious activities. Nor may teachers, administrators, and other school employees, when acting in their official capacities as representatives of the state, encourage or discourage prayer, or participate in such activities with students.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

The school district shall utilize integrated pest management procedures to manage structural and landscape pests and the toxic chemicals used for their control in order to alleviate pest problems with the least possible hazard to people, property, and the environment. (*DSD Policy 716*)