

Wind Gap Middle School



2025-2026
Student Handbook

1620 Teels Road
Pen Argyl, PA 18072

Wind Gap Middle School 2025 – 2026 SCHOOL CALENDAR

August 25, 2025	School Opens – Students’ First Day
August 29 & September 1, 2025	School Closed – Labor Day
September 29, 2025	Act 80 Day – 12:45 Early Dismissal
October 13, 2025	School Closed- Columbus Day
October 20, 2025	Act 80 Day – 12:45 Early Dismissal
November 17, 2025	Act 80 Day – 12:45 Early Dismissal
November 19, 2025	End of 1 st Trimester
November 24-26, 2025	12:45 Early Dismissal - Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences
November 27-28 & December 1, 2025	School Closed – Thanksgiving Vacation
December 23, 2025	Act 80 Day-- 12:45 Early Dismissal
December 24, 2025 - January 2, 2026	School Closed – Winter Vacation
January 5, 2026	Return to School
January 19, 2026	School Closed- Martin Luther King Day
January 26, 2026	Act 80 Day – 12:45 Early Dismissal
February 16, 2026	School Closed- Presidents’ Day
February 25 & 26, 2026	12:45 Early Dismissal - Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences
March 2, 2026	End of 2 nd Trimester
March 2, 2026	Act 80 Day - 12:45 Early Dismissal
April 3-6, 2026	School Closed - Spring Vacation
April 7, 2026	Return to School
April 13, 2026	Act 80 Day - 12:45 Early Dismissal
May 4, 2026	Act 80 Day - 12:45 Early Dismissal
May 25, 2026	School Closed - Memorial Day
May 28, 2026	11:45 Early Dismissal - Students’ Last Day

Pen Argyl Area School District

Mission Statement:

The Pen Argyl Area School District will foster educational growth and lifelong learning by implementing evidence-based teaching and learning practices focused on college and career readiness.

Vision Statement:

The Pen Argyl Area School District will employ future-focused teaching and learning practices to address the ever-changing technological advances in society, preparing our students for the careers of today, and those anticipated in the future. 1. Student growth and development guide all decisions. 2. Teachers, students, and community members will utilize state-of-the-art technologies and innovative teaching and learning practices to develop communication, collaboration, creativity, computational thinking, and critical thinking skills, as students move from being information consumers to information creators. 3. All students will succeed and persevere in all endeavors through a well-rounded education: academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular. 4. All students will practice civil behaviors such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, and kindness.

Wind Gap Middle School PBIS Expectations:

GREEN KNIGHTS SAY, “RESPECT THE WGMS CODE!”

W = Work Hard

G = Give Respect

M = Make Good Choices

S = Show Responsibility

PBIS is a system to support appropriate academic and behavioral motivations. It is a tiered approach to motivating students to focus on academics and appropriate behaviors.

WGMS aims to encourage each child to be independent as well as develop a sense of respect and responsibility for themselves, others and their school.

Wind Gap Middle School

2025-2026

Welcome

The staff at the Wind Gap Middle School would like to welcome all of our students to the Wind Gap Middle School for the 2025-2026 School Year. We sincerely hope that this school year will be a pleasant and successful year for each of you.

The policies and procedures that are contained within this handbook are of great value in helping you adjust to our school and to become an integral part of it. Please familiarize yourself with this information. Once you have done so, please sign the section below and have your child (tear out and) return this page to his/her homeroom teacher.

It is important to realize that the success of our school is directly proportional to the collective effort of our students. We sincerely hope that you will take advantage of all that our Middle School has to offer and make your year fun, exciting and educational.

=====

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Homeroom _____

I hereby certify that I have received a copy of the student handbook. I acknowledge that I am aware of the school's bullying policy, discipline policy, drug/alcohol/weapons and tobacco policy, internet and computer policy, attendance policy, and other policies and guidelines as presented in this student handbook. I understand that my son/daughter is required to abide by and is subject to all the policies, guidelines, and procedures as outlined in this student handbook and the district policy at large. Please direct any questions you may have to Mr. Shan Smerdon, Principal, or Mr. Jeffrey Searfass, Assistant Principal.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Parent e-mail address: _____

Wind Gap Middle School Office:

Regular office hours 7:30 am-4:00 pm

Principal: Mr. Shan Smerdon

smerdon.shan@penargylsd.org

Assistant Principal: Mr. Jeffrey Searfass

searfass.jeffrey@penargylsd.org

(610) 863-9093-Office

(610) 863-3817- Fax

Visitor's Procedure

All visitors are required to register at the Middle School office and obtain a visitor's badge/sticker. Parents are encouraged to call and arrange a time that is mutually agreeable when meeting with teachers and administrators. Students are prohibited from bringing friends to school during regular school hours. If you have a question concerning classroom activities, please first contact the teacher. If he or she does not answer your questions, contact the team leader. If further explanation is needed the principal should be contacted.

PICTURES ON WEBSITE & OTHER ELECTRONIC / PAPER BASED POSTINGS

We will occasionally post pictures on our website of student activities (classroom learning, trips, assemblies, projects). Students will be seen but not identified by name. **All parents/guardians who wish their child not be photographed must submit that in writing each new school year. Notes from the previous school year do not transfer over to this school year.** If you would not want your child's picture posted, please send Mr. Smerdon an email message (smerdon.shan@penargylsd.org) and we will make every effort to comply with your wishes.

VOLUNTEER POLICY

Parent volunteers must have all required paperwork by the school district and be School Board approved. Information on becoming a volunteer can be found on the Wind Gap Middle School website, in the Family Resources - Parent Volunteers section.

- If you are not sure if you have completed all necessary requirements, you may check by calling the school office at 610-863-9093.

Table of Contents

- I. Computer Acceptable Use Policy**
- II. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**
- III. Medication Policy**
- IV. Attendance**
- V. Student responsibilities**
- VI. Discipline**
- VII. District Policies**
- VIII. Academics**
- IX. Miscellaneous**

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Pen Argyl Area School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, and handicap in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504.

For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures in relation to Title IX and Section 504, please contact the Title IX District Coordinator, Mr. Greg Freeman, at 1620 Teels Road, Pen Argyl, PA 18072, (610) 863-3191. Reports of discrimination or sexual harassment can be made at any time through any of the following means: direct email to building principal or assistant principal; use of a bully reporting form for a specific school; contact with school resource officer; and / or a report through the Safe to Say Something system (S2SS).

For information regarding services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons, contact district administration at (610) 863-3191, or by calling the building principal directly.



COMPUTER, NETWORK, ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Purpose

This policy is intended to help students, employees and guests (users) understand what shall be considered acceptable use of the district's Internet, computer and network resources including, but not limited to, district-issued laptop computers, tablets, and all devices logged into the district's computer network or Internet during and after regular school hours.

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

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

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

Definitions

The term child pornography is defined under both federal and state law.

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

1. The production of such visual depiction involves the use of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct;
2. Such visual depiction is a digital image, computer image, or computer-generated image that is, or is indistinguishable from, that of a minor engaging in sexually explicit conduct; or
3. Such visual depiction has been created, adapted, or modified to appear that an identifiable minor is engaging in sexually explicit conduct.

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

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

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

1. Taken as a whole, with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or excretion;
2. Depicts, describes or represents in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
3. Taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value as to minors.

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

1. Predominantly appeals to the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors;
2. Is patently offensive to prevailing standards in the adult community as a whole with respect to what is suitable for minors; and
3. Taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political, educational or scientific value for minors.

Minor - any individual seventeen (17) years of age or under.[\[3\]](#)

Obscene - any material or performance, if:[\[5\]](#)

1. The average person applying contemporary community standards would find that the subject matter taken as a whole appeals to the prurient interest;
2. The subject matter depicts or describes in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct described in the law to be obscene; and
3. The subject matter, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, educational or scientific value.

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

Authority

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

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

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

Electronic communications on the district network, including but not limited to messages that are created, sent or received using the district's email system, are the property of the district. The district reserves the right to monitor, track and log the contents of all messages created, sent or received using the email system. The email system is strictly for official district business.

Users should be aware that it is often necessary to access users' accounts in order to perform routine maintenance and security tasks. Passwords and attempts to delete communications or information do not restrict the district's ability or right to access such communications or information.

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

The Board establishes the following materials, in addition to those stated in law and defined in this policy, that are inappropriate for access by minors:[4]

1. Defamatory.
2. Lewd, vulgar, or profane.
3. Threatening.
4. Harassing or discriminatory.[9][10][11]
5. Bullying.[12]
6. Terroristic.[13]

The district reserves the right to restrict access to any Internet sites or functions it deems inappropriate through established Board policy, or the use of software and/or online server blocking. Specifically, the district operates and enforces a technology protection measure(s) that blocks or filters access to inappropriate matter by minors on its computers used and accessible to adults and students. The technology protection measure shall be enforced during use of computers with Internet access.[3][4][14]

Upon request by students or staff, the Assistant Superintendent or designee shall expedite a review and may authorize the disabling of Internet blocking/filtering software to enable access to

material that is blocked through technology protection measures but is not prohibited by this policy.[\[14\]](#)

Upon request by students or staff, building administrators may authorize the temporary disabling of Internet blocking/filtering software to enable access for bona fide research or for other lawful purposes. Written permission from the parent/guardian is required prior to disabling Internet blocking/filtering software for a student's use. If a request for temporary disabling of Internet blocking/filtering software is denied, the requesting student or staff member may appeal the denial to the Superintendent or designee for expedited review.[\[3\]](#)[\[15\]](#)

Delegation of Responsibility

The Assistant Superintendent or designee shall oversee the district's Internet, computers and network resources and shall work with other regional and state organizations as necessary to educate users, approve activities, provide for all users leadership for proper training in the use of the district's resources and the requirements of this policy, establish a system to ensure adequate supervision of the district's resources, maintain up-to-date acknowledgment and consent forms, and interpret and enforce policy.

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

The district shall inform staff, students, parents/guardians and other users about this policy through employee and student handbooks, posting on the district website, and by other appropriate methods. A copy of this policy shall be provided to parents/guardians, upon written request.[\[14\]](#)

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

Student user agreements shall also be signed by a parent/guardian.

Administrators, teachers and staff have a professional responsibility to work together to help students develop the intellectual skills necessary to discern among information sources, to identify information appropriate to their age and developmental levels, and to evaluate and use the information to meet their educational goals.

Teachers shall be responsible to provide students with clear guidelines, direction, and supervision for the use of all technologies with their students.

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

Building administrators shall make initial determinations of whether inappropriate use has occurred.

The Assistant Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for recommending technology and developing procedures used to determine whether the district's computers are being used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The procedures shall include but not be limited to: [\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)[\[16\]](#)

1. Utilizing a technology protection measure that blocks or filters Internet access for minors and adults to certain visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, harmful to minors with respect to use by minors, or determined inappropriate for use by minors by the Board.
2. Maintaining and securing a usage log.
3. Monitoring online activities of minors.

The Assistant Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations that ensure students are educated on network etiquette and other appropriate online behavior, including: [\[4\]](#)

1. Interaction with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms.
2. Cyberbullying awareness and response. [\[12\]](#)[\[17\]](#)

Guidelines

Network accounts shall be used only by the authorized owner of the account for its approved purpose. Network users shall respect the privacy of other users on the system.

Students may only use the district's Internet, computers and network resources for educational purposes. Educational purposes shall include classroom activities, professional or career development or otherwise support the district's curriculum, policies, rules, regulations and mission statement.

Incidental personal use of district computers is permitted for employees, so long as such use does not interfere with the employee's job duties or performance, with system operations or with other system users. Personal use must comply with all applicable district policies, rules and regulations, as well as the terms of the ISP, and local, state or federal laws.

Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent or discourage staff members from using personal devices at home in order to connect with the district's network for uses in conformance with this policy.

Users may not use their personal computers to access the district's Internet, computers or network resources unless approved by the Technology Department or designee, and/or authorized by policy.

Safety

It is the district's goal to protect users of the network from harassment and unwanted or unsolicited electronic communications. Any network user who receives threatening or unwelcome electronic communications or inadvertently visits or accesses an inappropriate site

shall report such immediately to a teacher or administrator. Network users shall not reveal personal information to other users on the network, including chat rooms, email, social networking websites, etc.

Internet safety measures shall effectively address the following:[\[4\]](#)[\[16\]](#)

1. Control of access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web.
2. Safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications.
3. Prevention of unauthorized online access by minors, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities.
4. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors.
5. Restriction of minors' access to materials harmful to them.

Prohibitions

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

1. Facilitating illegal activity.
2. Commercial or for-profit purposes.
3. Nonwork or nonschool related work.
4. Product advertisement or political lobbying.
5. Bullying/Cyberbullying and harassment.[\[9\]](#)[\[12\]](#)[\[17\]](#)
6. Hate mail, discriminatory remarks, and offensive, inflammatory, or inappropriate communication.
7. Unauthorized or illegal installation, distribution, reproduction, or use of copyrighted materials.
8. Accessing, sending, receiving, transferring, viewing, sharing or downloading obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal materials, images or photographs.[\[18\]](#)
9. Access by students and minors to material that is harmful to minors or is determined inappropriate for minors in accordance with Board policy.
10. Inappropriate language or profanity.

11. Transmission of material likely to be offensive or objectionable to recipients.
12. Intentional obtaining or modifying of files, passwords, and data belonging to other users.
13. Impersonation of another user, anonymity, and pseudonyms.
14. Fraudulent copying, communications, or modification of materials in violation of copyright laws.[19]
15. Loading or using of unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media.
16. Disruption of the work of other users.
17. Destruction, modification, abuse or unauthorized access to network hardware, software and files.
18. Accessing the Internet, district computers or other network resources without authorization.
19. Disabling or bypassing the Internet blocking/filtering software without authorization.
20. Accessing, sending, receiving, transferring, viewing, sharing or downloading confidential information without authorization.
21. Participation in online gaming and/or gambling.
22. Accessing or using social networking or instant messaging websites.

Security

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

1. Employees and students shall not reveal their passwords to another individual.
2. Users are not to use a computer that has been logged in under another student's or employee's name.
3. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the network.
4. Unauthorized access, including hacking and logging into networks using another individual's username and password shall be strictly prohibited and will result in discipline and denial of privileges. Such unauthorized use may also be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution.

Copyright

The illegal use of copyrighted materials is prohibited. Any data uploaded to or downloaded from the network shall be subject to fair use guidelines and applicable laws and regulations.[19][20]

District Website

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

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

Consequences for Inappropriate Use

General rules for behavior and communications apply when using the Internet, in addition to the stipulations of this policy.

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

The network user shall be responsible for damages to the network, equipment, systems, and software resulting from deliberate or willful acts.[14]

The user may also be responsible for incidental or unintended damage resulting from negligent, willful or deliberate violations of this policy.

The user shall be responsible for payments related to lost or stolen district equipment, and recovery and/or breach of the data contained on them.

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

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

Any and all costs incurred by the district for repairs and/or replacement of software, hardware and data files and for technological consultant services due to any violation of this policy, ISP, or federal, state, or local law shall be paid by the user who caused the loss.

**COMPUTER, NETWORK, ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERNET
ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

SIGNATURE PAGE

To the Parent/Guardian/Employee:

As the parent or guardian of _____ (student name) or as an employee of the Pen Argyl Area School District (PAASD), I have read the Pen Argyl Area School District Acceptable Use Policy governing access to the Internet, electronic communications, and the Pen Argyl District Network and Electronic Communications System (PANS) and agree with its terms. I understand that this access is being provided for educational purposes only. I understand that the Pen Argyl Area School District cannot restrict access to all controversial and inappropriate materials and I will not hold it responsible for materials acquired on the network. I also accept full responsibility for supervision of my child if the network is accessed from home. I hereby give permission to issue an account for my child.

I understand that I have no privacy expectation relative to materials stored on the PANS system and I understand that the PAASD has the right to monitor all materials on the PANS without prior notice.

Parent, Guardian, or Employee:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

To the Student:

I have read the Policy, including this entire signature page, and agree to the terms and conditions as specified.

Teacher Name (please print): _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to the Middle School Office

II. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of age 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students"

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe are inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school *not disclose directory information* about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

III. Medication Procedure

Authorization for Medication during School Hours

If your child needs to take medication in school, prescription or over the counter, the procedure is as follows:

1. Prescription medication, including over the counter, will be administered to the students in the regular school setting and only in circumstances when the child's health may be jeopardized without it.
2. The school medication form needs to be signed by the physician, psychiatrist, or dentist **and** parent/guardian.
3. Standing doctor's notes must be processed again with a new note covering the 2025-2026 school year. Notes from the previous school year do not transfer to this school year.
4. If dosage is changed, new written authorization from the doctor and parent/guardian is required.
5. Authorization will terminate with the expiration date of the prescription or at the end of the school year, whichever occurs first.
6. If medication is discontinued, the doctor must notify the nurse in writing.
7. Medication must be delivered to the school nurse by the parent, legal guardian, or authorized adult designee in the original medication container and in an amount not to exceed a 20- school day supply.
8. Students are **not to have** medication in their possession at any time per school district drug and alcohol policy (except physician authorized self-administered inhalant medications).
9. **Medication sent to school in violation of this policy will not be administered to a student.**
10. Over the counter medication—**does not** apply to cough drops, **but does** include aspirin, Tylenol, Ibuprofen, allergy, antacids, and other over the counter medication, in which case a one school year standing order from the child's personal physician will be accepted.

IV. Pupil Attendance

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

ALL STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE PEN ARGYL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT MUST RESIDE WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE PEN ARGYL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT.

Purpose

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

Authority

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

Definitions

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

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

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

Person in parental relation shall mean a:

1. Custodial biological or adoptive parent.
2. Noncustodial biological or adoptive parent.
3. Guardian of the person of a student.

4. Person with whom a student lives and who is acting in a parental role of a student.

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

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

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify students, persons in parental relation and staff about the district's attendance policy by publishing such policy in student handbooks and newsletters, on the district website and through other efficient communication methods.

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

The Superintendent or designee, in coordination with the building principal and assistant principal, shall be responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this policy.

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

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

Guidelines

Compulsory School Attendance Requirements

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

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

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

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

Excused/Lawful Absence

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

1. Illness, including if a student is dismissed by designated district staff during school hours for health-related reasons.
2. Obtaining professional health care or therapy service rendered by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts in any state, commonwealth or territory.
3. Quarantine.
4. Family emergency.
5. Recovery from accident.
6. Required court attendance.
7. Death in family.
8. Participation in a project sponsored by a statewide or countywide 4-H, FFA or combined 4-H and FFA group, upon prior written request.
9. Participation in a musical performance in conjunction with a national veterans' organization or incorporated unit, as defined in law, for an event or funeral.
 - a. The national veterans' organization or incorporated unit must provide the student with a signed excuse, which shall include the date, location, and time of the event or funeral.
 - b. The student shall furnish the signed excuse to the district prior to being excused from school.
10. Observance of a religious holiday observed by a bona fide religious group, upon prior written request from the person in parental relation.
11. Nonschool-sponsored educational tours or trips, if the following conditions are met:
 - a. The person in parental relation submits the required documentation for excusal prior to the absence, within the appropriate timeframe.
 - b. The student's participation has been approved by the Superintendent or designee.
12. College or postsecondary institution visit, with prior approval.
13. Other urgent reasons that may reasonably cause a student's absence, as well as circumstances related to homelessness, foster care and other forms of educational instability.

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

Temporary Excusals –

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

1. Students receiving tutorial instruction in a field not offered in the district's curricula from a properly qualified tutor approved by the Superintendent, when the excusal does not interfere with the student's regular program of studies.
2. Students participating in a religious instruction program, if the following conditions are met:
 - a. The person in parental relation submits a written request for excusal. The request shall identify and describe the instruction, and the dates and hours of instruction.
 - b. The student shall not miss more than thirty-six (36) hours per school year in order to attend classes for religious instruction.
 - c. Following each absence, the person in parental relation shall submit a statement attesting that the student attended the instruction, and the dates and hours of attendance.
3. School age children unable to attend school upon recommendation of the school physician and a psychiatrist or school psychologist, or both, and with approval of the Secretary of Education.

Parental Notice of Absence –

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

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts.

Unexcused/Unlawful Absence

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

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

Parental Notification –

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

Enforcement of Compulsory Attendance Requirements

Student is Truant –

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

The notice shall:

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

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

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

School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) –

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

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

The following individuals shall be invited to the SAIC:

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

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

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

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

Student is Habitually Truant –

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

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

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

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

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

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

Filing a Citation –

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

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

Special Needs and Accommodations

If a truant or habitually truant student may qualify as a student with a disability, and require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education shall be notified and shall take action to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[16][35][36][37]

For students with disabilities who are truant or habitually truant, the appropriate team shall be notified and shall address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.[16][35][37]

Discipline

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

WMGS Attendance Procedures:

- **Absence Notes**
 - It is the parent's responsibility to provide a written excuse to the school on the day the returns to school. Parent notes may be submitted via **Skyward** or directly to the **main office**. Parents may submit **medical excuses** directly to the main office or it can be emailed to the following email address:
wgms.attendance@penargylsd.org
 - Policy 204-AR : The absence was four (4) or more days and no doctor's note was provided : Unexcused/Unlawful

- **Vacations**
 - A family must submit a Permission for Student Excusal due to educational/vacation trip or tour form no fewer than ten (10) school days prior to leaving for this trip. Vacation forms can be completed via hard copy or the vacation Google Form located on the WGMS website. When submitting a vacation form, the entire document must be completed for the request to be processed, including educational benefits to be derived from the trip. All requests will be processed a week prior to the listed dates of absence due to attendance requirements. An email will be sent to parents when the request has been processed. Students must make up missed schoolwork at the direction of the teachers.

- **Times Affecting Truancy:**
 - Students arriving at school 20 minutes (8:55 a.m) after the start of their first period class will be considered a half day unexcused absence.
 - A student leaving school prior to the first 3 hours and 15 minutes (11:50 a.m) into the school day will be assessed a ½ day absence.
 - A student arriving at school after the first 3 hours and 15 minutes (11:50 a.m) into the school day will be assessed a whole day of absence.

Illegal / Unexcused Absence Letter (EXAMPLE, actual letter may differ)

This notice is to advise you that the following absence for (Students Name) was Unlawful/Unexcused:

Date:

We are reaching out to let you know that we need proper documentation to indicate an excused absence. This is an important reminder designed to help you avoid truancy proceedings in the future if additional unlawful absences occur.

Please contact Mrs. Heather Reed, Attendance Secretary, at the Middle School office if you have any questions. The Pupil Attendance Policy, pursuant to Act 138 approved by the PA General Assembly on November 3, 2016, is located in the WGMS handbook.

In addition, if you are having difficulty getting your student to school, please contact the school counselors. The school counselors will work with you and your student to provide opportunities to remove barriers to learning.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Searfass

Mr. Jeffrey Searfass
Assistant Principal

PEN ARGYL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION FOR STUDENT EXCUSAL DUE TO AN EDUCATIONAL/VACATION TRIP OR TOUR

****This form must be turned in ten days prior to trip****

Student's Name _____ Birth Date _____

Grade _____ School _____

Parent's Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Number of days to be absent from school _____

Dates of Absence _____

Request (The general location of trip)

Educational benefits to be derived (Must be completed):

Date of Application Signature of Parent/Guardian

For Office Use Only

Date application received _____

Number of student absences to date _____

☐ Acknowledged/Approved ☐ Disapproved

If approved, absences will be excused but are excused and count towards the 10 excused absences allowed for students each year.

Comments:

Date Principal's Signature

Pen Argyl Area School District

Current File: JE - R

LATE / TARDY TO SCHOOL

The following tardiness policies refer to full days of school: 8:35 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. for the Middle School. Late arrivals on days when school starts later than the normal starting time due to weather/emergency closings will only change the start time. All other parts of the tardiness policy remain in full force and effect. Only excuses received from a doctor, dentist, a parent/guardian in relation to illness or a religious holiday, or a bus driver for a late school bus will be considered a legal tardiness to school. All other tardiness is unexcused. A parent/guardian email or phone call followed by a signed note the next school day, in relation to being late to school due to illness, will be accepted **only two (2) times per trimester**. The 3rd and subsequent tardy to school due to illness will require a valid doctor's note. If no note is produced, the student will be credited with an unexcused tardy. In extreme emergencies a direct phone call on the day of tardiness from a parent/guardian to the appropriate administrator is required to explain the tardiness. A building administrator will determine the validity of excuses and whether disciplinary action is required. *Unless you are in your homeroom/class by the designated starting time, you will be considered late to school.* If you arrive late, report *directly to the main office* and a late pass will be given to you. Students will be allowed two (2) discipline free unexcused tardy occurrences to school **per trimester**.

Beginning with the **3rd tardy in each trimester**, students will receive progressive discipline.

Wind Gap Middle School Progressive Discipline	
An unexcused late to school includes, however, is not limited to: car trouble, missed the bus, overslept, alarm clock failure.	
Occurrence	Consequence
1 st – 3 rd	No consequence
4 th -7 th	Lunch Detention
8 th – 10 th	1 hour detention
11 th & >	Discipline determined by Administration
Athletics & Extra-curricular Activities: Students who participate in athletics/extra-curricular activities and report 20 minutes after the beginning of their 1 st period class are not eligible to participate in any games/performances that day. Exceptions include students who provide a doctor's note or have administrative approval.	

V. Student Responsibilities

- A. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and homework, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students are responsible to share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.
- B. **No student has the right to interfere with the education of fellow students.** It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.
- C. Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.
- D. It is the responsibility of the students to conform to the following:
 - 1. Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accordance with them. Students assume that, until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed in writing, it is in effect.
 - 2. Volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
 - 3. Dress and groom to meet standards of safety and health, and not to cause substantial disruption to the educational processes.
 - 4. Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for the students enrolled therein.
 - 5. Comply with Commonwealth and local laws.
 - 6. Exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.
 - 7. Attend school daily and be on time at all classes and other school functions.
 - 8. Make up work when absent from school.
 - 9. Pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by local school authorities.
 - 10. Report accurately in student media.
 - 11. Not use obscene language in student media or on school premises.

VI. Discipline Policy

Introduction:

Wind Gap Middle School takes pride in providing a comprehensive educational program for its students. It is the responsibility of the students to comply with school rules, regulations and laws.

The easiest way for everyone to meet student responsibilities is to have established an effective set of rules and regulations that permit education to continue with the least amount of disruptions as possible. Success is seen when all parties share in the responsibility to develop a climate within the Wind Gap Middle School that is conducive to learning and living in today's society.

It is expected that Wind Gap students will accept the responsibility for their own behavior, both in and out of the classroom, by adhering to the established rules and regulations. When negative behavior impacts on this expectation, the discipline policy will be brought into effect. **The administration has the right to use its discretion, with respect to discipline, as situations arise.** Fairness and consistency in applying the rules and regulations are the goals of the discipline policy. It is the intent of the administration to modify negative behavior in order to create a positive school climate.

After school/office detentions will be held on Mondays through Thursdays, in the main office lobby. If WGMS is closed due to a holiday or snow day, detention will be held on the following Tuesday through Thursday of that week. Detention for all students is held from 3:15 – 4:00. At the start of detention, students should report to the office lobby area. Students should be picked up at the main entrance of the building promptly at the end of the detention.

***Video cameras may be used to monitor student behavior, but videotaping is not required for disciplinary action to be taken.**

General Discipline:

Behavior infractions have been placed into levels varying from minor to major. The infraction, the person(s) responsible for issuing discipline and the disciplinary consequences are listed below. It is impossible to identify every possible disciplinary offense at each level. Therefore, administrative discretion is applied when unique situations should arise in categorizing the level of offense.

Whenever possible, disciplinary infractions will be accompanied by opportunities for remediation or support through school or community-based programming to the fullest extent possible.

Level I Infractions

The following are incidents that the teacher will typically handle. These problems will initially result in the issuing of warnings (written referrals or verbal) followed by detention. These infractions may result in a phone call or e-mail to a parent, assignment of behavior consequences and a referral for review by administration. Teachers will keep written documentation of incidents.

- Lunchroom, locker area, lavatories, and assembly disruptions
- Minor Classroom Violations – talking, refusal to work, incomplete assignments, refusal to clean area, throwing of objects, disruptive noises, unacceptable gestures, distracting clothing/hair/jewelry, uncooperative behavior
- Hallway Discipline – Students in halls without passes, screaming/running, loitering, public display of affection, and roaming the halls without a pass – repeated behavior increases level
- Confiscation of “Articles not permitted in school”
- Unprepared for class (Lack of books, folders, pencils, and/or other required classroom materials)
- Dress code violation
- Tardy to class – 1st

In the case of Level I infractions, the following disciplinary measures could be used: Warning, recess detention, lunch detention, A.M/P.M detention. Administration has the right to use its discretion in regard to discipline.

Level II Infractions

The following are incidents that the grade level teams will typically handle. These infractions may result in a phone call or e-mail to a parent, assignment of behavior consequences and a referral for review by administration. Detention will be assigned by a teacher.

- Repeated level one infraction, including if occurring on the same day
- Forged passes, excuses, and/or parent or teacher signatures
- Excessive loitering in halls, lavatories, or unassigned areas
- Use of abusive, obscene, and/or unacceptable language (written or verbal)
- Unauthorized locker use (e.g. pre-setting, stickers, sharing lockers, using an unassigned locker, switching locks)
- Persistent disruption of the educational process
- Continued unexcused tardiness to school

In the case of Level II infractions, the following disciplinary measures could be used: Lunch detention, A.M/P.M detention. Administration has the right to use its discretion in regard to discipline.

Level III Infractions

The following are incidents that will result in referrals from grade level teams to the principal or assistant principal.

- Repeated level two infraction
- Inappropriate behavior in the cafeteria (throwing food, etc.) and/or lavatories
- Disrespect to fellow students (throwing objects, encouraging rumors, name calling, tripping, spitting and verbal threats, horseplay)
- Excessive (10 or more) unexcused tardiness to school and/or homeroom
- Disrespect to and/or inappropriate behavior for teachers (including substitute teachers) or any other district employee (lying, cheating, refusal to follow direction, talking back, etc.)
- Failure to attend detention
- Disruptive in detention
- Forging of school district documents
- Bullying other students
- Skipping class – unauthorized out of classroom activities or spending more than 10 minutes out of classroom for any activity
- Use of abusive, obscene, and/or unacceptable language (written or verbal)
- Any use of racial/discriminatory words or statements (written or verbal)

In the case of Level III infractions, the following disciplinary measures could be used: A.M/P.M detention, In-School Suspension, Out-Of-School Suspension. Administration has the right to use its discretion in regard to discipline.

Level IV Infractions

The following are incidents that the administration will handle. The result could be in-school suspension, out of school suspension, external suspension, and/or other disciplinary actions.

- Repeated level three infraction
- Leaving school building/grounds without permission
- Threatening of school district employee
- Vandalism of school property
- Intentional damage to locker
- Truancy
- Insubordination
- Violation of “acceptable internet use” policy or other technological related infractions that have an impact on school function
- Misuse of school district property
- Possession of stolen property
- Stealing
- Fighting
- Unauthorized photo, audio, and / or video recording on school grounds, during school activity, or on school transportation

Level V Infractions

By their very nature, Level 5 infractions are very serious, as they jeopardize the safety and welfare of everyone in the building. Thus, these infractions will result in suspension and may very well rise to the level of expulsion from school, legal action, and/or alternative placement, even on the first occurrence.

- Repeated level four infraction
- Repeated fighting or assault on classmates
- Assault or harassment of district personnel/volunteers
- Violation of the district’s Drug & Alcohol Policy (File JFCI)
- Violation of the district’s Violence/Weapons Policy (File FJCJ)
- Violation of the district’s Harassment Policy (File GBCC/JQ)
- Use or possession of tobacco products
- Extortion
- Bomb threat
- Arson
- Major vandalism
- False fire alarm
- Terroristic Threats

- The following actions will be taken as a response to tobacco use or possession:
 - 1st through 5th offense
 - 3 days of ISS + referral to Slatebelt Regional Police Department
 - 6th through 10+ offenses
 - 3 days OSS + referral to Slatebelt Regional Police Department
-

Out-Of-School Suspensions – Following previously stated infraction levels and at the discretion of the administration following board policies and state and local laws. During suspension, the following criteria are upheld.

- Students may not enter school district property.
- Students may not attend school district events or athletic activities, including those held off property.
- Students may not join live streamed classes.
- Students may complete work that is posted through online means.
- Students may communicate via email only with teachers.

In reference to suspensions and expulsions - In the event of revision, most updated version can be found at Board Docs by [CLICKING HERE](#) and referencing policies in the 200 range.

Citation Information: School administrators, in conjunction with the Slatebelt Regional Police Department have the right to cite students for various reasons if necessary, regardless of the levels listed above. For further information on disorderly conduct (Section 5503) or other related offenses, please consult the Crimes Code of Pennsylvania.

VII. Specific District Discipline Policies:

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The Pen Argyl Area School District Board of Education, Administration and staff believe in the individual value and potential of each member of the school community to develop to their full potential. We also recognize that problems created by chemical abuse and dependency have an adverse effect on all members of the school community. This policy is based on the belief that chemical usage or dependency can be life threatening and can disrupt the lives of the individuals involved, those of their closest relations and friends, and even those of innocent persons who may be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

We believe that it is the responsibility of the school community to provide leadership in the prevention of all forms of chemical abuse. An educational program on the harmful effects of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco must be an important part of the curriculum from Kindergarten to graduation. Aggressive attempts to identify potential abusers and recommend appropriate support to address their problems are an integral part of the district plan. A key component of this process is the Student Assistance Program (SAP). The SAP team is a group of school personnel trained to identify high-risk students who are having academic or behavioral problems in school, which may have resulted from abuse of drugs or alcohol. Parents and members of the community will continue to support district initiatives to assist students to respond appropriately to the temptations associated with the use of controlled substances.

Definitions:

- A. **Confiscation** – The seizure of any tobacco product, drug/alcohol or mood altering substance by school officials.
- B. **Displaying Symptom(s)** – Displaying one or more symptoms of the following symptoms:
 - 1. Odor of alcoholic beverages/or drugs
 - 2. Slurred speech
 - 3. Bloodshot eyes, glassy eyes, dilated pupils
 - 4. Excessive fatigue or hyperactivity
 - 5. Mention of alcohol or drug use
 - 6. Erratic behavior
- C. **Distribution** – Delivering, selling, passing, sharing or giving any alcohol, drug or mood-altering substance, as defined by this policy, from one person to another or aid therein.

- D. Illegal Substances – Any alcohol or malt beverage, and drug listed in the *Controlled Substance Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act* (1972 P.L. 233, No. 64), or PA Drug Device and Cosmetic Act (Act 1971), as a controlled substance which is intended to alter mood. Examples include, but are not limited to, beer, wine, liquor, marijuana, hashish, chemical solvents, inhalants, glue, look-alike substances, and any capsule or pill not registered with the school nurse, annotated within the student's health record and then administered in accordance with the school district's policy for the administration of medication to students in school.
- E. Drug Paraphernalia - Any utensil or item, which in the school district's representative's reasonable judgement, is commonly associated with the use of drugs, alcohol, or mood altering substances. Examples include, but are not limited to, roach clips, pipes and bowls.
- F. Possession – The act of holding on one's person or among one's control, without any attempt to distribute alcohol, drugs, or mood-altering substances as defined by this policy.
- G. School Property – Includes buildings, facilities and grounds on the school campus, as well as, any off-campus buildings, facilities or grounds used for a school function, school bus-stop, school parking areas, and on any route traveled to and from school by any means.
- H. School-Sponsored Activity- Any school approved activity before, during or after school hours.
- I. Student Assistance Program Team – A team composed of school personnel who is trained to understand and work on the issues of adolescent chemical use, abuse, death, suicide, pregnancy, and mental health. The SAP team operates within the guidelines established by the *Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994*.
- J. Underage Drinking – The consumption, possession or displaying symptoms associated with alcoholic beverages by a person under 21 years of age.

General Rules

Alcoholic beverages, tobacco or illegal substances are not allowed on school property and/or grounds of the Pen Argyl Area School District, at any school district sponsored activity (on school property or elsewhere) or on any school sponsored transportation. Student compliance with the rules, regulations and standards of conduct and disciplinary sanctions established by the school district is mandatory.

Procedures:

Pursuant to this policy, the following rules and procedures shall be used by all school district personnel when responding to drug and alcohol related situations involving any student in school, at school sponsored activities, on school approved transportation, or participating in school sponsored activities on or off school property:

- A. Distribution of alcoholic beverages, or illegal substances on school property, at school sponsored activities, or district approved transportation.
 - 1. Notification of local/state law enforcement agencies.
 - 2. Notification of parent or legal guardian of the student.
 - 3. 10-day out-of-school suspension.
 - 4. Referral to Student Assistance Program.
 - 5. Recommendation for expulsion.
 - 6. Students involved in athletics or extra-curricular/co-curricular activities will be subject to additional penalties as stated in the athletic and/or extracurricular and co-curricular activities subsection of this policy.
- B. Consumption, possession and/or displaying of symptom(s) indicative, or associated with underage drinking or illegal substance use, and/or possession of drug paraphernalia on school property, school sponsored activities, or district approved transportation.
 - 1. Notification of local/state law enforcement agencies.
 - 2. Notification of parent or legal guardian of the student
 - 3. Up to a 10-day out-of-school suspension.
 - 4. Referral to Student Assistance Program
 - 5. Possible recommendation for expulsion.
 - 6. Students involved in athletics or extra-curricular/co-curricular activities will be subject to additional penalties as stated in the athletic and/or extra-curricular and co-curricular activities subsection of this policy.
 - 7. Emergency situations (overdose/intoxication):
 - a. Provisions for emergency medical attention.
 - b. Numbers one through six will be followed under procedure B.
- C. Distribution, possession of and/or use of tobacco products on school property, school-sponsored activities, or school-approved transportation is prohibited by Pennsylvania State Law. Violators will be subject to the following:
 - 1. Fifty (50) dollar fine.
 - 2. 3-day out-of-school suspension

3. Students involved in athletics or extra/co-curricular activities will be subject to additional penalties at the discretion of the coach or advisor.
-
-

Violence/Weapons Policy

Policy:

- A. The Pen Argyl Area School District has made a strong and determined effort to maintain its schools as safe and secure places where students and staff can pursue the educational endeavors our children deserve. Escalating violence encroaching on our national landscape has resulted in the proliferation of dangerous and deadly weapons in America's urban, suburban and rural communities.
- B: The Pennsylvania legislature, in an effort to stem this national trend shown by a significant increase in the presence of weapons in school settings, enacted Public Law 167 of 1980 making it a criminal offense to possess any weapon in a school building, on school grounds, or on a school bus. Additionally, 18PA, C.S.A. (912 makes it a misdemeanor of the first degree to possess any weapon in a school, school program or school bus.
- C: No student shall have in his/her possession on school premises (including a school bus or other school vehicles, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is on his/her way to or from school) a firearm, explosive weapon, knife, any other dangerous weapon or any instrument represented as such. No one shall interfere with normal activities, occupancy, or use any building or portion of the school campus by exhibiting, using or threatening to exhibit or use a firearm, explosive weapon, knife, other dangerous illegal instrument or any instrument represented as such. Any student violating this policy shall be suspended or expelled. Absent extraordinary and compelling reasons, the student will be subject to immediate police investigation of all incidents involving the possession of dangerous weapons on school grounds, which may result in a police request to a Juvenile Probation Office for emergency detention. The Superintendent may recommend discipline short of expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

In the case of an exceptional student, the Superintendent shall take all necessary steps to comply with 22 Pennsylvania code <14.35.

- D: An exception to this policy may be made to allow for possession of a weapon for any lawful supervised school activity or course upon prior written approval of the building principal.

Weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel are permitted. The superintendent or his/her designee may prescribe special conditions or procedures to be followed before giving such authorization.

Definitions:

- A. Dangerous Weapon/Instrument – Means any weapon, device, instrument, material or substance, animate or inanimate, which is capable of causing death or inflicting serious bodily injury. The term shall include but not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku sticks, brass or metal knuckles, firearm, shotgun, rifle, bb or pellet gun or any other dangerous or illegal instrument represented as such.
- B. Searches – Student lockers are school property. Student lockers will be searched pursuant to the standards set forth in the Pen Argyl Area School District Locker Search Policy.
- C. Possession- A student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker; under the student's control while he/she is on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school; or while the student is on his/her way to or from school.

Consequences

Possession or use of a dangerous weapon/instrument is considered a violation of the Pen Argyl Area School District Violence/Weapons Policy, and may be dealt with in one or more of the following ways:

- 1. Parental contact
- 2. Suspension
- 3. Expulsion
- 4. Arrest
- 5. Prosecution

The Superintendent shall report all incidents relating to expulsion for possession of a weapon to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Acts of violence or possession of a weapon on school property in violation of this policy shall be reported to the office for Safe Schools on the designated from twice per year as required.

Students and staff shall be informed of this policy and its consequences at least one time a year.

Locker Search Policy

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

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

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

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

The principal or a designated staff person shall be present whenever a student locker is inspected for cleanliness or is searched. The principal or designee shall maintain written

records of all occasions when a locker is searched or inspected. Such records shall include the reason(s) for the search, persons present, objects found and their disposition.

BULLYING/CYBER-BULLYING

Purpose

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

Definitions

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

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

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

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

Authority

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by district students.

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

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

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

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

Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination

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

Confidentiality

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

Retaliation

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

Delegation of Responsibility

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

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

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

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

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

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

Guidelines

The Code of Student Conduct, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.

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

Education

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

Consequences for Violations

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

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

Harassment Policy

Please note that this section, of the discipline policy, only deals with portions of the Pen Argyl Area School Districts Harassment Policy (File GBCC/JQ) pertinent to students. Upon administrative request the complete Policy may be viewed in the Wind Gap Middle School's main office.

Harassment Prohibited:

It is the policy of the Pen Argyl Area School District to maintain a working and learning environment free from harassment based on factors such as gender, color, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation and age. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the staff (professional or non-professional) to harass a student or another staff member through conduct or communications of any nature as defined below. Any employee of the district who engages conduct which constitutes harassment as defined in this policy shall be subject to discipline up to and including discharge.

In addition, it shall be a violation of this policy for any student of the district to harass another student or a staff member through conduct or communications of a nature as defined below. Any student who engages in conduct which constitutes harassment as defined in this policy shall be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.

Any employee or student of the district who is subjected to harassment in the course of his or her employment or education in this school district shall have the right to file a complaint under this policy.

Definition of Harassment:

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Titles VII and IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. The following behavior constitutes prohibited sexual harassment for purposes of this policy:

1. unwelcome sexual advances; or
2. requests for sexual favors; or
3. other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when made by any member of the school staff to a student where
4. submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly required of the recipient as a term or condition of an individual's . . . education or when
5. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational . . . decisions affecting the recipient; or when
6. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the recipient's . . . education or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive . . . learning environment.

Sexual harassment, as defined above, may include, but is not limited to the following: verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person, with sexual or demeaning implications; unwelcome touching; suggesting or demanding

sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades . . . or benefit of the district's programs and activities.

Definition of Other Harassment:

Other harassment based on factors such as color, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and age are forms of discrimination prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, (503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act.)

Other harassment, as listed above, may include, but are not limited to the following: verbal harassment or abuse of a derogatory or slanderous nature; repeated remarks and/or actions to a person, with demeaning implications; implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, services, or benefits of the district's programs and activities.

Procedure for Reporting Harassment:

Any person who alleges harassment by any staff member or student in the district may use the district's complaint procedure and complain directly to a staff member's immediate supervisor, a staff member, building principal or other individual designated to receive such complaints. ..

Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future . . . educational opportunity or grades.

The rights to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the district's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

Procedure for Handling Complaints:

- A. Complaints involving harassment at the building level may be resolved informally through confidential mediation, counseling or informal discussion.
- B. (However, at the discretion of the principal, if complaints can't be, or are not worthy of being, resolved informally) The complainant may file a written complaint to the building principal, which, in turn will notify (the student who the complaint is filed on as well as his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).
- C. A fact-finding investigation will be initiated by the affirmation action officer or his/her designee which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - 1. interview of complainant and review of a written description of the incident completed by the complainant
 - 2. interview of accused and review of a written description of the incident completed by the accused

3. interview of any other persons with personal knowledge of the allegations of the complaint.

All individuals involved in such an investigation shall maintain strict confidentiality.

Disposition of Complaint:

- A. If the investigation shows that unlawful harassment has occurred, the superintendent, building principal, or supervisor shall determine appropriate remediation and/or discipline. Any disciplinary action shall be subject to limitation of the School Code, State Board Regulations, and other applicable law . . .
- B. Student disciplinary action may include:
 1. Disciplinary action according to the middle school discipline policy (level 5 infraction).
 2. Suspension
 3. Expulsion hearing before the school board
- C. If the investigation shows that no unlawful harassment has occurred, the superintendent and building principal (students) shall be so notified. Under no circumstances shall any record of complaint which is found to be without basis be placed in the accused's record or released to any person other than the accused, the complainant, the superintendent, the building principal and the staff member (or student) to whom the complaint was originally made, without consent of the accused, except by order of court.
- D. In addition, if the investigation shows that the accused is not guilty of unlawful harassment, and that the complaint was lodged in bad faith, then the superintendent and/or building principal or supervisor may impose appropriate discipline on the complainant . . . in addition, if the investigation shows that the accused retaliated against the complainant in any way because of the complaint, then the superintendent and/or the building principal may impose appropriate discipline on the accused . .

Prevention Program:

****Students will be informed of the school district's harassment policy through the handbook and/or orientation sessions. Parental signature acknowledging receipt of the handbook will also indicate a review of this and other policies was conducted at home.**

Fighting / Physical Aggression

The Wind Gap Middle School does not believe that fighting, hitting, pushing etc. someone is ever an acceptable means to settle a dispute or disagreement. There exists a multitude of options for students who feel threatened or compelled to fight. Students are expected to notify a school district employee whenever they feel threatened or compelled to fight.

One-on-one guidance counseling and teacher/principal conference are available for students to, maturely and acceptably, settle a disagreement. Students who disregard these options and fight or respond in a physical nature will be punished.

Being a level 4 or 5 infraction, fighting will normally result in an out of school suspension. Students who participate in physical violence may also be reported to the local authorities. All fights are viewed on a case-by-case basis and the extent of disciplinary action is at the discretion of the principal/assistant principal. Additionally all individuals involved in fighting will normally be referred to the guidance department to help them more acceptably resolve their conflict.

Students who engage in physical aggression, fighting, pushing, shoving, etc. may be suspended, regardless of who initiated the incident. As stated above, all students have the responsibility to report physical aggression immediately, **NOT** to respond verbally or physically.

Bus Rider Rules and Regulations

The following rules and regulations have been established for the safety and comfort of all students when riding the bus. These rules apply on any trip under school sponsorship and for daily transportation.

A. General Regulations:

1. Obey the driver at all times
2. Board the bus in the morning and leave the bus in the afternoon **ONLY** at your assigned stop - **Bus passes will not be issued**
3. Ride **ONLY** the bus to which you are assigned.
4. Live animals and hazardous materials are not permitted on the bus
5. Not responsible for any personal property left on the bus
6. Harassment of students and drivers will not be permitted.

B. Prior to loading:

1. Be at your designated bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled time
2. Stay off the road while waiting at the bus stop
3. Behave in a safe manner while waiting for the bus

4. Remain at least ten feet from the bus when it stops (where permitted) and do not approach it until it has stopped completely and the door is opened. The bus is not required to come to a complete stop if students are not standing at the stop indicated (curb side or road shoulder).
 5. Cross the road at least ten feet IN FRONT OF THE BUS only after making sure no traffic is approaching from either direction.
 6. Enter bus in single file
- C. While on the Bus:
1. Sit, facing forward, in the seat assigned by the driver. Do not lie down. – All students will be assigned a seat
 2. Keep your hands and head inside the bus
 3. Throwing items in the bus or out of the bus windows will not be tolerated.
 4. Place nothing in the aisle of the bus
 5. Loud talking, laughing, vulgarity, and boisterous or other improper conduct which may divert the driver's attention is not permitted on the bus
 6. Horse play in or around the bus is not permitted
 7. Help look after the safety and comfort of younger students
 8. Tampering or damaging bus equipment will not be tolerated. Repair cost must be paid by the offender and may be subject to arrest
 9. Eating, drinking, gum chewing, and smoking are not permitted on the bus
 10. Music without headphones is not permitted on the bus
 11. Remain seated while the bus is in motion, or if the bus is delayed on the road
- D. While leaving the bus:
1. Remember to remove all books, lunches and other articles from the bus
 2. Cross the road at least ten feet IN FRONT OF THE BUS, only after making sure no traffic is approaching from either direction

BUS DISCIPLINE

***Video cameras and auditory devices are installed on every bus and will be used to monitor student behavior on the bus, but videotaping is not required for disciplinary action to be taken.**

Disciplinary action taken for bus violations will be determined on a case by case basis. Consequences can range from a warning to loss of bus privileges depending on the severity of the action, or the frequency of behavior.

The Principal/Assistant Principal retains authority to review and change any disciplinary action due to severity and frequency of offense. Discipline may be carried over to the following school year.

Bus PBIS Expectations

- **Work Hard** - Assist others who need to be helped, Be a friend to someone in need

- **Give Respect** - Listen to the bus driver, Greet and thank the bus driver, Share seats respectfully, Keep your hands and feet to yourself, Use appropriate tone, language and volume
- **Make Good Choices** - Stay seated while the bus is moving, Keep your body and belongings inside the bus, Enter and exit in an orderly fashion
- **Show Responsibility** - Accept consequences without arguing or complaining, Be on time , Focus on self, Report any incident to the bus driver

.....

Students Transportation Policy Statement

It is the desire of the Pen Argyl Area School District to provide safe and economical bus transportation for its students. To this end, the Pen Argyl Area Board of Education will operate a bus fleet or contract for bus service or any combination thereof that will provide student transportation at the lowest cost. Bus driver and bus rider rules and regulations including discipline procedures will be established and periodically reviewed by the administration and Board of Education (These policies are listed above).

Transportation provides equal opportunities for all children of the Pen Argyl Area School District to obtain an education. Transportation is also provided according to the provisions of Act 372, 1972 Legislature, for children in non-public schools who reside in the district and are within 10 miles of the district boundaries.

Transportation will be provided for all students in grades kindergarten through twelve (12). However, students who live in the Borough of Pen Argyl and attend Pen Argyl High School will be required to walk to school. High school students with a written medical exemption or an I.E.P. requiring transportation will be provided transportation.

Students who attend I.C.S. and live south of Route 512 will be provided with a crossing guard or bus transportation at the discretion of the school district. Students who live North of 512 will walk to school.

Permanent Bus Stops:

Students will be scheduled for one A.M. and one P.M. bus stop only.

Bus Passes:

No bus passes will be issued. In emergency situations contact the building principal and/or transportation coordinator.

Travel Time on Bus:

With the exception of extra-curricular activity runs, the Pen Argyl Area School District will make every reasonable attempt to limit the amount of time spent on the bus for public and non-public school students to 1 hour and 15 minutes for all students, barring adverse weather conditions or accidents. The Pen Argyl Area School District reserves the right to start to pick up students no earlier than 6:30 A.M.

New Bus Stops:

Requests for a new bus stop which is located at a stop that has already been established need to be submitted directly to the student's school office in writing. Requests for a new stop which is not an established stop need to be submitted to the district's bus coordinator in writing. Once a written request has been received, the bus coordinator has three full working days to make a determination on whether or not permission for the requested stop will be granted. The bus coordinator will contact the individual making the request no later than four days after the request has been received with a determination. If you have any questions or concerns about bussing please contact Dana Farace, district transportation supervisor at 610-863-9093 ext. 1385.

* * * * *

Articles Not Permitted in School

Articles that interfere in any way with school procedures, disrupt instruction or become hazardous to the health, safety or welfare of others are not permitted. Such items include: white-out, chains, wallet chains, safety pins, toy guns, water pistols, squeeze bottles, perfume/cologne, knives, electronic devices, balls, trading cards, glow-sticks, matches, skateboards, etc. Hacky-sacks may only be used during recess. Other items may be added to the above list at the discretion of the administration.

Cell Phones In School

Cell Phones will be permitted to be brought into school, but they must be off and in the student's locker or in the provided storage space where student personal belongings are located (not on person or in bookbag). Cell phone requirements are also related to smartwatches. Students are allowed to wear smartwatches, however, if they are using them in a manner such as a person would use a phone, it is considered as though the student is using the phone. If the student is using the smartwatch in a phone function, the student is subject to discipline under the cell phone policy. An example of this would be using the smartwatch to text or write email. Students will not be allowed to wear smartwatches during the administration of any standardized test, as per state test security protocols.

First Offense: Cell phone confiscated and given back to the student at the end of the school day.
2nd Offense: Cell phone confiscated and parent/guardian must pick-up the phone in the main office.

Subsequent Offenses: Cell phone confiscated and parent/guardian must pick-up the phone in the main office. Further disciplinary action will be taken.

Fund Raiser Sales

Fund-raiser sales from outside sources will not be permitted to take place during school hours. Students are not permitted to sell any non-fundraiser items either.

Student Dress / Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in a manner that demonstrates respect for themselves and others. Student dress has the potential to disrupt the educational process and could foster an environment that compromises the health, safety and welfare of our students.

ID's

Students will be provided with an ID in the beginning of the school year. Students are expected to wear the ID at all times within the school building, unless otherwise permitted by staff to not wear the ID (i.e physical education).

Bottoms- Acceptable	Not Acceptable
-Jeans, Khakis, Capris, Athletic Pants, Sweat Pants, Yoga Pants, Leggings -Shorts, Dresses or Skirts. (Length = must come to mid-thigh) -All clothing must be worn on or just below the natural waistline.	-Shorts, Dresses or Skirts that are shorter than mid-thigh. -Sagging Pants. -Pajamas/Sleepwear, Biker Shorts -Any holes, cuts, rips, tears or frays above the knee. -Undergarments or bare skin may not be exposed or visible. -Any see-through material not worn underneath something else.

Tops--Acceptable	Not Acceptable
-Long/Short Sleeve Crewneck -Long /Short Sleeve V-Neck (A crewneck T-Shirt is required if the V-Neck shirt exposes cleavage). -Long or Short Sleeve Polo Style or Button Down with all but the top button fastened. (A crew neck t-shirt is required if you choose to have more than one button unfastened). -Long or Short Sleeve Sweater. -Long or Short Sleeve Sweatshirt. -Hooded Sweatshirts (hood must remain down)	-Necklines lower than a straight line from the top of the underarm across to the opposite underarm. (Unless a t-shirt is worn underneath). <i>No exposure of the breast or cleavage area is permitted.</i> -Shirts that do not extend past the top of the pants. (If you raise your arms to shoulder level and the stomach area shows, the top is unacceptable). -Sleeveless, Halter, Strapless, Sheer, Mesh, Spaghetti Straps, Modified Sleeve Shirts and Tank Tops of the Tailored or Cut Off Variety. (All tops must cover the entire shoulder area) -Winter Jackets, Heavy Material Coats, Gloves or Hats. (When worn to school these items must be put in the students' locker upon arrival). -Pajamas/Sleepwear
Footwear--Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Sneakers, Shoes, Clogs, Sandals with straps that go around the back of the foot.	Bare feet, Bedroom Slippers, Cleats, flip flops, slides, OR any type of footwear with open backs
Head—Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Ponytail holders, Headbands / Bandanas (that pull hair away from the face).	Sweatbands, Bandanas, Hats, Hoods, Head Coverings not dictated by religious beliefs.
ANY Clothing Items	Not Acceptable

	Clothing that advertises alcohol, drugs, or gang affiliation OR expresses obscene, immoral, disrespectful, and / or sexually suggestive messages
--	--

Student attire should convey the appearance of cleanliness and should not distract others from the basic educational purposes of the school.

Students failing to abide by these guidelines will be asked to turn their clothing inside out, wear an alternative outfit (if available) or may call home to have a parent bring more suitable attire. The student will remain in ISS until they are in compliance with the dress code or until the end of the day.

The administration understands that the development and enforcement of a student dress code is, to a certain degree, inherently subjective. Administrative decisions with respect to student dress are designed to foster an environment that positively impacts the health, safety and welfare of all students while maintaining a learning environment free of distraction.

Having said this, any discipline that is levied due to non-compliance with the Wind Gap Middle School's student dress code, will be at the discretion of the principal and/or assistant principal. The magnitude of the non-compliance, the cooperation of the student and the consistency of the non-compliance will be the major determining factors when assigning discipline. Additionally, the administration reserves the right to "relax" dress-code violations for special, school-spirit related functions (hat day, etc.).

The WGMS dress code guidelines apply to all school sponsored events including all dances, field trips, etc.

Student Conduct

Hallways - PBIS Expectations:

- **Work Hard** - Assist others who need to be helped (direction, fallen items)
- **Give Respect** - -Walk, Stay to the right, Keep hands and feet to yourself, Use appropriate tone, language and volume
- **Make Good Choices** - -Go directly to class or intended destination, Only use your assigned locker
- **Show Responsibility** - -Accept consequences without arguing or complaining, Keep locker/cubby area clean

Classroom - PBIS Expectations:

- **Work Hard** - Lead by example, Always give 100%, Get involved in your community, Try new things, Show dedication to your schoolwork, Challenge yourself
- **Give Respect** - -Look and listen when others are speaking, Raise your hand for permission to speak, Keep hands and feet to yourself, Use positive language, Include others
- **Make Good Choices** - Be prepared for class, Follow directions, Do your own work, Take care of school property, Stand up for others
- **Show Responsibility** - -Apologize for mistakes, Accept consequences without arguing or complaining, Ask for help when needed (advocate), Actively participate

Cafeteria - PBIS Expectations:

- **Work Hard** - -Start a conversation with someone new, Keep your area clean, Raise your hand for permission to leave your seat
- **Give Respect** - -Keep hands and feet to yourself, Listen to adults, Use appropriate tone, language and volume, Think before you speak.
- **Make Good Choices** - -Keep food on your plate or in your mouth, Use table manners, Enter and exit in an orderly fashion, Get Quiet and Line up at first signal, Stay seated
- **Show Responsibility** - -Accept consequences without arguing or complaining, Eat your own food, Have money or ID ready.

WGMS Library

Borrowing Books

- All students may borrow up to THREE books at a time.
- Books may be kept for TWO weeks and renewed for an additional TWO weeks if a student needs more time.
- Students who have overdue library materials will not be able to borrow new books until the outstanding books are returned.
- If a book is lost or damaged, the student who borrowed the book will be charged the replacement cost of the item.

Visiting the Library

- Students in 4th and 5th grade will have scheduled library visits during which they may borrow and exchange library materials.
- Students in 6th - 8th grade may visit the library in the morning before announcements, or during resource period at the end of the day. Passes to visit the library are available by visiting the library website.
- Students in 7th and 8th grade may also visit the library during their lunch times on days when the library is available.
- Students visiting the library are expected to be reading, working on school assignments, or participating in STEAM activities.
- Students whose behavior goes against school or library behavior expectations may lose library privileges.

Dances:

- Regular school rules apply.
- Students must have a full day of attendance during the regular school day in order to attend dance.
- Students are not allowed to leave the dance unless a parent picks them up and are seen by an administrator. Under normal circumstances, students remain for the entire dance period / duration.
- No glow-sticks of any kind are allowed unless prior approval from administrator.
- Inappropriate behavior may result in an immediate phone call home, removal from the dance and/or upcoming dances, “time outs”, and/or additional disciplinary action.

Definitions of Disciplinary Actions:

Classroom Action by the Teacher: This can include, but is not limited to, the teacher addressing the specific misbehavior with the student, changing seats, conferencing with the student after class, and/or assigning detention.

Referral to School Counselor: For reasons of a student's difficult social or emotional adjustment to the learning situation, the teacher can refer the student to the guidance staff.

Parental Contact: This is an important and necessary step in any disciplinary option. The teacher or administration will contact the parent either by phone, e-mail, and/or mail so as to gain some support and insight in helping correct misbehavior.

Disciplinary Referral: This is an action taken by the classroom teacher that results in the parent and the administration being notified of misbehavior on the part of the student. There is a specific listing of the reasons for referral, the actions taken prior to the referral, and any recommendation or actions that will be taken regarding the incident.

Privilege Denial: The privilege of participating in the many various programs and activities is an important part of attending middle school. However, disruptive behavior, disrespect toward the rules and regulations of the school and a lack of a serious approach to the positive learning experiences that take place in the school, can lead to a loss of these privileges. The privileges denied to students who fail to maintain the level of responsibility expected of them can be (but are not limited to): attending school functions in the form of dances, parties, field trips, field day events, assemblies, and many other scheduled programs and events. The signed first sheet of this book must also be returned, or these privileges will not be given. Administration may place a student on privilege denial at any time, for any duration, due to inappropriate behavior. Bus referrals can also lead to privilege denial. Eighth grade students should be aware that privilege denial includes the Moving Up Dance, class trips, etc. Field trips are at the discretion of each individual team.

Restricted Movement: Students who abuse the privilege of maturely and respectfully asking for passes to and from classes for various reasons may be placed on restricted movement. These students will not be allowed to utilize passes for any reasons. In cases of emergencies (lavatory, nurse, etc.) the principal or his/her designee will escort the student to his/her destination. Positive and responsible behavior can lead to a reinstatement of these pass privileges. Students may be placed on restricted movement for any inappropriate behavior at the discretion of the administration. Examples of Restricted Movement include, but are not limited to:

- Restroom Restriction = Specific sign-out pass is used and / or student must use the nurses restroom. Restrictions may be made for limiting time frames for using the restroom, either in number of uses or in time of day usage. It is at the administrator's discretion whether the student must use the nurse's office during any time.
- Hallway Restriction = Student will be given specific time frames they are allowed in the hallway or specific schedule of hallway use. This is at the discretion of the administrator.
- Cafeteria Restriction = Specific seating given to student and directions of when the student may move throughout the cafeteria.

Detention: Detentions will be held after school, in the main office lobby. Detention time for all students will be 3:15 to 4:00. Parent contact will be made prior to the detention. It is the responsibility of the parent to arrange transportation home. The Middle School Teams or the administration may assign detention. If this occurs, parent contact will be made in advance. The same hours listed above will apply.

1. Only the principal/assistant principal may excuse a student from serving a detention. Any student who is excused from a detention will be expected to report to the detention on the alternate day that it is assigned.
2. Serving a detention takes precedence over any and all after school activities and co-curricular activities. Students will not be excused from detention to participate in co-curricular activities.
3. Students who fail to report to a detention will be given one in-school or out of school suspension. If a student arrives late to a detention, he/she will not be allowed to enter detention.
4. All students who are assigned detention are expected to bring sufficient work to occupy the entire detention time.
5. Any disruptive behavior (talking, laughing, making noises, use of cell phone, etc.) in detention will result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension.
6. Students are required to be quiet at all times. Students not following the rules will be instructed to leave, and suspension will be assigned.

In-school Suspension: This aspect of the discipline process is designed to provide an appropriate learning situation for any student suspended from school. As in any suspension: the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be informed of the suspension and the reason(s). The student must use the full time available during the in-school suspension for the following activities:

1. Completion of assignments or other curriculum related tasks assigned by the teacher.
2. Reading of curriculum related information or materials.
3. Studying curriculum related information or materials.
4. Completing a behavior packet or reflection packet.

If school is closed due to snow/weather emergency OR the student is absent on the day they are to serve after-school detention or ISS, they are to serve it the next scheduled day.

Out-of-School Suspension: This involves the exclusion of the student from school for a period of 1 to 10 consecutive school days.

During Out of School Suspensions:

1. Students may complete work provided by teachers either in written form or posted online.
2. Students may not go onto district property.
3. Students may not participate in any school functions or activities unless given permission by an administrator.
4. Students may not join any live online classes and will be removed if they do so.

All disciplinary action is at the discretion of the building level principal or his/her designee.

VIII. Academics

Introduction:

The Wind Gap Middle School will provide students with a thorough educational program designed to enable them to become well-educated, healthy, socially conscious, morally upright and contributing citizens.

We believe that standards of excellence and high ideals should be promoted in all phases of the school program and that students should be taught to incorporate these in all aspect of their lives.

The Middle School, through cooperative efforts with the community, should strive to develop a favorable atmosphere for learning that includes rights and responsibilities of students, development of good citizenship habits and active participation in school life.

The Wind Gap Middle School curriculum is of sufficient breadth and depth to meet individual needs, abilities, interests, and aspirations. The Pennsylvania State Chapter 4 requirements along with the P.S.S.A. examination supply the foundation and regulation of the curriculum. The Wind Gap Middle School's curriculum's goal is that students exceed Pennsylvania State expectations.

Chapter XIV: Special Education Services and Programs

In compliance with state and federal law, notice is hereby given by the Pen Argyl Area School District that it conducts ongoing identification activities as part of its school program for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education and related services (eligible students). If your child is identified by the district as possibly in need of such services, you will be notified of applicable procedures. Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction due to the following disabilities:

1. Autism
2. Deaf-Blindness
3. Deafness
4. Developmental Delay
5. Emotional Disturbance
6. Hearing Impairment
7. Intellectual Disability
8. Multiple Disabilities
9. Orthopedic Impairment
10. Other Health Impairments
11. Specific Learning Disability
12. Speech or Language Impairment
13. Traumatic Brain Injury
14. Visual Impairment due to Blindness

If you believe that your school-aged child may be in need of special education services and related programs, or young child (age 3 to school-age) may be in need of early intervention, screening, and evaluation processes are designed to assess the needs of the child and his/her eligibility are available to you at no cost, upon request. You may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not your child is enrolled in the district's public school program; including children who are homeless, wards of the state, or highly mobile, including migrant children. Requests

for evaluation and screening of school-age students are to be made to your child's principal.

Children aged three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need Special Education and related services.

Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least three years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) The child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas, or (ii) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional, and self-help. For additional information, you can contact Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 at (610) 252-5550.

Confidentiality: All information gathered about your child is subject to the confidentiality provisions contained in federal and state law. The District has policies and procedures in effect governing the collection, maintenance, destruction, and disclosure to third parties of this information. For information about these policies and procedures, as well as rights of confidentiality and access to educational records, you may contact the Special Education Department.

Chapter XV: Protected Handicapped Students

In compliance with state and federal law, the Pen Argyl Area School District will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations that are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled or seeking enrollment in special education programs. If you think your child may be in need of

services through Chapter 15, contact his/her guidance counselor and/or building principal.

Chapter XVI: Gifted Students

In compliance with state regulations, notice is hereby given by the Pen Argyl Area School District that it conducts screening and evaluation activities to locate and identify students within the district who are thought to be mentally gifted and in need of specially designed instruction.

The Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) is a process of gathering information that will be used to find out if your child qualifies for gifted education, and, if so, the types of programs and services needed. Part of this process includes an evaluation by a certified school psychologist. You may ask your school to give your child a GMDE at any time. You may ask for this evaluation by contacting the principal of your child's school.

Following the GMDE, a Gifted Written Report (GWR) is prepared that recommends whether your child is mentally gifted and needs specially designed instruction. Mentally gifted is defined as "outstanding intellectual and creative ability the development of which requires specially designed programs or support services, or both, if not ordinarily provided in the regular education program."

Grading:

All grades are a reflection of the student's progress towards the standards. The standards based report card grading key:

<u>Overall Grade</u>	<u>Progress Toward Standard:</u>
90-100%	E---Exceeds standards
70-89%	M---Meets standards
60-69%	W---Working towards standards
< 60%	D---Does not meet standards

<u>Overall Grade</u>	<u>Grading Signification</u>
90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
< 60%	F = failing grade

Honor Roll:

The qualification for Honor Roll will be based on the trimester GPA as follows:

1st Honor Roll	92% - 100%
2nd Honor Roll	88% - 91%

Additionally, a student cannot receive a grade of less than 70% to be considered for the honor roll. Teachers are to round up/down based on the student's average in the case of fractions. In the case of incomplete work, students should communicate with their teachers to make up work. Work should be made up within a reasonable amount of time in order to be counted towards a grade and not receive a value of a "0".

National Junior Honor Society:

The mission of the Wind Gap Middle School National Junior Honor Society is to create an enthusiasm for superior scholarship; to develop citizenship; to stimulate a desire to serve; to promote leadership; and to instill exemplary qualities of character.

Membership in this chapter shall be based upon scholarship, character, leadership, citizenship, and service. The election of members to this chapter shall be by a faculty council, with the principal acting as adviser.

Candidates eligible for election to this chapter must be in the eighth grade. Candidates eligible for election to the chapter shall have a minimum scholarship average of 93%. In addition, no grade in any subject for any quarter can be less than 70%. This scholastic level of achievement shall remain fixed, and shall be the required minimum scholastic level of achievement for admission to candidacy. All students who can rise in scholarship to or above such standard may be admitted to candidacy for election to membership. Candidates shall then be considered on the basis of citizenship, service, leadership and character.

Complete bylaws, with respect to this chapter, may be viewed in the main office of the Wind Gap Middle School. Questions regarding National Jr. Honor Society should be directed to the club's advisor.

Homework:

Homework is a way of teaching necessary skills and increase student retention. Homework assignments are aimed at increasing the student's time spent learning, promoting responsibility and providing additional practice. Homework assignments are also given to spark student creativity, preparing students for the next lesson, and allowing students to extend what they have learned.

We urge parents to guide and encourage their children with assigned homework. Under no circumstance do homework for your child, but provide a learning environment in the home that is conducive to learning. Encourage your child to form the habit of writing homework assignments in the homework section of this student handbook.

Students are responsible to complete all homework assignments neatly and on time. Not completing homework will adversely affect a student's academic performance. Teachers will communicate with parents in regards to homework completion and all academic needs.

Remediation:

It is the collective goal of the Wind Gap Middle School that all students are afforded every opportunity to succeed. If a student is not proficient on the Reading and/or the Mathematics PSSA tests, they will be assigned additional instructional time in Reading and/or Math for the school year.

When a child is having academic difficulty, parents are always encouraged to contact their child's teachers by calling the Wind Gap Middle School office (610) 863 – 9093.

Cheating/Plagiarism

The Wind Gap Middle School is an academically oriented school. Course work is often difficult and students at times may feel pressured to succeed at all costs. As a result, some students consider cheating as an acceptable part of school life.

The school administration, faculty and staff do not, in any way, accept cheating as necessary or unavoidable. Cheating has a very negative effect on the individual student, the class and the overall academic climate of our school.

Any student encountering academic difficulty should see his/her teacher, counselor or administrator immediately. There are a myriad of available resources to help assist students in academic need.

Students who choose to cheat to solve their problems may receive a zero for the given assignment or test. Any further disciplinary action is at the discretion of the principal and teacher.

All students should be aware that plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional is a form of cheating. “Cutting and pasting” directly from a website or any other source for use in any school project is plagiarism. A teacher who has determined that plagiarism has been committed shall have the option of downgrading the assignment or giving no credit (for the assignment).

IX. Miscellaneous

Parent Pick-up

Students may be picked up in the middle school office from 8:40 am until 2:45 pm. After 2:45, parent pick up will be in the auditorium lobby.

Lockers:

In the event lockers are assigned, the following guidelines are for locker use. Lockers are provided for the storage of texts, clothing, and personal property. Homeroom teachers will give the student his/her locker and combination on the first day of school. To ensure better utilization of the lockers, students are expected to follow the guidelines listed below:

1. Never share your combination with others. A student is responsible for any items in his/her locker. Additionally, anything stolen from these lockers is the responsibility of the students and not the Wind Gap Middle School. Sixth grade students are responsible for the Master Lock that is on their locker. If it is “lost” or “stolen”, the student is responsible for paying to have it replaced. No student may switch their locker without permission from a principal.
2. Spin your lock dial after closing the locker. Students are not allowed to “pre-set” lockers.
3. Memorize your combination. If you forget your combination, your homeroom teacher has a record. Writing combinations down increases the likelihood of someone getting your combination.
4. Report any damaged locker to your homeroom teacher immediately.
5. Do not kick or slam any locker. Report mechanical problems to your homeroom teacher.
6. Do not place your own lock on any locker in school. If you do use your own lock it will be cut off, discarded and replaced with a school-issued lock.
7. Do not place your items in another students’ locker.

8. Keep lockers clean and presentable.
9. Neither the interior or exterior of the locker may be decorated with stickers

The principal/assistant principal may search a student's locker and seize any illegal and/or inappropriate materials. Lockers are considered a privilege, and, therefore, may be taken away by the administration if necessary.
