

Abington Heights Middle School

1555 Newton-Ransom Blvd.
Clarks Summit, PA 18411
(570) 585-4300
ms.ahsd.org



Student Handbook 2022 – 2023

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ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTORY

Dr. Christopher Shaffer	Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Margaret Vitale	Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mr. James Mirabelli	Business Manager
Mrs. Megan Buck	Director of Human Resources
Mr. Enrico Mastroianni	Athletic Director
Mr. Justin Kraky	Director of Technology
Mrs. Michelle Snyder	Middle School Principal
Mr. Thomas Evans	Middle School Assistant Principal
Mr. Randy Hanyon	Middle School Dean of Students
Mr. Erik Elliott	Director of Buildings and Grounds
Mr. Andrew Snyder	High School Principal
Mr. James Becchetti	High School Assistant Principal
Mrs. Lee Ann Theony	High School Assistant Principal
Mr. Peter S. Smith II	Director of Student Services
Mrs. Karen Butkoski	Director of Special Education
Mrs. Tara Harden	Assistant Director of Special Education
Mrs. Colleen Leonard	Waverly Elementary Principal
Mrs. Kelly Coyne	S Abington Elem.Principal
Mr. Mario Emiliani	Clarks Summit Elem Principal
Mrs. Bridget Frounfelker	Newton Ransom Elem Principal Coordinator of Curriculum

MIDDLE SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

At the Abington Heights Middle School, we strive to promote academic excellence within a caring, supportive environment. We emphasize self-esteem, self-motivation, and a sense of responsibility. Our staff is committed to providing all students with the opportunity to meet their maximum potential.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

We believe that all students in the Abington Heights School District should have the opportunity and be encouraged to develop an understanding of themselves and their capabilities and realize and more fully accept their responsibilities as citizens to deal with the problems of our changing society. The educational program should also help the students to appreciate the accomplishments of others and give them an understanding and respect for all people, including those with varying backgrounds.

We further believe that the educational program should emphasize the development of basic educational skills along with good physical and mental health. Furthermore, by using a wide variety of content and learning activities, the student's interests and needs can be met while fostering their creative abilities and positive attitudes in all forms of learning. In addition, the students should have an effective counseling program to help them plan for future vocational or educational endeavors. It is also essential for students to develop the ability to analyze and interpret data to make meaningful and sound decisions.

To help achieve these ends, the Abington Heights School District should involve the parents as a part of the educational process and provide financial support and administrative policies to enhance this educational philosophy.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

Abington Heights Middle School has implemented a behavior management system known as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports or PBIS.

The AHMS staff takes a team approach to develop solutions to behavior problems. PBIS is a whole-school approach to discipline that includes systemic and individualized strategies for achieving social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviors with ALL students. PBIS promotes and encourages positive social behavior and climate school-wide, applies function-based problem solving to address the needs of students engaging in repeated behavior problems, and engages staff in routine reflection and data-based decision making to guide intervention planning decisions.



**Receipt of
Abington Heights Middle School
Student Handbook
2022 – 2023**

This is to certify that I have received and reviewed the Abington Heights School District's Middle School Student Handbook.

Please sign and return to your homeroom teacher by September 23, 2022

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

PUBLICATION OF STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Occasionally, photographs and/or videos are taken within the school environment and made public through local television, newspapers, and social media. These releases are designed to bring positive attention to programs, activities, and other accomplishments of our students and school. We are careful to limit the dissemination of this media to legitimate public relations purposes only.

- I give permission for my child to participate in photographs/videos for public relations purposes while at school.
- I **DO NOT** give permission for my child to participate in photographs/videos for public relations purposes while at school.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

1. Students may go to their team areas beginning at 7:25 A.M. All students must be in their homerooms at 7:35 A.M.
2. Students are not allowed to leave school grounds during school hours without permission.
3. Students are not allowed in the building after dismissal unless they are under the supervision of a faculty member. Students should report to the main office.
4. Students reporting late must report to the main office with a written explanation of their tardiness. Please refer to attendance and discipline guidelines for specific information.
5. Students are not allowed to run in halls or other areas of the school.
6. Students are not to use or display obscene language (oral or written) or physical gestures at any time.
7. Fighting in school or on school grounds will not be tolerated. Violators of this rule may be subject to immediate suspension.
8. Students who do not attend scheduled detention will serve ½ day In-School suspension.
9. The Abington Heights Middle School administration may refuse any student admission to attend a school dance, an evening school event, or after-school activity if he or she arrives at school after the half-day mark (11:05 A.M.) or is absent for the entire school day. A student's discipline and regular attendance records will be considered. Students who present a valid medical note will be permitted to participate in all evening events.
10. Students will not be permitted to use skateboards, bikes, or rollerblades on school property.
11. Students are prohibited from unauthorized audio, video, or digital recording of any students, faculty, staff, or administration. Any student who violates this guideline is subject to school-administered discipline.
12. Students who cause a general disruption to the school environment may be subject to disciplinary action.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(Pennsylvania School Code)

Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.

1. Students have a responsibility to attend school regularly.
2. It is the responsibility of students to be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves accordingly.
3. Students have a responsibility to express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner so as not to offend, slander, or libel others.
4. Students have a responsibility to volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property. This includes being willing to volunteer information in disciplinary cases or school safety concerns and cooperate with school staff should they have knowledge of importance in relation to such cases.
5. Students have a responsibility to dress appropriately and groom themselves to meet fair standards of safety and health.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

(Pennsylvania School Code)

6. Until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed, students are responsible for assuming the rule is in full effect.
7. Students are responsible for assisting the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled in school.
8. Students are to be aware of and comply with state and local laws.
9. Using public facilities and equipment with proper care is a student's responsibility.
10. Students have a responsibility to protect and care for school property, including textbooks.
11. Submitting a proper excuse for absence from school is a student's responsibility.
12. Students are responsible for being on time for all classes and other school functions.
13. Completing work following an absence from school is a student's responsibility.
14. Students are to pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by state and local authorities.
15. Students are responsible for avoiding inaccuracies in the development of posters or publications.
16. Students are responsible for avoiding indecent, inappropriate, or obscene language at any time on school property and at school-sponsored activities to affect a common standard of decency.
17. Students have a responsibility to meet all financial obligations concerning equipment, textbooks, library books, fundraisers, and supplies.
18. Students have a responsibility to fulfill all disciplinary obligations.
19. No student has the right to interfere with the education of his fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Abington Heights Middle School is dedicated to providing our students with a wide variety of diverse after-school activities. These activities are designed to provide exploratory experiences that may provide them with future interests to help them become well-rounded adults.

Active participation in the after-school program will provide students with: increased self-esteem and self-worth, increased confidence, friendship and leadership opportunities, and a sense of comfort and belonging to our school community. The after-school program runs 3 times per year, six weeks per session from 2:15-3:20 P.M.

ATHLETICS

Seventh and eighth-grade students may participate in interscholastic athletics at the junior high level in the following sports: cross country, soccer, football, field hockey, wrestling, softball, basketball, baseball, and track, and field.

Any Abington Heights Middle School students participating in interscholastic athletics may not have a class average below 60% in more than one academic class to be eligible to participate in practice or athletic contests. Any student that has a class average lower than 60% in two or more classes will be deemed ineligible to participate for a period of one week (Sunday to Saturday). Eligibility reports are run weekly on Fridays.

All Abington Heights School District student-athletes will adhere to the Extracurricular Code of Conduct as established by the Abington Heights School District. Each participant will receive and sign a copy of the Extracurricular Code of Conduct.

ATTENDANCE

School attendance is essential for maximum success. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing excuses for each day that a student is absent from school.

Excused Absence

After an absence, parents/guardians must provide an excuse or doctor's note to the office within three school days or the absence will be changed to an unexcused absence. After 6 excused absences a doctor's note will be required.

"Excused" absences include the absence of a student for the following reasons:

1. Illness
2. Quarantine
3. Death in the immediate family
4. Impassable roads
5. Pre-approved observance of religious holidays

Unexcused Absence

Students have 3 school days to turn in an excuse for absence from school. A "warning letter of concern" will be mailed home after the **3rd unexcused absence** from school. This letter advises the parents of the Compulsory Attendance Laws of PA. A letter to attend a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) will be sent after the **6th unexcused absence** from school. The SAIP meeting will develop an agreed-upon plan to improve student attendance

If unexcused absences continue following the SAIP conference, a letter will be forwarded to the local District Magistrate's office.

ATTENDANCE -TARDINESS

Tardiness - Excused

A student who arrives late to school and has turned in a note from a parent, doctor, or legal professional within three days of the tardy will be marked as "Excused Tardy". If a total of ten (10) instances of tardiness occur a letter will be sent home notifying the parents.

Tardiness - Unexcused

Students arriving to homeroom after 7:35 a.m. without a signed note from a parent or medical professional will be marked "Unexcused Tardy".

- Students will receive a "warning" for the first 3 times they are Unexcused Tardy to school. A letter will be sent home notifying parents.
- Upon the 5th unexcused tardy students will receive a letter notifying them of future disciplinary actions
- Students may receive a detention on sixth unexcused tardy and subsequent Unexcused Tardy to school.
- Students and Parents will be required to attend a Student Attendance Improvement Plan conference with Administration and Lackawanna County

Abington Heights Middle School
Attendance/Absences/Tardiness Flowchart

First and Second Unlawful Absence

Student is absent(absence is considered unlawful until Abington Heights School District receives a written excuse). Parents are notified by AHSD of unlawful absences. Board policy requires excuses to be returned within 3 days of absence, otherwise the excuse will be considered unlawful



Third Unlawful Absence

Parents are sent (via US Mail) a third notice by AHSD of unlawful absence. AHSD coordinated a School Attendance Improvement Plan(SAIP conference. The purpose of the SAIP meeting is to identify and resolve attendance issues and to offer appropriate support. A referral is made to the Lackawanna County office of Youth and Family Services . If there are no subsequent unlawful absences, no further action is needed



Subsequent Unlawful Absences

If there are subsequent unlawful absences after a SAIP has been implemented, regardless of the parent participation in the SAIP meeting, an additional referral will be made to Lackawanna County office of Youth and Family Services and a citation will be filed with magisterial district judge. If a child continues to be unlawfully absent, AHSD will fill citations with the magisterial judge and submit referrals to Lackawanna County office of Youth and Family Services on a weekly basis



10+ absences

A maximum of ten days of cumulative lawful absences verified by a parental/medical excuse may be permitted during a school year. For all absences beyond 10 days, regardless of a reason. AHSD requires an excuse from a physician.



Tardiness

Excessive tardiness minutes will be accumulated and considered as unlawful absences. Students chronically late to school will be referred to Lackawanna County office of Youth and Family Services and the local magistrate for failure to comply with the attendance policy

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The Abington Heights School District wellness plan encourages healthy and nutritious choices in the foods our students eat while at school and is intended to ensure a safe and healthy environment for students with serious health issues. The Abington Heights Middle School does not allow snacks and treats to be brought into the school for classroom birthday celebrations. Student birthdays will be recognized and celebrated without the sharing of snacks.

BULLYING REFERRAL SYSTEM REPORTING

The administration, faculty, and staff of Abington Heights Middle School are dedicated and committed to providing students with a safe, caring, and supportive school environment. Our school-wide bullying reporting system is in place to address the serious issues related to school bullying.

This system works in three ways:

1. Students can make anonymous bully referrals by placing a bully reporting form into a team bully mailbox.
2. Students, parents, and any community member can report bullying anonymously through a link on our Middle School website. If you need to make a referral, the web address is ms.ahsd.org.
3. Students may submit a tip to the Safe-2-Say mobile app, SAFE2SAYPA.ORG, or 1-844-SAF2SAY

*This bully referral system gives bystanders (students witnessing bullying but unsure of what to do about it) and targets (victims of bullying) the chance to stop bullying without fear of repercussions.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

The Abington Heights School District furnishes transportation for students. It is understood that parents assume the responsibility of supervision before the time when their children board the bus in the morning and when children leave the bus after the school day. Children who ride school buses are required by school policy to conduct themselves as bus passengers in a manner consistent with established standards of classroom behavior. Abuse of the privilege of transportation may result in a student's loss of bus transportation as delineated in the policy statement adopted by the Board of School Directors and is available in school offices. Students may ride a bus other than their own only with written permission from a parent or guardian that has administration approval. Buses determined to be overcrowded by school administration are to have no extra riders. Vans will have no extra riders.

CAFETERIA POINT OF SALE SYSTEM

Abington Heights School District's Food Service Department has implemented a School Cafe program <https://www.schoolcafe.com/> that makes viewing or depositing money into student's lunch accounts an option for all parents in our district. This School Cafe bullet is located under parent links on the [ahsd.org](https://www.ahsd.org) website. Now, any parent with an established profile on <https://www.schoolcafe.com/> will be invited to opt-in to receive an email notification, automatically, whenever his/her student's account reaches a predetermined "low balance level" set by the

account holder. All parents are encouraged to utilize this software tool to monitor their student(s) purchases and daily balance. This system will replace all paper negative balance slips. For more information, contact Marissa Janesko R.D Metz Culinary Management at janeskom@ahsd.org or 570-585-5309.

Every student will use a student PIN (Personal Identification Number) to buy lunch and to check their account. When your child enters their PIN into the system, their information including their picture appears on the screen for the cashier to view. The picture will prevent another student from using your child's account. Parents may deposit money into their child's account on a weekly, monthly, or yearly basis (checks are recommended). The money goes into your child's account and is automatically deducted when they make a purchase. By utilizing this system, you will no longer need to worry about giving your child money every day; however, you can still send money regularly. If your child has a balance in their account at the end of the school year, it can be returned or credited towards the next school year.

CHROMEBOOK EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Grade 5 - Chromebook laptop computers are assigned to each 5th grade homeroom in the Abington Heights Middle School.

Grades 6 - 8th - Chromebooks are issued to each student in Abington Heights Middle School for use until they leave our school.

Computers are to be returned as received, except for normal wear and tear, as determined by the District. Abington Heights School District School Board Policy No. 815: Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers & Network and School Board Policy No. 224: Care of School Property apply to all students using computers. The assignment and use of a computer are considered to be a privilege. Inappropriate use or neglect of a computer, internet, and/or any installed software could result in the loss of computer privileges. Loss of privileges will not change classroom expectations and/or assignment completion.

CURRICULUM NIGHTS

Curriculum nights are held at the beginning of the school year to acquaint parents with the school program and to allow parents to meet their child's teachers. Program dates will be posted on our website: ms.ahsd.org

DRESS CODE

All students will be expected to adhere to the following guidelines to ensure compliance with the dress code:

- Upper-body attire must cover students from the collarbone to the base of the torso, so as not to expose a student's midriff, cleavage, chest, or back.
- Lower-body attire should be worn at the waist and use the 3X5 rule of an index card for the length
 - All dress and skirt lengths will be no shorter than three (3) inches above the knee.
 - All pants, shorts, and gym shorts lengths will be no shorter than five (5) inches above the knee.

 - The highest point of any slit in a dress, skirt, pants, or shorts must be no shorter than five (5) inches above the knee.

- Manufacturer's name and insignia, or Abington Heights approved attire, are the only words or phrases that are allowed.
 - There are no restrictions on length, size, or location of manufacturer's name or insignia.
- Hats, bandanas, spikes, jewelry, sunglasses, or anything deemed disruptive or unsafe by the administration will not be permitted.
- Footwear that is appropriate and safe for school activities must be worn at all times.
- Exposed underwear of any kind is not permitted.
- Any clothing items worn must not have any holes, tears, or rips in clothing from collarbone to five (5) inches about the knee.

Spirit Days: Throughout the year, the PBIS team will promote Spirit Days. (Favorite team jersey day, college day, place)

EARLY DISMISSALS

Medical and dental appointments for children should be scheduled by parents after the school day has concluded at 2:00 P.M. If it is essential that medical appointments be scheduled during the school day, a note must be submitted to the main office requesting early dismissal and stating the reason. It is the student's responsibility to inform the teacher when it is time for his or her early dismissal. Students then report to the school office to wait for their parents to pick them up.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

To support student safety, AHMS students are allowed to possess electronic devices while in school. Students must adhere to the following rules regarding electronic device use:

- Personal Electronic devices must be turned off and cannot be visible in the hallways, lavatories, recess area, or team areas during the school day.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY (CONTINUED)

- The school day includes; class time, lunch periods, after-school detention or tutorials, and during emergency drills.
- Using an electronic device to record, photograph or videotape is prohibited.
- Students are permitted to possess/use electronic devices at school from 7:00 -7:25 a. m. in the cafeteria area only,
- If a student is found in violation of this policy, the following discipline will be administered:

FIRST OFFENSE

- Warning-Parent contact, the personal electronic device will be confiscated. The student may pick up at the end of the school day.

SECOND OFFENSE

- Detention-Parent contact, the electronic device will be confiscated. The student may pick up at the end of the school day.

THIRD OFFENSE

- In-School Suspension-Parent contact, the electronic device will be confiscated. Student/Parents may pick up at the end of the school day. A Parent Conference may be required. Subsequent electronic device violations will result in additional consequences.

Additionally, any violation of this policy that causes or involves a distraction or interruption of transportation, the instructional environment, or leads to the violation of other district rules or policies will be subject to disciplinary action according to the AHMS Student Handbook. Failure to comply with a staff directive to turn in an electronic device will be considered defiance of authority and subject to disciplinary action according to the AHMS Handbook. If parents need to contact a student during the school day, they are encouraged to contact the school office for assistance. If students need to use a phone during the school day, they must use a school phone, which is made available to students with appropriate permission.

AHMS personnel are not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

When it becomes necessary to close school due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions during the school year, area radio/television stations will broadcast school closing decisions in the early morning hours or as soon as such decisions are made during a school day. It is requested that parents do not call the school since lines must be kept open for emergencies. Parents will receive emergency notifications by signing up for the AHSD Remind account or by following the district website.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Energy drinks such as *Monster* or *Red Bull* are not allowed in school at any time or any after-school events such as concerts, dances, and after-school activities. Energy drinks brought to school will be confiscated.

AHMS has designated "Nut-Free Zones" throughout the school. Students are not permitted to have food, snacks, or beverages that may contain nut products in these areas.

GYM UNIFORMS

In physical education (PE), students are required to change from their school clothing into athletic appropriate clothing for class and then change back into their school clothes after class. Their PE clothes must be carried in a see-through bag (i.e. mesh, clear plastic).

Suggested PE clothes would include shorts (of acceptable length and fullness, no zippers), short sleeve or long sleeve t-shirts (does NOT need a collar), sweatpants or sweatshirts, socks, and soft-soled athletic or tennis shoes. Electronic devices are not permitted in the locker room.

INSURANCE

Application forms for insurance are distributed during the first week of school each year or given to parents at the time of registration if the school year is in progress. The student medical insurance is made available at a nominal cost as a service by the school. Insurance coverage may be requested throughout the school year by contacting the building Principal.

MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS/ EMERGENCY CARDS

The Pennsylvania Department of Health sets strict requirements for students of public schools. These requirements include proof of immunizations, dental visits, and physical examinations.

- **Dental Examination:** upon entry into the district, grade 3, and grade 7.
- **Physical Examinations:** upon entry into the district, grade 6, and grade 11
- **Scoliosis exams** are done at the 7th grade level with parent consent.
-

The Department of Health requires these as a means of protecting and promoting the health of the school population. **If this documentation is not received by May 1 of the upcoming school year, your child may be excluded from school.**

A medical emergency card, indicating the address, telephone number, doctor, or person to be contacted in the event of an emergency is filed at AHMS for each student. Parents are requested to keep this card current by notifying the School Nurse if there should be any change in this information.

Questions concerning the health program may be directed to the school nurse at 585-4312.

MEDICATIONS

When a student must take the medication in school (over-the-counter or prescription), the physician and parent must sign a medication request form. A prescription label will be accepted for five (5) days in lieu of a physician's permission. This five (5) day grace period allows time to have the form completed by the physician. A note from home is **not** a sufficient parental request.

All medications **must** be in the original container. Prescription products must have a **current** prescription label attached. **Medications must be dropped off to the nurse by the parent.** Students who must take medications in school must do so in the nurse's office only, and only if they have submitted the required medical form. Except for inhalers, prescribed medications or over-the-counter medications are strictly prohibited in a school building, a school bus, or on school property owned by, leased by, or under the control of a school district. Failure to follow these procedures may lead to a violation of the Abington Heights School District Alcohol and Controlled Substance Use and Abuse Policy.

PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The Abington Heights Middle School Parent Teacher Association supports various activities for the benefit of our students. Parents are encouraged to participate actively in this worthwhile organization. Membership forms are distributed at the beginning of each school year. **PTA meetings will be conducted on the first Tuesday of each month.** Call (570) 585-4300 for time.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

The Abington Heights School District provides an opportunity for parents to meet with teachers to discuss their child's progress twice during the school year. Please consult the district calendar for specific dates and times. The conferences provide an excellent opportunity for parents to assess their child's progress and every effort should be made to attend.

PARENT TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS

Parents who transport their children to school in the morning and/or from school in the afternoon should drive carefully around the school buildings and follow the procedures listed below. Parents should only use the paved driveway to enter and depart school grounds.

Morning Drop-Off

- **Parents may drop off their children at the back building entrance between 7:00 A.M. - 7:25 A.M.**
- **Parents may drop off their children in front of the building AFTER the bus drop off has ended.**
- Students entering the school as of 7:35 A.M. will be marked tardy in the main office.

Afternoon Pick-Up - Begins at 2:20 PM

- Parents who wish to pick up their children must provide the administrative office with a written note.
- Parents may pick up their children in the afternoon at the **front or back entrance** to the school.

- Parents will not be permitted up the driveway until school buses have departed the campus
- **Students in Grades 5 & 6 will be dismissed from the rear of the building.**
- **Students in Grades 7 & 8 will be dismissed from the front entrance of the building.**
- Parents may not, at any time, park at the outer edge of the driveway circle to avoid the line of parent vehicles. These procedures are intended to ensure the safety of all students

To facilitate the dismissal process, we ask the parents to place a nameplate in their front windshield.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

The Abington Heights School District is not responsible for lost or stolen personal property. Valuables, if they are brought to school, should be stored in the Main Office safe. The Middle School administration strongly discourages students from bringing large amounts of cash, jewelry, and electronic devices such as iPods, MP3 players, tablets, and hand-held video games to school for any reason.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Students in Abington Heights Middle School receive report cards at the end of every nine weeks. Report cards are distributed to the students and posted on the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Interim progress reports indicating students' academic and social progress will be posted to the Infinite Campus Parent Portal at the midpoint of each of the four marking periods.

REPORT CARDS

Academic subjects and special subject courses are evaluated according to the following guidelines:

A = Outstanding Progress	Grade Range = 90 – 100
B = Commendable Progress	Grade Range = 80 – 89
C = Average Progress	Grade Range = 70 – 79
D = Needs Improvement	Grade Range = 60 - 69
U = Unsatisfactory Progress	Grade Range = 59 – below
NG = No Grade	
I = Incomplete	

Grade 5 & 6 -English Language Arts Report Card

EE = Exceeds Expectations
 ME = Meets Expectations
 AE = Approaching Expectations
 NE= Needs Support on Expectations
 NA= Non Applicable Currently

7th grade World Language Grades

O=Outstanding,
 S = Satisfactory,
 U = Unsatisfactory

Physical Education Grades

P = Pass
 F = Fail

REPORT CARDS (CONTINUED)

1. Individual conferences should be scheduled whenever a child is having difficulty progressing academically, emotionally, or socially.
2. The Abington Heights Middle School teachers may determine that a student is eligible to earn a grade of “Incomplete” for a course when a student has not completed required assignments due to illness, a death in the immediate family, or other extenuating circumstances.
3. **Students with an “Incomplete” grade must complete and submit any missing work within ten school days after the end of the marking period. Students who do not complete the missing work within that time frame may earn an “Unsatisfactory” grade.**

SEARCHES

School lockers, designated areas for storing personal items (individual student “cubbies”), shelves, desks, roadways, and parking areas are the property of the school district. The use of such property by students is a privilege, not a right. The reasonable expectation of privacy that students enjoy does not extend to lockers, desks, or vehicles parked or driven on school property. The school district expressly reserves the right to search lockers, desks, and vehicles on school property whenever deemed necessary or reasonable for the protection of health, welfare, and maintenance of discipline in the classroom or on school grounds. This may include random, blanket, periodic, or sweeping searches and may include the use of animals or mechanical means to detect the presence of illegal substances, weapons, or other prohibited articles or materials. Random, periodic, or sweeping searches of all lockers, shelves, and areas for storing personal items (individual student “cubbies”) will be conducted without regard for any individual suspicion. Searches of students, student clothing, and student possessions may be conducted if the administration determines that a reasonable level of suspicion exists that a violation of school policy has occurred. Students found in possession of illegal substances or look-alike, weapons or look-alike, or other prohibited articles or materials in their lockers or desks, and/or on their persons shall be subject to discipline in accordance with the rules, policies, and regulations of the District and shall further be subject to any fines, penalties, or legal actions as may be provided for by State and Federal laws and regulations. Such evidence may be used against the student in disciplinary proceedings.

SCHOOL MATERIALS CARE

Textbooks, Chromebooks, library books, and other school materials used by students should be treated with care and respect. Students are responsible for books or materials which are damaged or lost while in their care.

SCHOOL VISITS

All visitors are required to report to the Main Office to sign in immediately upon entering the school. Visiting or vacationing students are not allowed to attend classes, except for students who are shadowing for enrollment at Abington Heights Middle School. Any student shadowing for prospective enrollment must be pre-approved by the building Principal.

SOLICITATIONS

At no time may students sell any items in the school building for personal gain. Any sales must be pre-approved by the administration.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

A Student Assistance Program has been established at Abington Heights Middle School. Faculty members on this team have received training through the statewide Student Assistance Program (SAP). The purpose of the Student Assistance Program is to identify students who may be having problems in school. These problems may be related to chemical dependence, suicide, depression, child abuse, divorce, or separation in the family. The Student Assistance Program is a method for intervening and referring these students to appropriate school and community services. Parents, students, or teachers may make referrals to the Student Assistance Program.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Abington Heights Middle School students are acknowledged in several ways during the school year for their academic achievement, citizenship, and overall effort. The two student recognitions that occur during the school year are:

- A. Student of the Month Award – is awarded to one male and one female from each team in every grade from October through May. Each student is chosen by their team of teachers for their strong academic performance and work ethic. Each student will be recognized and awarded. Student of the Month winners, along with their parents, will also be invited to an end-of-the-year recognition ceremony to celebrate their achievements.

- B. Most Improved Award –Students who have improved in academics, attendance, and school citizenship. One male and one female from each team in every grade will earn the award for the 2nd and 3rd quarters. Students are chosen by their teachers for their strong work ethic, attitude, commitment to their grades, and overall improvement in grades from the previous quarter.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Students in the Abington Heights Middle School determined to be in need of academic remediation may be recommended or required to complete a summer school educational program offered through the Edison Learning Courses. Students who fail academic courses and/or who fail to complete a summer school program risk being retained for the upcoming school year. The middle school administration will make student promotion and retention decisions based on a comprehensive review of the student's academic records and unique social and educational needs.

TELEPHONE CALLS

Parents should direct all telephone calls to the Main Office at (570) 585-4300. Messages will be delivered to students by a faculty or staff member in a reasonable period of time. Students may only call home using the phone located in the Main Office. Students who use a cell phone or other electronic device to contact parents will be subject to disciplinary action.

TEMPORARY MEDICAL EXCUSE

In conformity with the School Code, a student will be considered for a Temporary Medical Excuse (TME) under the following conditions:

- A temporary medical and/or psychiatric condition is considered medically urgent and so severe that it is likely to persist for more than two (2) weeks.
- It is a condition that will prevent the child from attending any part of the school day for a specific period of time. The specific period may not exceed 90 calendar days in one period as per the Pennsylvania School Code.
- The district has received the Physician's Recommendation form, fully completed, from a certified/licensed medical doctor, psychologist, and/or psychiatrist. Signatures of Licensed Nurse Practitioners will not be accepted.

TESTING PROGRAM

The students of Abington Heights Middle School will participate in the following state-issued exams:

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

Grade 5: English Language Arts and Mathematics

Grade 6: English Language Arts and Mathematics

Grade 7: English Language Arts and Mathematics

Grade 8: English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science

Keystone Exams

Only students in 8th grade who are enrolled in Algebra I will take the Algebra I Keystone Exam.

Parents with questions about student participation in Pennsylvania state exams should contact the building Principal at (570) 585-4300.

WEBSITE

The Abington Heights Middle School has a school website that includes a great deal of valuable information. The web address is ms.ahsd.org.

POLICIES

ABINGTON HEIGHTS SCHOOL DISTRICT

Policy: No. 227

Section: Students

Title: Alcohol & Controlled Substance Use & Abuse

ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE POLICY

PURPOSE

The Abington Heights School District (AHSD) is committed to providing a positive learning environment that contributes to the health, safety, and well-being of students. The objective of this policy is to respond effectively to the use and/or distribution of alcohol and drugs by students within the school environment and/or related school activities.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for developing administrative guidelines and procedures to implement and enforce this policy. Building administrators and school personnel shall follow guidelines and procedures outlined in this policy as they deal with students found using or possessing alcohol and/or other drugs. It is also the responsibility of the Superintendent to integrate substance abuse/prevention education into appropriate district curricula.

AUTHORITY

All staff, students, and parents have the obligation to report to district administrators any violations of this policy. The use, abuse, and/or possession of alcohol, inhalants, mood-altering substances, look-alike drugs, drug substances, chemicals, or paraphernalia is forbidden.

Paraphernalia means all equipment, products, and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use or designed for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, repackaging, storing, containing, concealing, injecting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing a controlled substance into the human body. This includes homemade items. Paraphernalia may be characterized solely by intended use and there is no requirement that residue of a controlled substance is present to characterize an item as paraphernalia. Intended use is determined by the totality of the circumstances. This policy prohibits the use or distribution of the above in school buildings, on school grounds, in school-leased or school-owned vehicles, and at all school affiliated or sponsored functions.

Possession shall be interpreted as knowingly holding an illegal substance to use, distribute, or keeping for another individual. The holding of a substance for another person will not be considered a defense to the possession of an illegal substance. A student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action(s) as stipulated in the Guidelines enclosed with this policy.

During the school year, educational programs and outside resources will be utilized to deter drug and alcohol use in the AHSD. Educational programs may include drug and alcohol assemblies, drug and alcohol education in the curriculum, and drug and alcohol counseling on an individual or group basis. Other sources may include law enforcement agencies and the use of specially trained dogs to locate drugs. These programs may be used periodically throughout the year.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

Pro Children Act of 1994

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are to be strictly adhered to K-12 by all appropriate staff members when working with students who are suspected of or have violated the Alcohol and Controlled Substance Use and Abuse Policy of the Abington Heights School District (AHSD). They provide a consistent approach for effectively responding to alcohol and drug-related situations that may occur in the schools or at school-related/sponsored events. This policy and guidelines have been written with consideration for the legal rights and responsibilities of administrators, staff, students, and parents. All students must be afforded due process rights according to district policy and administrative procedures. Prescribed guidelines regarding the suspension and expulsion of special education students must be followed according to federal/state laws, district policy, and administrative procedures. The use and abuse of alcohol and drugs are devastating to students, parents/guardians, and school staff. The administration of the policy is extremely important since it has the potential of affecting the future and present lives of young people. There may be extenuating circumstances when administering this policy that requires some alteration of the disciplinary action recommended within these guidelines. The Superintendent of Schools must approve any deviations of the disciplinary action outlined in the guidelines. The Superintendent will report all deviations to the Board of Education. This policy will be administered in accordance with the guidelines specified for the appropriate scenario below:

1. THE POSSIBLE DRUG USE BY A STUDENT IS A CONCERN; HOWEVER, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF VIOLATION OF LAW OR SCHOOL REGULATIONS.

- 1.1. This situation may involve a student who is suspected of using drugs but does not demonstrate extreme behavior changes and shows no evidence of drug use; a student who contacts a teacher regarding the drug use of a friend of another student; the student who volunteers information about personal drug use.
- 1.2. A teacher may approach the student regarding behavior, classroom performance, or general health. Students should not be accused of drug use. The teacher should make a referral to the Student Assistance Team. The team will convene to discuss possible actions.
- 1.3. The investigation should be limited to discussion with the student and should not be used as a basis to punish the student.
- 1.4. Any contact with parents concerning the student's suspected use of drugs will be made in conjunction with the nurse and administration and only after a referral through the Student Assistance Team.
- 1.5. Information will be limited to the Student Assistance Team. The team will convene to discuss possible action.
- 1.6 The police will not be notified in this situation.

2. A STUDENT DEMONSTRATES OBVIOUS SYMPTOMS OF POSSIBLE DRUG USE SUCH AS STAGGERING, SLURRED SPEECH, DAZED APPEARANCE, INCOHERENCE, INABILITY TO RESPOND, AND/OR STRONG ODOR OF ALCOHOL. THIS SITUATION SHALL BE HANDLED AS A HEALTH PROBLEM & POTENTIAL EMERGENCY.

- 2.1. The teacher will immediately summon an administrator and the school nurse. The students shall not be left alone. Arrangements may be made for the student to be taken to a medical facility or released to parents/guardians. The teacher will complete a Discipline Referral.
- 2.2. If alcohol or drug use is indicated, the administration will be responsible for the investigation. The nurse will conduct a physical review and log the information in the Health Office daily log. The administrative investigation may include a search, according to

the policy of the student's locker, and removal of apparent drug substances.

2.3. Parents will be notified of the incident as a health concern or medical emergency as well as a potential discipline concern. This will include a description of the situation and symptoms.

2.4. Information regarding the incident will be distributed to the initial parties involved in the investigation and may only be extended to the Student Assistance Team and law enforcement.

2.5. If the student is discovered to be in possession of drugs or alcohol, disciplinary consequences will be determined in accord with appropriate subsequent sections of this policy. All substances discovered at the emergency scene or subsequently uncovered will be turned over by the school Principal or authorized designee to medical personnel for identification and aid in the treatment of the student. In the absence of a medical emergency, substances will be turned over to law enforcement. If alcohol/drugs have been consumed off school grounds, the consumption will be considered as having occurred on school grounds if the student comes to school after such use and demonstrates the behavior stipulated under this section.

The administration will conduct an informal hearing with the student and parents. If the substance involved is identified as governed by these guidelines, and it is the student's 1st offense, the disciplinary action would be a 10-day out-of-school suspension and a recommendation for expulsion of 10 school days. The recommendation for expulsion will also require a mandatory drug and alcohol evaluation. As an alternative to the 10-day expulsion, the student may agree with the building principal to perform 30 hours of community service to be approved by the principal. Failure to complete the required hours in the time specified in the agreement would result in the imposition of the 10-day expulsion. For a second or subsequent offense, the disciplinary action will be for a 10-day out-of-school suspension and a recommendation for expulsion of 20 days. The recommendation for expulsion will also require a mandatory drug and alcohol evaluation.

3. A STUDENT IS CAUGHT FOR THE FIRST TIME WITH A SMALL AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL OR DRUGS (AMOUNT TYPICAL FOR PERSONAL USE), OR DRUG PARAPHERNALIA.

3.1. The teacher will summon the Principal or escort the student to the Principal's office. The student will not be left alone. The teacher will then complete a Discipline Referral.

3.2. The Principal will request that the student empty his/her pockets or purse and volunteer all drug substances. The student's locker will be searched according to district policy. Police will be involved if the student is uncooperative.

3.3. The parent will be contacted, the situation described, and an immediate conference arranged.

3.4. Information shall be limited to the initial parties who have knowledge of the incident and may only be extended to the Student Assistance Team. The Team will convene to discuss possible action. The Administration will make the referral to the Team and complete the appropriate referral. Law enforcement will be notified.

3.5. All substances will be sealed, documented, and turned over to the police with a request for analysis. The substances may be used as a basis and evidence for legal proceedings.

3.6. Following an informal hearing the student will be suspended for a period of ten school days. The student will be referred to the Board of Education with a recommendation for an expulsion of 45 days. The recommendation for expulsion will also require a mandatory drug and alcohol evaluation.

4. A STUDENT IS CAUGHT A SECOND TIME IN POSSESSION OF A SMALL AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL OR DRUG SUBSTANCE OR PARAPHERNALIA.

4.1. The teacher will summon the Principal or escort the student to the Principal's office. The student will not be left alone. The teacher will then complete a Discipline Referral and complete an Incident Report.

4.2. The Principal will request that the student empty his/her pockets or purse and volunteer all drug substances. The student's locker will be searched according to policy. Police will be involved if the student is uncooperative.

4.3. The parents will be contacted, the situation described, and an immediate conference arranged.

4.4. Information shall be limited to the initial parties who have knowledge of the incident and may only be extended to the Student Assistance Team. The Team will convene to discuss possible action. The Administration will make the referral to the Team and complete the appropriate referral.

4.5. All substances will be sealed, documented, and turned over to the police with a request for analysis. The substances may be used as a basis and evidence for legal proceedings.

4.6. Following an informal hearing, the student will be suspended for a period of ten school days. A formal board hearing will be required to consider the student's future in the Abington Heights School District. An administrative recommendation will be made providing for expulsion from school for no less than 90 days.

5. A STUDENT IS CAUGHT A THIRD TIME IN POSSESSION OF A SMALL AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL OR DRUG SUBSTANCE OR PARAPHERNALIA.

5.1. The teacher will summon the Principal or escort the student to the Principal's office. The student will not be left alone. The teacher will then complete a Discipline Referral and Incident Report.

5.2. The Principal will request that the student empty his/her pockets or purse and volunteer all drug substances. The student's locker will be searched according to the policy. Police will be involved if the student is uncooperative.

5.3. The parent will be contacted, the situation described, and an immediate conference arranged.

5.4. Information shall be limited to the initial parties who have knowledge of the incident and may only be extended to the Student Assistance Team. The Team will convene to discuss possible action. The Administration will make the referral to the Team and complete the appropriate form.

5.5. All substances will be sealed, documented, and turned over to the police with a request for analysis. The substances may be used as a basis and evidence for legal proceedings.

5.6. Following an informal hearing, the student will be suspended for a period of ten school days. A formal Board hearing will be required with an administrative recommendation to consider permanent expulsion. If the student is of compulsory school age he/she will be recommended for placement in an alternative education setting until they are 17 years of age and then will be recommended for permanent expulsion.

5.7 Police will be called and the substance will be turned over to them. The police will take charge of the investigation.

6. A STUDENT IS CAUGHT IN POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL OR DRUGS INDICATING THE INTENTION TO SELL OR DISTRIBUTE.

6.1 The teacher will summon the Principal or escort the student to the Principal's office. The student will not be left alone. The teacher will then complete a Discipline Referral and Incident Report.

6.2 The principal will request that the student empty his/her pockets or purse and volunteer all drug substances. The student's locker will be searched according to policy. Police will be involved if the student is uncooperative.

6.3 The parent will be contacted, the situation described and an immediate conference arranged.

6.4 Information will be limited to the initial parties who have knowledge of the incident and may only be extended to the Student Assistance Team. The Team will convene to discuss possible action.

6.5 All substances will be sealed, documented, and turned over to the police with the request for analysis. The substances may be used as a basis and evidence for legal proceedings.

6.6 Following an informal hearing, the student will be suspended for a period of ten school days. A formal Board hearing will be required with an administrative recommendation to consider an expulsion ranging from 180 school days to permanent. In the event of permanent expulsion, if the student is of compulsory school age they will be recommended for placement in an alternative education setting until they are 17 years of age and then will be recommended for permanent expulsion.

6.7 Police will be called and the substance will be turned over to them. The police will take charge of the investigation.

7. A STUDENT VOLUNTARILY SEEKS HELP TO COMBAT A DRUG OR ALCOHOL PROBLEM .

7.1 The Administration will inform the Student Assistance Team of the student's request for help. The Administration will complete the appropriate referral.

7.2 The Administration will take a detailed statement from the student regarding the incidents and extent of the drug and alcohol abuse problem. That statement will remain confidential and be forwarded to the team to be utilized in the assessment.

7.3 The parent will be contacted, the situation described, and a conference arranged. This is necessary because family involvement is extremely important in order for the student to successfully combat his/her abuse problem.

7.4 Information shall be limited to the initial parties who have knowledge of the incident and may only be extended to the Student Assistance Team. The team will convene to discuss possible actions.

BOARD POLICY ON WEAPONS IN THE SCHOOLS

PURPOSE: The Board of Education shall provide for a safe environment for the operation of the educational program. Weapons on school property or at school functions present a danger to those present and a direct disruption to a safe and orderly environment. For this reason, students will not be permitted to possess or use any weapon at any time, in any school district building, on school property, on any school van or bus, or at any school function.

DEFINITIONS: For the purpose of this policy, these terms are defined as follows:

- The term "possess" shall include but not be limited to having possession of, to control, to have on one's person, being concealed in one's clothing or belongings, in a locker, or a vehicle.
- The term "school property" shall include but not be limited to all buildings and grounds owned, leased, or used by the school district, and any school vehicle or school bus.
- The term "school function" shall include but not be limited to any regular educational program, extra-curricular activity, athletic event, field trip, dance, concert, fundraising activity, or other activity, sponsored or co-sponsored by the school district whether on or off of school property.
- The term "use" shall include but not be limited to display, handle, load, operate, point, discharge or threaten to do one or more of the above actions.
- The term "weapon" shall include, but not be limited to any instrument or object capable of inflicting harm in its normal or intended use. It shall include but not be limited to any bomb, grenade, machine gun, sawed-off shotgun, firearm especially made or specially adapted for concealment or silent discharge, blackjack, sandbag, metal knuckles, dagger, knife, razor, or cutting instrument, or any other implement which may be used for the infliction of serious bodily injury.

RESPONSIBILITY: Under the direction of the Superintendent, the district administrators shall implement the following procedures.

KNOWLEDGE OF A WEAPON

- Any student discovering, without previous plan or knowledge, that he/she is in possession, in transport, or in the maintenance of a weapon as defined in this policy will immediately report the weapon to a properly authorized adult.
- All district employees will report to the principal the knowledge of any weapon as defined in this policy.

POSSESSION OF A WEAPON

- The weapon will be confiscated.
- The law enforcement agency will be notified.
- Parents will be notified.
- The student will be immediately suspended for up to ten (10) days.
- A required meeting with the principal, student, and parents will be held.
- A recommendation may be made to the Board that expulsion is considered.
- Professional counseling may be required as a condition of re-entry to school.

USE OF A WEAPON

- The weapon will be confiscated.
- The law enforcement agency will be notified.
- Parents will be notified and requested to come to the school.
- Criminal charges will be filed immediately.
- The student will immediately be suspended for up to ten (10) days.
- A required meeting with the principal, student, and parents will be held.
- A recommendation will be made to the Board for expulsion.

EXCEPTIONS: Exceptions to the policy are the following:

- The possession and use of the weapon are required as part of an authorized course.
- The possession of the weapon is part of a display, such as in a history class.
- The possession of the weapon is authorized as a stage prop.
- The possession and use of the weapon is part of an interscholastic sports activity.
- The possession violation is deemed by district administrators to be technical in nature and non-threatening in the school environment. This situation may result in the implementation of some, but not necessarily all, of the procedures called for under Responsibility.

A written request, with documentation, for each exception must be submitted in advance to the superintendent or building principal for approval.

STUDENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

RATIONALE

The Civil Rights Act Title IX of the Federal Education Amendments prohibits sexual and racial discrimination against students in school settings. Sexual harassment is defined by Title IX as a form of sexual discrimination.

PHILOSOPHY

Abington Heights Middle School is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for all students. Therefore, we prohibit sexual harassment and will not tolerate it in any form.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to sexually harass any other student. We will investigate all formal and informal, verbal and written complaints of sexual harassment. Any student who is found to have sexually harassed any other student will be disciplined.

DEFINITION

Sexual harassment consists of verbal, written, or physical conduct of a personal or sexual nature not related to the educational function of the school, including both non-consensual and consensual behaviors, during all times when students are under the jurisdiction of the school.

Sexually harassing behaviors can include but are not limited to:

- touching (arm, breast, buttock, etc.).
- sexual games or dares.
- verbal or written comments (about parts of the body, sexual orientation, clothing, looks, etc.).
- name-calling or profanity.
- spreading sexual rumors.
- leers and stares.
- sexual or "dirty" jokes.
- cartoons, pictures, and pornography.
- gestures with the hands and body.
- pressure for sexual activity.
- cornering, blocking, standing too close, following.
- conversations that are too personal.
- "rating" an individual, for example on a scale from 1 to 10.
- obscene T-shirts, hats, pins.
- pulling, tugging, grabbing at others' clothing.
- sexual assault and attempted sexual assault.
- rape.
- touching oneself sexually in front of others.
- graffiti.
- making kissing sounds or smacking sounds.
- howling, catcalls, whistles, barking.
- repeatedly approaching someone when he or she isn't interested.
- facial expressions (winking, kissing, etc.).
- "making out" in the hallway.
- suggestive, full-body, or unwanted hugging.

Response and reporting procedures

School personnel must report and/or investigate all incidents of sexual harassment and take appropriate action, whether they personally observe incidents or are made aware of them by some other means. Reporting, investigation, and action must occur even if the victim doesn't file a formal complaint, and even if the victim doesn't express any overt disapproval of the harassment. In the eyes of the law, teachers function as supervisors, which makes them legally liable for incidents of sexual harassment.

Staff members will intervene immediately or in a timely fashion to address the behavior. The intervention will consist of identifying the inappropriate behavior, debriefing the student(s) about his or her role, and may include a referral to the administration. Repeated or severe incidents of harassment require a mandatory referral to the administration. Information concerning any complaints of sexual harassment shall be treated confidentially.

Suggested teacher interventions

1. Stop the behavior.
2. Debrief rules.
3. Discuss why the behavior is inappropriate.
4. List the consequences of the behavior.
5. Conference with the student(s).
6. Make parent contact.
7. Arrange for apologies, both verbal and written.
8. Initiate a counselor referral.
9. Initiate an administrative referral.

Procedures after an administrative referral

1. An immediate investigation will be completed, which may include verbal and written statements for witnesses. All facets of the investigation will be documented and all information will be kept confidential.
2. All parties and their parents will be notified that:
 - sexual harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated in the school.
 - consequences will occur for inappropriate behavior.
 - retaliation against victims or witnesses will not be tolerated.

In addition, the following information will be discussed.

- the types of behaviors that constitute sexual harassment.
 - the rights and responsibilities of the individual to prevent sexual harassment from happening.
3. Consequences will be assigned which may include the following:
 - a verbal warning/reprimand.
 - a written warning/reprimand entered in the student's file.
 - suspension.
 - an apology to the victim.
 - counselor referral.
 - a parent/student/administrator conference.
 - police involvement.
 - loss of the privilege to participate in extracurricular activities for a specific period of time.
 - community service.
 - other consequences deemed appropriate by the school or district.

ABINGTON HEIGHTS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Bullying Protocol

Mrs. Michelle Snyder, Principal
Mr. Thomas Evans, Assistant Principal
Mr. Randy Hanyon, Dean of Student

Rationale

The House Judiciary Committee amended and approved SB71. The bill requires each school to adopt a bullying policy by June 30, 2007. Each bullying policy must prescribe disciplinary consequences for bullying and may include programs for intervention, prevention, and education. School bullying policies must be published on school district Web sites and distributed with each school's student code of conduct. SB71 was amended to require districts to post a copy of the policy in all classrooms and to review the policy with students at least twice during the school year.

Philosophy

The Abington Heights School District is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for all students. Therefore, we prohibit bullying and intimidation and will not tolerate it in any form.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully or intimidate any other student. We will investigate all informal and formal verbal and written complaints of bullying and/or intimidation. Any student who is found to have been bullied and/or intimidated by another student will be disciplined.

Definition

“Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-age children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.”

StopBullying.gov, U.S. Office of Education

The behavior of bullying occurs in five forms: physical, verbal, relational/emotional, cyberbullying, and sexual bullying

- a. **Physical Bullying**- hitting, kicking, or any physical aggression.
- b. **Verbal Bullying**- Teasing, name-calling, put-downs, or other behavior that would deliberately hurt others' feelings or make them feel bad.
- c. **Relational Aggression/Emotional Bullying**- starting rumors, telling others not to be friends with someone, or other actions that would cause someone to be without friends.
- d. **Cyberbullying**- Using electronic device mediums such as but not limited to computers, cell phones, and pagers to bully (bullying defined above) others through methods such as posting comments, statements, or pictures on blogs or websites, text messaging, instant messaging, and email.
- e. **Sexual Bullying**-A person intentionally says or does repeatedly harmful, humiliating, or disrespectful statements or actions that are sexual by nature. i.e. calling names, vulgar gestures, crude comments about a person's body or appearance.

Bullying/Intimidating behaviors can include but are not limited to:

- Taunting
- Name-calling
- Rumor spreading
- Making up stories to get other children in trouble
- Telling other children not to be friends with a target child
- Kicking, tripping or pushing another child
- Teasing other children and making remarks about their culture, religion, ethnicity, weight, physical appearance, disabilities, or medical conditions
- Intimidating others
- Taking other children's possessions or demanding money from them
- Damaging other children's property
- Hiding other children's books, bags, or other property
- Picking on other children, even when they're upset
- Making threats to other children
- Manipulating others, getting them to do things that they may not want to do

Response and reporting procedures

School personnel must report and/or investigate all incidents of bullying/intimidation and take appropriate action, whether they personally observe incidents or are made aware of them by some other means. Reporting, investigation, and action must occur even if the victim does not file a formal complaint, and even if the victim does not express any overt disapproval of the bullying/intimidating act.

Staff members will intervene immediately or in a timely fashion to address the behavior. The intervention will consist of identifying the inappropriate behavior, debriefing the student(s) about his/her role, will include a referral to the administration, and parental contact. Repeated or severe incidents of bullying/intimidation require a mandatory administrative referral. Information concerning any complaints of bullying/intimidation shall be treated confidentially.

BULLYING REFERRAL SYSTEM

The administration, faculty, and staff of Abington Heights Middle School are dedicated and committed to providing students with a safe, caring, and supportive school environment. Our school-wide anonymous bullying reporting system is in place to address the serious issues related to school bullying.

This system works in three ways:

1. Students can make anonymous bully referrals by placing a bully reporting form into a team bully mailbox.
2. Students, parents, and community members can report bullying anonymously by using the Safe-2-Say app, or call 1-844-SAF2SAY.
3. Students, parents, and any community member can report bullying anonymously through a link on our Middle School website. If you need to make a referral, the web address is ms.ahsd.org.

*This bully referral system gives bystanders (students witnessing bullying but unsure of what to do about it) and targets (victims of bullying) the chance to stop bullying without fear of repercussions.

Suggested teacher interventions

- Identify Bully behaviors.
- Stop the behavior.
- Conference with the student or students
- Provide meditations for students engaging in bully behaviors.
- Review and apply consequences
- Make parent contact.
- Arrange for apologies, both verbal and written.
- Initiate a counselor referral.
- Initiate an administrative referral.

Procedures after an administrative referral

1. An immediate investigation will be completed, which may include a verbal and written statement for witnesses. All facets of the investigation will be documented and all information will be kept confidential.

2. All parties and their parents will be notified that:
- Bullying and/or intimidation are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in school.
 - Consequences will occur for inappropriate behavior.
 - Retaliation against victims or witnesses will not be tolerated.

In addition, the following information will be discussed.

- The types of behavior that constitute bullying/intimidation.
- The rights and responsibilities of the individual to prevent bullying/intimidation from happening.

Interventions and Consequences for Bullying

The following list provides a variety of consequences for bullying that can be imposed based on several factors including the following:

- the level of bullying (mild, moderate, and severe)
- the student’s age, ability, and intentions
- the duration, severity, and frequency of the bullying incident (Borba, 2018)

When assigning consequences, it is also helpful to consider the following: was the student remorseful, did he or she take responsibility for his or her behavior, and make amends

Options for Consequences

- Conference with the student about the incident-provide a clear, strong message that bullying is unacceptable, will be closely monitored, and if it continues more severe consequences will be assigned
- A written letter of apology to the targeted child (if the child is truly remorseful)
- Mediation with the target (if the target is willing to meet with a bully)
- Complete a “Think Sheet” describing what the child did wrong, how it impacted others, and what he or she will do to correct the situation
- Discipline referral and meeting with the assistant principal
- Create a school PSA or poster about why bullying is wrong
- Write an essay describing the negative effects of bullying on the school and the target

Options for Consequences - (continued)

- Research the emotional and physical consequences of bullying. Write a paper or create a PowerPoint to share what you learned.
- Write an essay describing how you will “retire” from bullying
- Read a story about bullying and write/discuss/ or illustrate what you learned.
- Review the school’s anti-bullying policy and write a paper discussing the specific values and rules that were broken and a plan to make things “right.”
- Conduct a lesson about empathy with younger students
- Participate in social-emotional skill training-possible areas include empathy-building, problem-solving, impulse control, anger management
- Create a behavior management plan with the school counselor
- Be a cross-age tutor (in an area of interest or talent) for a younger student
- Read a bullying prevention book to younger students
- Teach younger students about bullying or anger management strategies
- Do chores at the school or help the custodian, cafeteria worker, secretary, or librarian
- Do a monitored community service project, such as helping at a food pantry, animal shelter, etc.
- Be removed from the area where the bullying took place and/or prevented from being close to the target
- Lose the privilege of recess or school activities
- Lose the privilege of eating in the cafeteria and eat lunch in the office
- Detention
- In-school-suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Police or community agency referral
- Face legal action if applicable
- Expulsion recommendation

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Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at School: What We Know and What We Can Do*. Cambridge, MA.

FERPA NOTICE

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) 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 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 to be 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 (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - 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 aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or 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.

For additional information or technical assistance, you may call (202) 260-3887 (voice). Individuals who use TDD may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Ave, SW Washington DC. 20202-5920
USDE - December 23, 2008

Notice of Special Education Services and Programs - Child Find

**To Parents who reside in one of the Twenty Constituent School Districts of the
Northeastern Educational Intermediate Unit**

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

The content of this notice has been written in English. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the school district (see Contacts) and request an explanation.

Identification Activity

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

In the case of a child that is of preschool age, developmental delay, each school district is required to annually provide a notice describing the identification activities and the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of personally identifiable information. This notice is intended to meet this requirement.

Identification activities are performed to find a child who is suspected of having a disability that would interfere with his or her learning unless special education programs and services are made available. These activities are sometimes called screening activities. The activities include Review of group data, conducting a hearing and vision screening, assessment of student's academic functioning, observation of the student displaying difficulty in behavior, and determining the student's response to attempted remediation. Input from parents is also an information source for identification. After a child is identified as a suspected child with a disability, he or she is evaluated but is not evaluated before parents give permission for their child to be evaluated.

Confidentiality

If after screening and a disability is identified, upon your permission your child will be evaluated. A written record of the results is called an education record, which is directly related to your child and is maintained by the school districts. These records are personally identifiable to your child. Personally, identifiable information includes the child's name, the name of the child's parents or other family member, the address of the child or their family, a personal identifier such as social security number, a list of characteristics that would make the child's identity easily traceable or other information that would make the child's identity easily traceable.

The school district will gather information regarding your child's physical, mental, emotional, and health functioning through testing and assessment, observation of your child, as well as through review of any records made available to the school district through your physician and other providers of services such as daycare agencies.

The school district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information by one school official being responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of the records; training being provided to all persons using the information and; maintaining for public inspection a current list of employees names and positions who may have access to the information.

The school district will inform you when this information is no longer needed to provide educational services to your child and will destroy the information at the request of the parent, except general information such as your child's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance record and classes attended, grade level completed, may be maintained without time limitation.

As the parent of the child, you have a number of rights regarding the confidentiality of your child's records. The right to inspect and review any education records related to your child are collected, maintained, or used by the school district. The school district will comply with a request for you to review the records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding planning for your child's special education program (called an IEP meeting), before a hearing should you and your school district disagree about how to educate your child who needs special education, and in no case, take more than 45 days to furnish you the opportunity to inspect and review your child's records.

You have the right to an explanation and interpretations of the records; to be provided copies of the records if failure to provide copies would effectively prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review the records and; the right to have a representative inspect and review the records.

Upon your request, the school district will provide you a list of the types and locations of education records collected, maintained, or used by the agency. [Editor note: if a district will charge a fee, then the following two sentences are necessary; if the district

will not charge any fees, then this sentence is unnecessary] Additionally, the school district will charge a fee for copies of records made in response to your request for copies except it will not charge a fee if doing so will prevent you from inspecting and reviewing your child's records. The district will not charge a fee to search for or retrieve information.

You have the right to request an amendment of your child's education records that you believe are inaccurate or misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of your child. The school district will decide whether to amend the records within a reasonable time of receipt of your request. If the school district refuses to amend the records you will be notified of the refusal and your right to a hearing. You will be given, at that time, additional information regarding the hearing procedures, and; upon request, the district will provide you records of the hearing to challenge information in your child's education files.

Parent consent is required before personally identifiable information contained in your child's education records is disclosed to anyone other than officials of the school district collecting or using the information for purposes of identification of your child, locating your child and evaluating your child or for any other purpose of making available a free appropriate public education to your child. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Additionally, the school district, upon request, discloses records without consent to officials of another school district in which your child seeks or intends to enroll.

When a child reaches age 18, the rights of the parent with regard to confidentiality of personally identifiable information is transferred to the student. A parent may file a written complaint alleging that the rights described in this notice were not provided:

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
Division of Compliance
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

The Department of Education will investigate the matter, issue a report of findings and necessary corrective action within 60 days. The Department will take necessary action to ensure compliance is achieved.

Complaints alleging failures of the school district with regard to confidentiality of personally identifiable information may also be filed with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

The Abington Heights School District will provide ongoing screening services. If you wish to learn more, have questions, or believe your child may need to be identified, please contact:

Director of Special Education: Mrs. Karen Bukoski 570.585-8278

Early Intervention Identification

The PA Department of Education is responsible for providing EI programs and services to eligible young children under Act 212 of 1990, the EI Services System Act. An "eligible young child" is a child age 3 to the age of beginners, who has an identified disability or a developmental delay in the areas of speech/language, learning, motor, adaptive, social, and/or behavioral and is in need of special education.

Developmental screening for thought to be eligible children is available through NEIU 19. To request a screening, call 1-800-228-1750, ext. 219 or 570-876-9219, Monday through Friday between 8:30 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. All information gathered is confidential. There is no cost for programs and services. For additional information, contact NEIU 19, 570-876-9255.

Addendum I:

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program

MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT:

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

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

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

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

- "Doubled up" - Sharing the housing of others due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons.
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations.
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Living in a public or private place is not designed for humans to live.
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances.
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
- Unaccompanied Youth - Children or youth who meet the definition of homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

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

- Immediate enrollment in the school they last attended or the school in whose attendance area they are currently staying even if they do not have all of the documents normally required at the time of enrollment;
- Access to free meals and textbooks Title I and other educational programs and other comparable services including transportation;
- Attendance in the same classes and activities that students in other living situations also participate in without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their housing situations.

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

- Assist with enrollment, monitor school attendance, and arrange transportation (PreK-8 students)
- Provide school supplies and other school-related materials as needed
- Advocate for and support students and families through school and home visits
- Set clear expectations for student behavior, attendance, and academic performance
- Assist students/families access to community services
- Assist students/families with access to tutoring, special education, and English language learning resources
- Assist students so they can participate in sports, field trips, and school activities regardless of their ability to pay or to provide their own transportation.

For additional information, contact LEA Homeless Liaison Karen Dougher at 570-585-8276.