



2018-2019 K-6 Student/Parent Handbook

Mr. Kurt Nyquist, Principal (knyquist@pennsvalley.org)	Centre Hall-Potter Miles Township/Rebersburg	422-2004 422-2006
Mrs. Danielle Yoder, Principal (dyoder@pennsvalley.org)	Penns Valley Elementary/ Intermediate	422-2002

While the information in this handbook remains the same for the most part, we urge you to read through to re-familiarize yourself with some of the more important policies and procedures.

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District Phone Numbers

●Elementary School Offices.....

Penns Valley Elementary School (K-4): **422-2002**
Mrs. Danielle Yoder, Principal dyoder@pennsvalley.org
Mrs. Debra Stover, Secretary dstover@pennsvalley.org
Mrs. Lisa Auman, Secretary lauman@pennsvalley.org

***Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. until 3:45 p.m.**

Penns Valley Intermediate School (5/6): **422-2002**
Mrs. Danielle Yoder, Principal dyoder@pennsvalley.org
Mrs. Debra Stover, Secretary dstover@pennsvalley.org
Mrs. Lisa Auman, Secretary lauman@pennsvalley.org

***Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. until 3:45 p.m.**

Centre Hall-Potter Elementary School (PreK-4): **422-2004**
Mr. Kurt Nyquist, Principal knyquist@pennsvalley.org
Mrs. Carrie Rishel, Secretary crishel@pennsvalley.org

***Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.**

Rebersburg-Miles Township Elementary (PreK-4): **422-2006**
Mr. Kurt Nyquist, Principal knyquist@pennsvalley.org
Mrs. Christin Martz, Secretary cmartz@pennsvalley.org

***Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.**

Registration Office: **422-2000, ext. 2532**

This is the contact for students who are new to the district that need to be registered and for students who are withdrawing from the district because they are moving.

Mrs. Debra Stover, Student Registrar dstover@pennsvalley.org

●Administrative Offices..... **422-2000**

- Dr. Brian Griffith, Superintendent
- Dr. Sherri Connell, Asst. Superintendent
- Ms. Lynn Naugle, Business Manager/Transportation Director
- Dr. Holly Sawyer, Student Support Services Director

OUR MISSION (Board Policy 101)

Empowering our students every day to reach individual success.

OUR VISION

The Penns Valley Area School District, families and the rural, progressive community are dedicated to the well-being of each student. We desire engaged, passionate and motivated learners. Our focus on learning in a supportive and trusting environment will prepare our students to be contributing members of a global society. We are committed to effective communication to create a shared understanding between all members of the school community.

OUR BELIEFS

We believe that....

1. Our primary responsibility is to engage, motivate and impassion learners.
2. A safe, caring, nurturing and comfortable environment promotes learning.
3. The educational process is best served when we respect and embrace the differences among all people.
4. Our partnered school community shares the responsibility for quality education and high performing schools.
5. Excellence is best-achieved and maintained by inspiring our staff through effective leadership, teamwork and the appropriate provision of resources.
6. A culture of continuous improvement promotes student achievement.
7. Learning happens in different ways and from different starting points.
8. Learning is a life-long process.

The Penns Valley School-wide Positive Behavior Support System (SWPBS): Acknowledgements and Consequences for Expected Universal Behaviors.

The School-wide Positive Behavior Support System is a proactive approach to discipline based on the idea that students can benefit from well-implemented, evidence-based practices for promoting appropriate student behavior thus establishing an environment conducive for learning. By providing a positive focus and universal expectations for encouraging desirable student behaviors, SWPBS can help maximize the time students are engaged in relevant learning activities.

SWPBS has been established to create a system of supports for **all** students in the school. It is based on practices that emphasize teaching and reinforcing expected universal behaviors and providing targeted interventions for students with behavioural/emotional support needs. SWPBS is characterized by several effective and efficient practices such as planned, positive interventions, managed (or eliminated) antecedents contributing to inappropriate behaviour, multiple opportunities for positive, corrective feedback, and directly taught, frequently practiced, routinized pro-social behaviors for automaticity. Research supports that a positive, direct instructional approach is more effective than traditional punishment-based alternatives in improving students' academic success and improving overall school climate (Horner, 2000; Myers, 2001). In SWPBS, all staff follow a predictable framework for behavior infractions consistently in a professional manner throughout the entire school. Consequences are an opportunity for the student to learn from his or her mistakes and to accept responsibility for the choices that he or she has made. The consequences are managed on a continuum matched to the intensity of the misbehavior. Acknowledgements/incentives are used to reward appropriate behaviors that support the school-wide behavioral expectations.

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)

Students will be taught expected behaviors. Expected behaviors will be modeled and reinforced to encourage our students to be responsible, be respectful, and be ready (3Rs). Expectations will be reviewed and retaught if needed. Parents or guardians will be contacted for assistance if a student has persistent difficulty following the 3Rs, or our district wide behavior expectations. Expected behaviors are posted throughout the entire school. Students can earn Ram Stars on the bus and throughout the school day.

ALL Students K-6 in the Penns Valley School District are expected to follow the 3Rs:

- ✓ **Be Responsible**
- ✓ **Be Respectful**
- ✓ **Be Ready**



1. ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS (Board Policy 204)

As defined in Section 1301 of the Pennsylvania School Code, every child being a resident of any school district between the age of five (5) and twenty-one (21) may attend the public schools in his district. The compulsory school laws of Pennsylvania require that every child between the age of eight (8) and seventeen (17) shall be in school. However, once a student is enrolled, that student and parents/guardians are subject to the attendance policy.

Absences

- Students have **three (3) days** following an absence to turn in their excuse at the school office. Failure to bring in an excuse within three days will result in the absence being declared **unlawful** for students under 17 years of age.
- **Excuses may also be emailed to the building secretary.**
- **Unlawful absences** totalling more than three (3) full days may be followed by prosecution and fine as required under section 1333 of the School Code.
- **Truancies**-Students are not expected to miss school at any time without the knowledge of the school or the parents. In case of violations see Discipline Policy.
- Parents are encouraged to call the school any time their child(ren) will be absent.

Early Dismissals

- Written requests for early dismissal must be turned into the office at the start of the day. Students leaving for medical appointments should pick up a verification slip verifying appointment slip or obtain a note from a doctor's office verifying appointment time in and time out. When students leave school early with unexcused reasons and have exceeded three (3) unexcused early dismissals, the time missed in class may be accumulated and counted as illegal or unexcused absences.
- Parents/guardians are strongly urged to limit requests for early dismissal to emergencies.
- Students who become ill after arriving at school must report to the nurse for assessment. The nurse will contact the parent/guardians to determine if the student should leave school. Students are not to leave the school building for any reason without permission from school personnel.

Board Policy requires that school-aged students enrolled in district schools attend school regularly, in accordance with state laws. The educational program offered by this district is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation in order for student to achieve academic standards and consistent educational progress.

Educational Trips (Board Policy 204.1)

The Board of School Directors (School Board) recognizes that from time to time students have the opportunity to participate in pre-planned trips and educational experiences during the regular school year. Although educational trips provide valuable experiences, the School Board feels that the daily learning opportunities provided in school are invaluable. Therefore, the School Board authorizes the principals to approve requests according to the guidelines outlined below:

- Trips must be educational in nature, as determined by the principal.
- The principals shall take into account the educational value of the planned trip, and the ability of the student to maintain an adequate academic performance. **No trips will be approved during any PSSA testing window.**
- Educational trips may accumulate to no more than **5 days** during the school year.

- The request for approval must be made in writing (e-mail or note) to the building principal from the student's parent or guardian prior to the trip. If approval is granted before the trip is taken, the student's absence will be excused. Should the student's absence extend beyond the approved time, such days will be classified as unlawful and/or unexcused.

- The student is required to make up all school assignments missed while he/she is away. This work may be completed either before or within two (2) days of the student's return to school unless an extension is granted by the teacher.

2. BULLYING (Board Policy 249)

The PVASD recognizes that bullying students has a negative effect on the educational environment of schools. Students who are bullied, intimidated or are fearful of other students may not be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the school district. Bullying shall mean unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student or group of students by another student or group of students. Bullying occurs when a student is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more students. Bullying implies an imbalance of power or strength. The student who is bullied has difficulty defending him or herself.

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)

Olweus Bullying Prevention is also being used to ensure that our school is a safe, healthy place that allows all students to focus on learning. We are asking that our students follow the rules listed below to assist in this effort. We are asking students and staff to report bullying. We need parents to assist us with this as well. Our fourth rule states that our students will report any incident of bullying at home, as well as at school. We are asking that parents inform the school by email or phone to their child's classroom teacher, school counselor, or elementary principal when students report bullying at home.

Our school rules to stop bullying:

- 1. We will not bully others.**
- 2. We will try to help students who are bullied.**
- 3. We will try to include students who are left out.**
- 4. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.**

3. CAFETERIA (Board Policy 808.1)

Student cafeteria prices for the 2017-18 school year are \$2.35 meals, .50 cents for milk, and \$1.15 for breakfast. The cafeterias at Penns Valley Elementary/Intermediate, Miles Township and Centre Hall-Potter Elementary School are all Point of Sale Systems. Each child has a four digit ID number assigned to them to access his/her account.

Breakfast will be served from 7:50a.m. – 8:05a.m.

Students who walk or are dropped off by parents who wish to eat breakfast must be in the school no later than 8:00a.m; otherwise, breakfast will not be served.

4. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Good communication between home and school is an integral part of a child's education. Occasionally problems arise concerning a school situation and a parent may want to discuss it. If the situation pertains to the classroom, **the child's teacher should be contacted first**. If further communication with the school is required, please **contact the elementary principal**.

5. COUNSELING SERVICES (Board Policy 112)

Two counselors who serve the elementary schools provide counseling services for K-6 students. In the process of working with students in the school setting, counselors are involved in the following areas: (a) counseling individuals and groups, (b) assessment of students, (c) providing information to and working with different audiences, (d) referral of students for testing, (e) orientation of students to the school environment, (f) communication with staff, administration, and parents, (g) collecting and maintaining student records, (h) assisting in the placement of students, and behavioral case managers in the Student Support process. If you would like additional information, please contact the counselor in your child's school. Rachel Malick serves Penns Valley Elementary/Intermediate School (422-2002) and Leah Craytz serves Centre Hall-Potter (422-2004) and Miles Township (422-2006)

6. CURRICULUM (Board Policy 105.1)

Upon request by a qualifying parent or student, the district will make available existing information about the curriculum, including academic standards to be achieved, instructional materials and assessment techniques. If any student or parent should wish to review curriculum or instructional materials, they should contact the building principal in writing.

7. DIRECTORY INFORMATION (Board Policy 216)

Directory information for a student includes such items as name, address, and telephone number and is information generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. If a parent/guardian does not wish for this information to be disclosed, a written notice must be provided to the school office no later than one week following the first day of school for that school year or one week after registration for those students transferring from educational programs outside the school district. The written notice from the parent should include the parent's signature and date. This parental notice is only valid for the school year in which it was issued.

8. DRESS CODE (Board Policy 221)

The School Board authorizes the building principal or designee to monitor student dress and grooming and enforce school rules prohibiting student dress or grooming practices which:

1. Present a hazard to the health or safety of the student or to others in the school.
2. Materially interfere with schoolwork, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program.
3. Cause excessive wear or damage to school property.
4. Prevent the student from achieving educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement.

The following guidelines regarding dress will be in place:

- a. Shorts will be permitted on warm days. However, shorts & skirts must be of reasonable length and determined by the principal.
- b. Tank tops must be high cut.
- c. Bare midriffs are not permitted.
- d. Shirts must be worn at all times.
- e. Students should be aware that clothing with obscene and/or offensive language or gestures will not be permitted.
- f. Bandannas and hats are not to be worn in the school building except for approved school activities.
- g. Sunglasses are not to be worn in the building unless prescribed by a doctor.
- h. Chains and chain wallets are not permitted (see Weapons policy 218.1).

Students will be required to change clothing deemed inappropriate by administration.

9. **EARLY DISMISSAL (Board Policy 805)**

When the district decides to dismiss early due to inclement weather, students will be dismissed at a time determined by the district office.

10. **ELEMENTARY/INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DAY (Board Policy 804)**

The elementary school day will provide for 335 minutes of instruction each day. Bus students will arrive at school between 7:50 and 8:05 a.m. **Students who are not transported to school by district transportation must be in their homerooms by 8:10 a.m.** Any student who arrives at school later than 8:10 a.m. will be considered tardy.

Students who walk or are dropped off by parents who wish to eat breakfast must be in the school no later than 8:00a.m. otherwise breakfast will not be served.

The instructional day for K-4 students: 8:10a.m. - 2:45p.m.

The instructional day for 5/6 students: 8:10a.m. - 3:05p.m.

11. **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION (Board Policy 805)**

Throughout the school year each building will conduct a variety of drills as specified in the School Emergency Operations plan. The three categories of drills are: (a) natural disaster, (b) human caused disaster, and (c) technological disasters. Also, fire drills are conducted one time each month.

12. **FIREWORKS**

Fireworks Law (Act of 1939, P.L. 134, #65). "Fireworks" are not permitted in public buildings. The term "fireworks" shall mean and include any combustible or explosive composition or any substance or combination of substances prepared for the purpose of producing a visible or audible effect by combustion, explosion, deflagration or detonation and shall include firecrackers or other fireworks of like construction and any fireworks containing any explosive or flammable compound. Please be advised that all fireworks (including smoke bombs and firecrackers) are not permitted in any of the Penns Valley Area School Districts schools.

13. **Food Allergy Management**

The Board is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students with severe or life-threatening food allergies and shall establish policy to address food allergy management in district schools in order to:

1. Reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions.
2. Ensure a rapid and effective response in the case of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction.
3. Protect the rights of students by providing them, through necessary accommodations when required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities, including classroom parties and field trips.

The focus of food allergy management shall be on prevention, education, awareness, communication and emergency response.

The Board adopts this policy in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, and the guidelines established jointly by the PA Department of Education and PA Department of Health on managing severe or life-threatening food allergies in the schools.

Food allergy - an abnormal, adverse reaction to a food that is triggered by the body's immune system.

Medical Plans of Care - written documents individualized for a particular student with a severe or life-threatening food allergy to address the student's needs throughout the school day, including:

1. Emergency Care Plan (ECP) - a medical plan of care based on the information provided in the student's Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP) and distributed to all school personnel who have responsibilities for the student which specifically describes how to recognize a food allergy emergency and what to do when signs or symptoms of these conditions are observed.
2. Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP) - a medical plan of care that provides written directions for school health personnel to follow in meeting the individual student's healthcare needs. The plan describes functional problem areas, sets goals for overcoming problems, and lists tasks/interventions to meet the goals. The IHP shall include a Food Allergy Medical Management Plan developed by a student's personal healthcare team and family, which shall outline the student's prescribed healthcare regimen and be signed by the student's board-certified allergist, family physician, physician assistant or certified registered nurse practitioner.
3. Related Services Component in Individualized Education Program (IEP) - that part of an IEP for a student receiving special education and related services which includes reference to development and implementation of an IHP and ECP for students with a documented severe or life-threatening food allergy as well as identifying the medical accommodations, educational aids and services to address the student's needs.
4. Section 504 Service Agreement - a medical plan of care which references development and implementation of an IHP and ECP as well as other accommodations, educational aids and services a student with a documented severe or life-threatening food allergy requires in order to have equal access to educational programs, nonacademic services and extracurricular activities as students without food allergies.

Prior to enrollment in the district or immediately after diagnosis of a food allergy, appropriate medical plans of care such as an ECP, IHP, Section 504 Service Agreement and/or IEP shall be developed for each student identified with a food allergy. Plans shall be developed by the school nurse, in collaboration with the student's healthcare provider, the student's parents/guardians, district or school nutrition staff, the student, if appropriate, and any other appropriate persons.

Where a medical plan of care is developed, it should carefully describe the plan for coverage and care of a student during the school day as well as during school- sponsored activities which take place while the student is under school jurisdiction during or outside of school hours. Medical plans of care shall include a component which provides information to the school nutrition service regarding each student with documented severe or life-threatening food allergies.

Medical plans of care should include both preventative measures to help avoid accidental exposure to allergens and emergency measures in case of exposure, including administration of emergency medication.

A complete set of a student's current medical plans of care related to food allergies shall be maintained by the school nurse. Information or copies of the different components of a student's medical plans of care shall be provided to appropriate personnel who may be involved in implementation of the medical plans of care.

Accommodating Students With Disabling Special Dietary Needs

Students with food allergies may be identified, evaluated and determined to be disabled, in which case the district shall make appropriate accommodations, substitutions or modifications in accordance with the student's medical plans of care.

The district must provide reasonable accommodations, substitutions or modifications for students with disabling dietary needs. The student's physician shall determine and document if the student has a disabling dietary need. Examples of a disability under this policy would include metabolic conditions (e.g., diabetes), severe food allergies or cerebral palsy.

Students who fall under this provision must have a written medical statement signed by a licensed physician, which shall be included with the student's IHP. The medical statement must identify:

1. The student's special dietary disability.
2. An explanation of why the disability restricts the student's diet.
3. The major life activity(ies) affected by the disability.
4. The food(s) to be omitted from the student's diet.

The food or choice of foods that must be provided as the substitute.

Accommodating Students With Non disabling Special Dietary Needs

The district may, at its discretion, make appropriate accommodations, substitutions or modifications for students who have a special dietary need but who do not meet the definition of disability, such as a food intolerance or allergy that does not cause a reaction that meets the definition of a disability. The decision to accommodate such a student shall be made on a case-by-case basis.

Students who fall under this provision must have a written medical statement signed by a physician, physician assistant or certified registered nurse practitioner identifying the following:

1. The medical or other special dietary condition which restricts the student's diet.
2. The food(s) to be omitted from the student's diet.
3. The food or choice of foods to be substituted.

Confidentiality

The district shall maintain the confidentiality of students with food allergies, to the extent appropriate and as requested by the student's parents/guardians. District staff shall maintain the confidentiality of student records as required by law, regulations and Board policy.

The Superintendent or designee, in coordination with the school nurse, school nutrition services staff, and other pertinent staff, shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy or adopt as administrative regulations the suggested guidelines developed by the Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Health and National School Boards Association (NSBA) guidance on managing severe or life-threatening food allergies in district schools, including all classrooms and instructional areas, school cafeterias, outdoor activity areas, on school buses, during field trips, and during school activities held before the school day and after the school day.

Administrative regulations should address the following components:

1. Identification of students with food allergies and provision of school health services.
2. Development and implementation of individual written management plans.
3. Development of a comprehensive and coordinated approach to creating a healthy school environment.
4. Communication and confidentiality.
5. Emergency response.
6. Professional development and training for school personnel.
7. Awareness education for students.

8. Awareness education and resources for parents/guardians.
9. Monitoring and evaluation.
10. The Superintendent or designee shall annually notify students, parents/guardians, staff and the public about the district's food allergy management policy by publishing such in handbooks and newsletters, on the district's website, and through posted notices and other efficient methods.

14. HEAD LICE

Evidence based practice for the treatment of head lice outlines that students are not to be excluded from school unless it has been determined that *live* head lice have been detected.

When infestation of an individual child is suspected by either the parent or classroom teacher, that child will be examined by the nurse in the nurse's office. If a child is to be excluded from school for the infestation of *live* head lice, the parent, or their representative, will transport the child home. Others in the classroom will be checked on an individual basis if infestation is suspected.

When two or more cases of *live* head lice are diagnosed, the nurse will send letters to all parents in the classroom to inform them about the situation and to recommend the assessment of their child. The letter will list the steps to be followed to help eradicate the pests.

If a student is found to have *live* head lice, the following policy will be in effect:

- a. Parents or an emergency representative will be contacted in each case. The parent or representative will be responsible for providing transportation home. Proper authorities may be notified if the child is not picked up at the school within one hour of the notification of infestation.
- b. Exclusion will be as follows:
 - The student will be excluded from school until the nurse examines the child after home treatment has been completed and finds him/her to be free of *live head lice*.
 - The student will be excluded from the school bus until the nurse has seen the child and determined to be free of *live* head lice. The parent will provide transportation for the child to the school to be examined by the school nurse.
 - A letter will be supplied by the school to the parent with recommendations in order to treat head lice in the home.
 - Names of children that have been excluded from school three times due to *live* head lice infestations and have not cooperated with the school to remedy the situation will be referred to the Centre County Children and Youth Services under the Neglect Provision of the Children Protective Service Law – Act 124.

15. HEALTH AND DENTAL EXAMINATIONS (Board Policy 209)

In compliance with the School Code, the School Board shall require that district students submit to health and dental examinations in order to protect the school community from the spread of communicable disease; to ensure that the student's participation in health, safety and physical education courses meets his/her individual needs; and to ensure that the learning potential of each students is not lessened by a remediable physical disability.

The following examinations are given to students at the following grade levels:

- Physical examinations are administered in grades one and six.
- A hearing test is conducted annually in kindergarten, first, second and third grades.

- Vision is tested annually in all grades.
- Dental examinations are given to students in grades one and three.

Parents are encouraged to take children to their own physician and dentist for examinations if possible. It should be kept in mind that due to the number of students which require examination by the school physician and the length of time available for the examinations, that these do not constitute complete physical exams. Many of the aspects of a complete physical will not be carried out during the school exam. We would therefore recommend strongly that, whenever possible, your child be seen by his family physician for both routine and episodic health care. Forms are available in each school office to take to your physician.

Questions regarding physical examinations may be directed to Mrs. Lori Stover, elementary nurse, at your child's school.

16. HEALTH SERVICES AND IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS (Board Policy 203)

The school nurse (or nurse's designee) is available from 8:00 a.m. until 3:15 p.m. Health personnel assists in the conducting of physical examinations, obtain and record general information for students including height and weight, and conduct vision and hearing screenings.

Students who are injured on school property are examined by the nurse (or nurse's designee). A determination is made regarding what the medical follow-up should be. Students who become ill during the school day are sent to the nurse's office and a determination is made whether or not a parent should be notified for transportation home.

Pennsylvania School Immunization Requirement:

Children in **ALL** grades (K-12) need the following immunizations for attendance:

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis* (1 dose on or after 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 month after previous dose given)
- 2 doses of measles, mumps and rubella**
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

Seventh through 12th Grade Additional immunization requirements for attendance:

- 2 doses meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)
 - First dose is given 11-15 years of age; a second dose is required at age 16 or entry into 12th grade.
 - If the dose was given at 16 years of age or older, only one dose is required.
- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap)

*Usually given as DTaP or DTP or DT or Td

**Usually given as MMR

17. KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE (Admission To) (Board Policy 201)

The School Board establishes age requirements for the admission of beginning students that are consistent with statute and sound educational practice and ensure the equitable treatment of all eligible children.

Kindergarten-A child is eligible for admission to kindergarten if he/she has attained the age of five (5) years before the first day of September.

The Superintendent or designee shall require that each student who registers for entrance to school exhibit his/her original birth certificate or similar documentation as proof of age and birth date, along with proof of residency and proof of required immunizations.

***Please see the immunization requirements listed under Health Services and Immunization Requirements.**

First Grade-Beginners are students entering the lowest grade of the primary school above the kindergarten level. They shall be admitted to school only during the first two (2) weeks of the annual school term, except that a child who is eight years of age may begin school at any time during the school year. A student may enrol at anytime if he/she is transferring from another school district.

A beginner is eligible for admission to first grade if the child has attained the age of six (6) years before the first day of September.

17. MEDICATION (administration of) (Board Policy 210)

The Penns Valley School District strongly believes that every effort should be made by physicians and parents to administer medication at home. However, any student who is required to take medication, **prescribed or non-prescribed**, during the school day must comply with school regulations.

The school nurse in the Penns Valley School District will administer medications to students during school hours under the following conditions:

- a. A form, provided by the district, signed by the physician or dentist specifying the name of the medication, dosage to be given, and time it is to be given, must accompany the medication. This form must also be completed if your child carries a self-administered asthma inhaler. The form is good only for the current school year.
- b. The medication must be brought by the parent/guardian to the office in each respective building in the original prescription container, properly labelled by a registered pharmacist, as required by law. All medication (other than self-administered asthmatic inhalers) will be locked in a designated area.
- c. The written consent form must be read, signed and completed by the parent/guardian. The form is found in the take-home packet that was brought home by your child. Additional copies are available at each elementary school.

All of the above requirements must be met or the medication will not be administered in school.

Your child is responsible to go to the designated area at the appropriate time to receive the medication. Unused medication should be picked up at your child's school at the end of the school year.

The Penns Valley Area School District advocates that responsibility for transport of medication to and from school lies with the parent or guardian. The district will not accept any responsibility for handling of medication while transported by a student.

If you have a problem obtaining a physician order on the Authorization for Medication form, please contact the school nurse for information to resolve this issue.

18. PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES (Board Policy 212)

In the elementary schools we make every effort to keep you informed about your child's progress. We feel that parent/teacher conferences are an important form of communicating between the school and home.

19. PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Your child should wear sneakers and appropriate clothing for physical activities on the day that physical education class is scheduled.

If your child has a physical handicap or a medical problem with restrictions, please write a letter explaining any difficulties the child may encounter with physical activities and send it to the phys. ed. teacher. This will help the teacher deal with any problems that may arise.

20. PRESCHOOL/EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

As a resident of the Penns Valley Area School District, you are entitled to programs designed to assist pre-school children who are identified with disabilities. Central Intermediate Unit #10 has been designated to provide early intervention services to any eligible young child age 3 until the "age of beginner" (five years and 7 months old) and his/her family in order to meet the individual needs of the child.

CIU #10 will provide a screening of any child thought to be disabled. In order to start the screening process a referral needs to be received at CIU #10. For information on this process, please call 1-800-982-3375. You will be given instructions regarding how to begin the screening process for the Early Intervention Program.

21. REPORT CARDS (Board Policy 212)

Report cards are distributed three times per year for students in grade K through 6. Report cards will be held at the end of the year for any student who owes money for books, magazines, equipment, lunch money or for any other debts.

22. SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures will be taken for students in grades K-6 in the fall and again in the spring. Please watch for notices during those to ensure your child has the opportunity to have his/her picture taken.

23. SCHOOL VISITORS AND SECURITY (Board Policies 907 & 908)

All Penns Valley School District schools are secure buildings. **All buildings are equipped with electronic locks at the main entrances and all exterior doors are locked at ALL times.** Visitors will enter and exit via the main entrance ONLY and will be required to bring a form of ID.

Visitors will be issued a pass that must be visible at all times. Any visitor not displaying a pass will be asked to report to the office.

While in the building, students and teachers will be able to exit at any door. We have made provisions for our students and teachers to enter the building throughout the day.

Parents are reminded that they need to inform the teacher and/or the secretary of their intent to pick up their child. This should be done by sending a note with your child or by calling the school to inform the office **prior to 2:00p.m. each day.** A message will be given to the child and the teacher.

Students will be dismissed at the regular dismissal time. We will not permit parents to enter the classroom area without a pass issued by the office.

24. STUDENT DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY (Board Policy 227)

This policy has two goals. First, it establishes clear and consistent guidelines for school personnel to follow when responding to students who are suspected of or are actually using drugs and alcohol, who mimic the use of them through their behavior, who experience medical emergencies as a result of using them, who distribute them to others, or who possess drug-related paraphernalia. Second, it conveys to members of the student population that using drugs and alcohol is not only wrong and harmful, but also illegal; that specific consequences apply to students who break the rules and that school-based avenues of prevention and early intervention are available to help students either to resist involvement or to reduce dependency.

To develop this policy, a committee was formed consisting of school administrators, counselors, teachers, students, state police personnel and drug and alcohol education specialists representing agencies from both Centre County government and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This committee has based this policy on portions of a Department of Education document ***entitled Responding to Student's Drug Use: Guidelines for School Personnel.***

DEFINITION OF TERMS:

- Drug, Mood Altering Substance and Alcohol**-involves any alcohol or malt beverage, any drug listed in Act 64 (1972) as a controlled substance, chemical, abused substance or medication for which a prescription is required under the law and/or any substance which is intended to alter mood.
- Distributing**-involves delivering, selling, passing, sharing or giving any alcohol, drug or mood altering substance, as defined by this policy, from one person to another or to aid therein.
- Possession**-involves possessing or holding, without any attempt to distribute, any alcohol, drug or mood altering substance determined to be illegal or as defined by this policy.
- Cooperative Behavior**-involves the willingness of a student to work with school personnel in a helpful manner.
- Uncooperative Behavior**-involves the resistance or refusal of a student (either verbal, physical or passive) to comply with the request or recommendations of school personnel. Examples of uncooperative behaviors include, but are not limited to, defiance, assault and deceit.
- Drug Paraphernalia**-involves any utensil or item that, in the judgment of school personnel, can be associated with the use of drugs, alcohol or mood altering substances. Examples of drug paraphernalia include, but are not limited to, roach clips, pipes and bowls.
- School Property**-involves not only actual buildings, facilities and grounds owned by the school, but also includes school buses, school parking areas, and any facility used for a school function.
- Confidentiality**-between students and school personnel will be respected and no confidential communication shall be made without the consent of the student or the parent/guardian unless the best interest of the student can be served only by doing so.
- Confiscating**-involves "reasonable suspicion" on the part of school personnel that a student is in possession of drugs, alcohol or mood altering substances, and therefore exists an obligation to search for and seize such items. This may include school lockers, cars on school property, clothing, purses, book bags, books and other personal property. Reasonable efforts would be made to secure the student's voluntary agreement to the search and to have the student present at the time of the search.

Parents may seek assistance for a child with a drug and/or alcohol problem by contacting the Centre County Drug and Alcohol Agency at 355-6744. The agency offers a variety of services for children in grades K-12.

25. STUDENT INSURANCE

Accident insurance is available for purchase by all students. It is recommended that students whose parents do not have health care policies from another source consider purchasing this insurance. Insurance applications are available at the school office upon your request. If you are interested in purchasing insurance, contact the office at your child's elementary school for the necessary paperwork.

26. STUDENT RECORDS (Board Policy 216)

Each year we are responsible to collect, maintain and release basic information about students. The policy in use was approved by our School Board and the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

A student record includes basic personal, health, and educational information. Personal data includes sex, birth date, parents' names and place of employment, siblings, address, phone number, social security number, and school picture. Health data includes results of measurement, visual, hearing, dental, and physical examinations. Educational data includes attendance, grades, test results, and school activities.

Access to the records is available to you, to the student, to school officials responsible for the student and to others for whom you have given written permission. Other persons do not have the privilege of access to the student or to his/her school records without the specific written consent of the guardian or parent with custody. If you believe any information in the record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates your privacy, you may request a meeting with the principal and the person responsible for the information. If a satisfactory conclusion cannot be reached, you may request a hearing to review the case.

School assumes both parents have equal access to the student's record. If there is legal evidence due to divorce, separation or custody to the contrary, it is the parent's responsibility to provide a copy of such a document to be included in the student's record. **If neither biological parent has custody of said student, then proof of custody must be provided.**

School information and documents, such as the report card, will be sent home with the child. It is the responsibility of the parents to see that such information is exchanged in situations where one parent has full or primary custody of the child. It is important to note that a parent may request a conference with a teacher at any time in order to access their child's progress.

When your child transfers to another school, we will forward complete records upon request from that school. It is important that you contact your school's office and make them aware of the withdraw. You may obtain a photocopy of the material at a modest cost per page. If you have any questions concerning these procedures or would like to review the policy or records, please call or visit the school.

27. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (Board Policies 103, 103.1, 113)

1. Free Education and Attendance

- a. All persons residing in this Commonwealth between the ages of 6 and 21 years are entitled to a free and full education in the Commonwealth's public schools.
- b. Parents or guardians of all children between the ages of 8 and 17 are required by the compulsory attendance law to ensure that their children attend an approved education institution, unless legally excused. Students who have not graduated may not be asked to leave school merely because they have reached 17 years of age if they are fulfilling

their responsibilities as students. A student may not be excluded from the public schools or from extracurricular activities because of being married or pregnant.

2. **Student Responsibilities (Board Policy 235)**

- a. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students 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 his 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 education 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:
 - Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior. Students should conduct themselves in accordance with them. Students should assume that, until a rule is waived, altered or repealed in writing, it is in effect.
 - Volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
 - Dress and groom to meet fair standards of safety and health, and not to cause substantial disruption to the educational processes.
 - Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled therein.
 - Comply with Commonwealth and local laws.
 - Exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.
 - Make up work when absent from school.
 - Report accurately and do not use indecent or obscene language in student newspapers or publications.

3. **Discrimination (Board Policy 248)**

Consistent with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (43 P.S. 951-963), no student shall be denied access to a free and full public education on account of race, religion, sex, national origin, or handicap.

4. **Exclusions From School (Board Policies 218 & 233)**

- a. The School Board shall define and publish the types of offenses that would lead to exclusion from school. Exclusions affecting certain exceptional students shall be governed by 22 Pa. Code 13.62 and 341.91 (relating to right to education and disciplinary exclusions of certain handicapped students from special education placement).
- b. Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion.

- Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from 1 to 10 consecutive school days. Suspensions may be given by the principal or person in charge of the public school.
 - No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
 - The Parents and the Superintendent of the district shall be notified immediately in writing when the student is suspended.
- c. When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements set forth in #6 (c) (relating to hearings).
- d. Suspension may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10 school day period.
- Students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the School Board.
 - Expulsion is exclusion from school for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing under #6 (relating to hearings).
 - During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the School School Board in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his normal class except as set forth in subsection (d).
 - If it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others, and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days, if the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.
- e. Students who are less than 17 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled, and they must be provided an education.
1. The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, through tutorial or correspondence study or through another educational program approved by the district's Superintendent.
 2. If the parents or guardian are unable to provide for the required education, they must within 30 days submit to the school district written evidence so stating. The district then has the responsibility to make some provision for the student's education. If 30 days pass without the district receiving satisfactory evidence that the required education is being provided to the student, it must re-contact the parent and, pending the parents' or guardians' provision of such education, the district must make some provision for the student's education or proceed under paragraph (3) or do both.
 3. If the approved educational program is not complied with, the school district may take action in accordance with Chapter 63 of the Juvenile Act (42 Pa. C.S. 630-6308), to ensure that the child will receive a proper education. See #1 (b) (relating to free

education and attendance).

5. Exclusion From Classes-In-School Suspension

- a. No student may receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.
- b. Communication with the parents or guardian shall precede the in-school suspension action taken by the school.
- c. When the in-school suspension exceeds 10 consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the principal shall be offered to the student and the student's parent or guardian prior to the 11th school day in accordance with the procedures in #6 (relating to the hearings).
- d. The student's school district has the responsibility to make some provision for the student's education during the period of the in-school suspension.

6. Hearings (Board Policy 235)

- a. Education is a statutory right, and students must be afforded all appropriate elements of due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing, which is a fundamental element of due process.
- b. A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions. This hearing may be held before the School Board or a duly authorized committee of the School Board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the School Board. Where the hearing is conducted by a committee of the School Board or a hearing examiner, a majority vote of the entire school School Board is required to expel a student.

1. The following due process requirements are to be observed with regard to the formal hearing:

- a. Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardian by certified mail.
- b. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing must be given.
- c. The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
- d. The student has the right to be represented by counsel.
- e. The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
- f. The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross examined.
- g. The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
- h. A record must be kept of the hearing, either by a stenographer or by a tape recorder. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.

- i. The proceeding must be held with all reasonable speed.
- 2. Where the student disagrees with the results of the hearing, recourse is available in the appropriate court of the Commonwealth. If it is alleged that a constitutional issue is involved, the student may file a claim for relief in the appropriate Federal district court.
- 3. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended.
 - 1. The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents or guardian to meet with the principal to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.
 - 2. The following due process requirements are to be observed in regard to the informal hearing:
 - o Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardian and to the student.
 - o Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
 - o A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
 - o A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
 - o The district shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension.

4. Freedom of Expression (Board Policy 220)

- a. The right of public school students to freedom of speech was affirmed by the United States Supreme Court in *Tinker vs. Des Moines Community School District*, 393 U.S. 503 (1969).
- b. Students have the right to express themselves unless such expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens immediate harm to the welfare of the school or community, encourages unlawful activity, or interferes with another individual's rights.
- c. Students may use publications, handbills, announcements, assemblies, group meetings, buttons, armbands, and other means of common communication, provided that the use of public school communications facilities shall be in accordance with the regulations of the authority in charge of those facilities.
 - o Students have the responsibility to obey laws governing libel and obscenity and to be aware of the full meaning of their expression.
 - o Students have the responsibility to be aware of the feelings and opinions of others and to give others a fair opportunity to express their views.
- d. Identification of the individual student or at least one responsible person in a student group may be required on any posted or distributed materials.
- e. School officials may require students to submit for prior approval a copy of all materials to be displayed, posted or distributed on school property.
- f. Bulletin Boards shall conform to the following:

- School authorities may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards.
 - Bulletin board space shall be provided for the use of students and student organizations.
 - School officials may require that notices or other communications be officially dated before posting, and that such materials be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin board.
- g. School newspapers and publications shall conform to the following:
- Students have a right and are as free as editors of other newspapers to report the news and to editorialize within the provisions in paragraphs (4) and (5).
 - School officials shall supervise student newspapers published with school equipment, remove obscene or libellous material and edit other material that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities.
 - School officials may not censor or restrict material simply because it is critical of the school or its administration.
 - Prior approval procedures regarding copy for school newspapers shall identify the individual to whom the material is to be submitted and shall establish a limitation on the time required making a decision. If the prescribed time for approval elapses without a decision, the material shall be considered authorized for distribution.
 - Students who are not members of the newspaper staff shall have access to its pages. Written criteria for submission of material by non-staff members shall be developed and distributed to all students.
- h. The wearing of buttons, badges, or armbands shall be permitted as another form of expression within the restrictions listed in subsection (c).
- i. School officials may set forth the time and place of distribution of materials so that distribution would not materially or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.
- A proper time and place set for distribution is one which would give the students the opportunity to reach fellow students.
 - The place of such activity may be restricted to permit the normal flow of traffic within the school and at exterior doors.
- j. School officials should adopt and publish guidelines for student use of school facilities and equipment.
- k. The constitutional right of freedom of speech guarantees the freedom of public school students to publish materials on their own.
- The school has no responsibility to assist students or to provide facilities in the publishing of such materials.
 - The students themselves have sole responsibility for any statements published.

- Approval procedures must be followed prior to distribution or display of materials on school property. See Subsection (1).

5. Flag Salute and the Pledge of Allegiance

It is the responsibility of every citizen to show proper respect for his country and its flag.

- Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the flag on the basis of personal belief or religious convictions.
- Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interest of classmates who do want to participate.

6. Searches (Board Policy 226)

School authorities may search a student's property while on school property, and may seize any illegal materials. Such materials may be used as evidence against the student in disciplinary proceedings. Prior to a search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. However, where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that a backpack, etc. contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare and safety of students in the school, they may be searched without prior warning.

28. STUDENT TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES (Board Policies 218 & 810)

Boarding the Bus:

- Be at the bus stop ten minutes before pick-up time.
- Use a safe walking route to your stop and use proper procedures should you cross a road.
- Wait in a safe, orderly manner away from traffic.
- Respect the rights of property owners at your stop and along your walking route.
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before moving forward to board.
- Board in an orderly manner, without pushing or shoving, at your stop or at your school.
- Use the grab rail and watch your step.

On-Board Procedures:

- Take your seat promptly and remain seated for your ride to and from school.
- Sit in the seat-facing front; keep your feet, books and other articles out of the aisle.
- Do not refuse to share your seat with others.
- Always keep your hands, arms and head inside the bus.
- Do not throw objects in the bus or out of the bus windows.
- Your conversations should be quiet, and your conduct orderly so that the driver is never distracted from the important job of driving.

- Do not eat, drink, smoke or use tobacco products or vulgar language and gestures on the bus.
- Do not damage any part of the bus and report any damages you do see.
- The emergency door handle should be used only for emergencies.
- Never sit in the driver's seat or tamper with any control or equipment.
- Should your bus breakdown or have an accident, remain seated and follow your driver's instructions.

Unloading the Bus:

- Wait until the bus comes to a full stop before leaving your seat.
- Get off the bus only at your assigned stop.
- Watch your step and use the grab rail; move promptly away from the bus.
- If necessary to cross the road, do so at least 10 feet in front of the bus. Cross without undue delay, with the warning lights, but be sure you check traffic both ways.
- Go directly home by a safe route; play after you get home.
- Never throw any object at the bus or any other motor vehicle.

REMEMBER: (a) the same rules apply on the bus as they do in the classroom, (b) the driver has the authority to assign seats, (c) cooperate with the driver; be courteous and protect your riding privilege. **All students are subject to being video/audio taped on the school bus at any time.**

IMPORTANT NOTE: Often times students inform the office that they are to ride another bus to a location other than home. The following guidelines pertain to this situation: (a) the student must present a note to the principal's office requesting permission to ride another bus or get off at another stop. The note must be signed by the office and presented by the child to the bus driver when the child gets on the bus, (b) if a request to ride another bus causes the bus to exceed the passenger limit, the request will be denied. Parents will be informed of this situation.

SURVEILLANCE: The Penns Valley Area School District has taken proactive measures to improve student safety on our transportation system. The District made this decision based on feedback that we received on student and parent surveys. Our goal is to prevent misbehavior on our buses so that our drivers can focus their attention on providing safe transport to and from school. To that end, the District has installed video/audio surveillance systems in all district buses and vans. We want parents and students to be aware that these systems are capable of recording *both audio and video*. The recordings may be used by administrators to monitor and address student misbehavior, driver performance and general vehicle safety. Additional information regarding the school vehicle audio/video systems is available on the District's website, specifically Board Policy 810.3.

29. STUDENT SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY (Board Policy 248)

All students in the Penns Valley Area School District should enjoy a school environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment. No student should be subjected to unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical, from another student or from a district employee. Sexual harassment is hereby prohibited and will be treated like any other form of student misconduct.

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:

- unwelcome sexual advances; or
- requests for sexual favors; or
- other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

where

- submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly required; or
- submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis of school or work related decisions affecting the recipient; or
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the recipient's work or school performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment.

Sexual harassment can take a variety of forms ranging from subtle pressure to physical assault.

Although all facts and circumstances will be considered, some examples of sexual harassment may include:

- threats of sexual relations or sexual contact.
- continuous or repeated verbal abuses of sexual nature including graphic commentaries on the person's body.
- sexually degrading words to describe the person or propositions of a sexual nature.
- sexual remarks, jokes or gestures that may embarrass or offend others.

Any student who feels he/she has been a victim of sexual harassment should immediately report the alleged harassment to a teacher, nurse, counselor or administrator. Each complaint will be carefully investigated by the Superintendent or designee and all findings will be documented in writing. All information obtained will be held in strictest confidence and will be discussed only on a need-to-know basis to investigate the matter.

The investigation of the complaint is as follows:

1. interview of complainant;
2. interview of accused;
3. interview of any other persons with personal knowledge of the allegations of the complaint.

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

No student will be subject to any form of retaliation or discipline for pursuing a sexual harassment complaint, unless such student falsifies a charge of sexual harassment against another student or

employee. Any action taken as a result of the investigation will depend upon the facts of each case. Sanctions may range from a warning to termination for employees.

In addition, any student found to have violated this policy may be required to participate in educational activities related to sexual harassment as part of any discipline imposed. Determination of the appropriate disciplinary sanctions or educational requirements shall be based upon the circumstances of the individual case, considering the following factors among others: severity of the misconduct, pervasiveness or persistence of the misconduct; effect on the victim or victims; intent of the perpetrator.

If a student has any questions with regard to this policy, he/she should contact the principal or guidance counselor.

30. TECHNOLOGY AND THE INTERNET (Board Policy 815)

All of our elementary schools possess the technology to access the Internet. Our students have the opportunity to access a variety of information that relates to the curriculum. Each student will be given a network account password that gives them access to the Penns Valley network and the Internet. All Internet access from student-accessible devices in the district is filtered for objectionable content in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Student access to the Internet and Penns Valley network is potentially monitored for compliance with the School Board "Acceptable Use of Internet Policy" (#815). Any inappropriate use of the network or Internet will be subject to the consequences outlined in that policy.

If, during your child's attendance in the district, you choose to revoke his/her permission to use the Internet, please state your intention in writing and submit a letter to the school's principal.

Students in elementary grades 3-6 will be given the opportunity to have email access. In grades 3 & 4 parent permission will be required.

31. TERRORISTIC THREATS/ACTS (Board Policy 218.2)

The School Board recognizes the danger that terroristic threats and acts by students presents to the safety and welfare of district students, staff and community. The School Board acknowledges the need for an immediate and effective response to a situation involving such a threat or act.

Definitions:

•**Terroristic Threats** – shall mean a threat to commit violence communicated with the intent to terrorize another; to cause evacuation of a building; or to cause serious public inconvenience, in reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.

•**Terroristic Act** – shall mean an offense against property or involving danger to another person.

The School Board prohibits any district student from communicating terroristic threats or committing terroristic acts directed at any student, employee, School Board member, community member or school building.

The School Board directs the Superintendent to react promptly and appropriately to information and knowledge concerning a possible or actual terroristic threat or act. The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for developing administrative procedures to implement this policy. Staff members and students shall be responsible for informing the building administrator(s) regarding any information or knowledge relevant to a possible or actual terroristic threat or act. The building administrator(s) shall immediately inform the Superintendent after receiving a report of such a threat or act.

When an administrator has evidence that a student has made a terroristic threat or committed a terroristic act, the following guidelines shall be applied: (1) the building administrator(s) may immediately

suspend the student, (2) the building administrator(s) shall promptly report the incident to the Superintendent, (3) based on further investigation, the Superintendent may report the student to law enforcement officials, (4) the building administrator(s) shall inform any person directly referenced or affected by a terroristic threat, (5) the Superintendent may recommend expulsion of the student to the School Board.

If a student is expelled for making terroristic threats or committing terroristic acts, the School Board may require, prior to readmission, that the student provide competent and credible evidence that the student does not pose a risk of harm to others. In the case of exceptional students, the district will take all steps necessary to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and follow Board policy.

32. TOBACCO FREE SCHOOLS (Board Policy 222)

On December 4, 1996, Governor Ridge signed into law Act 145 of 1996. USE OF TOBACCO IN SCHOOLS: A pupil who possesses or uses tobacco in a school building, school bus or on school property owned by or under the control of a school district commits a summary offense and shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine of not more than \$50. This law became effective February 3, 1997.

Possession or use of any tobacco product will result in the following:

- **First Offense - Summary Offense:** Fine.
 - **Second Offense - Summary Offense:** Fine and one day in-school suspension.
 - **Third or More Offense - Summary Offense:** Fine and one day out-of-school suspension
- Refusal by a student to relinquish a tobacco product to a staff member will result in a one day out-of-school suspension, a summary offense and a fine. Any tobacco product may be confiscated at any time by a member of the faculty.

33. VOLUNTEERING IN THE SCHOOLS

The district welcomes volunteers in our schools. There are many instructional and non-instructional duties and activities available to parents, grandparents, and community members.

Anyone wishing to volunteer in the school district including being a chaperone on a field trip must have all necessary paperwork on file before doing so. Those who do not have such paperwork on file will not be able to serve as a volunteer. Requirements are Act 34 (Criminal Record check), Act 151 (Child Abuse Clearance) and TB test. Volunteer booklets are available at each elementary school. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer in any of our schools, please call Christin Martz (422-2006) for further information.

34. WEAPONS POLICY (Board Policy 218.1)

The School Board recognizes the importance of a safe school environment relative to the educational process. Possession of weapons in the school setting is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by law.

Weapon – the term shall include but not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, chains, nunchaku, brass or metal knuckles, firearm, shotgun, rifle, BB or pellet gun, replica of a weapon, chemical agent, explosive device, and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

Possessing - 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 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 coming to or from school.

The School Board prohibits students from possessing and bringing weapons and replicas of weapons into any school district building, onto school property, to any school sponsored activity, and onto any public vehicle providing transportation to school or a school sponsored activity.

The school district shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law. The Superintendent may recommend modification of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. In the case of an exceptional student, the Superintendent shall take all necessary steps to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The Superintendent or designee shall report the discovery of any weapon prohibited by this policy to the student's parents and to local law enforcement officials. The Superintendent or designee shall report all incidents relating to expulsion for possession of a weapon to the department of Education. The Superintendent or designee shall be responsible to develop a memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement officials that sets forth procedures to be followed when an incident occurs involving an act of violence or possession of a weapon by any person on school property. Acts of violence or possession of a weapon in violation of this policy shall be reported to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form at least twice each year.

Students, staff and parents shall be informed at least annually concerning this policy. An exception to this policy may be made by the Superintendent, who shall prescribe special conditions or procedures to be followed.

In accordance with the federal Gun-Free School Zone Act, possession or discharge of a firearm in, or within 1,000 feet of school grounds is prohibited. Violations shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency. (Weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel are permitted.)

Transfer Students – when the school district receives a student who transfers from a public or private school during an expulsion period for an offense involving a weapon, the district may assign that student to an alternative assignment or may provide alternative education, provided the assignment does not exceed the expulsion period.

35. WELLNESS POLICY (Board Policy 246)

Public Law 108-265, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, requires all Local Education Agencies participating in the National School Lunch Program to develop local wellness policies. One requirement of the law is that nutrition guidelines must be developed for all foods available on each school campus during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. The standards apply to all grades in all buildings. The entire Student Wellness policy is available on the district website.

36. WITHDRAWAL

The procedure to withdraw a student who is moving from the district is as follows:

- a. Make your child's teacher aware of your plans.
- b. Complete the student withdrawal form that is available at each school office.
- c. Contact Debra Stover, District Registrar Secretary, at 422-2000, ext. 2532 to let her know when and where you are moving to. She will notify the transportation office.
- d. Return all books and equipment belonging to the school.

37. CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY, TEXTBOOKS AND EQUIPMENT (Board Policy 224)

The Penns Valley Area schools belong to the taxpayers of the Penns Valley Area School District who have provided funds needed for construction and operation. Students are expected to take proper care of the schools and demonstrate responsibility for all school property.

The Penns Valley Area School Board has the responsibility to provide necessary textbooks and equipment to fulfill the needs of students. These materials are the property of the school district. Therefore, payment for loss, breakage, or damage beyond normal usage shall be the responsibility of the student or his/her parents/guardians. During the course of the school year if a textbook is lost or damaged, the teacher will make a replacement available to the student. However, this textbook will remain in the classroom until the student pays for the lost or damaged book. Money collected for lost or damaged books or equipment shall be deposited into the district's general fund.

Teachers are required to record textbook numbers when issuing texts and assume the responsibility for seeing that texts are returned by students.

38. ELECTRONIC DEVICES (Board Policy 237)

Cell phones, camera phones, laser pointers, music devices, and all other electronic devices are not to be used during instructional time without teacher or principal approval. In grades K-6 these items are to be stored and secured in their designated locker throughout the day.

39. PROGRAMS FOR ELIGIBLE OR PROTECTED HANDICAPPED STUDENTS:

In compliance with the state and federal law, notice is hereby given by the Penns Valley Area School District that it conducts ongoing identification activities as a part of its school program for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education and related services. 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 conditions:

1. Autism
2. Blindness or visual impairment
3. Deafness or hearing impairment
4. Deaf/Blind
5. Intellectual Disability
6. Multi-Disability
7. Other health impairments
8. Orthopedic impairment
9. Physical disability
10. Serious emotional disturbance
11. Specific learning disability
12. Speech and language impairment
13. Traumatic Brain Injury

If you believe that your school-age child may be in need of special education services and related programs, or your child (age 3 to school-age) may be in need of early intervention, screening, and evaluation processes designed to assess the needs of the child and his/her eligibility are available to you at no cost, upon written request. You may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not your child is enrolled in the District's public school program. Requests for evaluation and screening are to be made in writing. In compliance with state and federal law, the Penns Valley 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 which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum intent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the

child must be school age with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. These services and protections for “protected handicapped student” are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs. For further information on the rights of parents and children, provision of services, evaluation and screening (including purpose time and location), and rights to due process procedures, you may contact in writing the Director of Student Support Services or any building principal.

40. Education for Homeless Youth

In 1987, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, (subsequently renamed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) to aid homeless persons. The Act defines the term “homeless children and youths” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

A student may qualify for certain rights and protections under the federal McKinney-Vento Act if he/she is living in any of the following situations:

- a shelter
- a motel or campground due to the lack of an alternative adequate accommodation
- a car, park, or abandoned building
- doubled up with other people due to loss of housing or economic hardship

Eligible students have the right to:

- Receive a free, appropriate public education.
- Enroll in school immediately, even if lacking documents normally required for enrollment.
- Enroll in the local school or continue attending the school of origin.
- Receive transportation to and from the school of origin.
- Receive educational services comparable to those provided to other students.

Please contact Dr. Holly Sawyer, Homeless Liaison at 814-422-2000 ext. 2536 with questions or to find out what services and supports may be available.

The Penns Valley Learning Experience

Empowering our students every day to reach individual success

Vision: The Penns Valley Area School District is a rural and progressive community dedicated to the well-being of each student. We seek to create engaged, passionate, and motivated life-long learners who will become contributing members of society. We are committed to effective communication within a supportive and trusting environment that will create a shared understanding between all members of the school community.

I. Academic GOAL: Create an innovative *content-rich* school system with high levels of individualized *student engagement* and *critical thinking*.

- **Content-rich:** Comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
- **Student Engagement:** The best evidence for student engagement is what students are saying and doing as a consequence of what the teacher does, or has done, or has planned. The critical distinction between a classroom in which students are compliant and busy, and one in which they are engaged, is that in the latter students are developing their understanding through what they do. That is, they are engaged in discussion, debate, answering “what if?” questions, discovering patterns, and the like.
- **Critical Thinking:** Critical thinking is that mode of thinking — about any subject, content, or problem — in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skilfully analyzing, assessing, and reconstructing it.

II. School Culture GOAL: Create a *supportive* and *trusting environment* for all *stakeholders* so that everyone has a mindset of *lifelong learning* and *continuous growth*.

- **Supportive:** Stakeholders are treated in a kind and respectful way. Differing ideas, thoughts and perspectives are considered. The first step of being supportive is to approach the matter at hand from an attitude of helpfulness. Stakeholders are expected to listen, seek understanding and respond respectfully. Disagreement between individuals is acceptable with appropriate rationale.
- **Trusting Environment:** Belief that others have your best interest in mind. A belief that there is continuous growth and an understanding that mistakes are opportunities to improve.
- **Stakeholders:** All members of the school community and community at large.
- **Lifelong Learning and Continuous Growth:** Stakeholders are inspired and committed to continually seeking to understand new ideas and perspectives. Stakeholders maintain the tenacity to persevere through failure.

Questions or comments regarding information found in this handbook may be directed to the elementary principal at your child's school.

Danielle Yoder-
**Penns Valley Elementary/
Intermediate: 422-2002**

Kurt Nyquist-
**Centre Hall: 422-2004
Miles Township: 422-2006**