



***Lyter Elementary School***

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## **2025-2026 Faculty Handbook**



Lyter Elementary School  
900 Spruce Street  
Montoursville, PA 17754

570.368.2614

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## Administration

### Superintendent

Mr. Daniel Taormina

### Supervisor of Special Education

Mr. Timothy Hanner

### Business Manager

Mrs. Brandy Smith

### Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds

Mr. Joe Gnoffo

### Principal

Mr. Darrin Feerrar

### Secretary

Mrs. Nicole Dame

### Office Aide

Mrs. Connie Dawes

### Security

Mr. John Whipple

## Teachers

### School Counselor

Mrs. Vanessa Lorson

### Kindergarten

Miss Kailey Beltz

Mrs. Kelly Kimble

Mrs. Shannon Perrotta

Mr. Chad Sartori

### 1st Grade

Mrs. Jessica Breon

Mrs. Julia Edler

Mrs. Danielle Logue

Mrs. Amy Rinker

### 2nd Grade

Mr. Patrick Clancy

Mrs. Michelle Fortin

Mrs. Kelley Imbro

Mrs. Amy Tucker

### 3rd Grade

Mrs. Amber Baxter

Miss Sara Conrad

Mr. Jason Cott

Mrs. Susan Ravert

## Teachers (Cont.)

### 4th Grade

Mrs. Kaylene Francis

Mrs. Kristi Michael

Mrs. Karen Simms

Mrs. Nadine Turnbow

### Learning, Emotional, Gifted, and Speech Support

Mrs. Dawn Cott

Mrs. Briana Kish

Mrs. Hayley Potter

Mrs. Joy Snyder

### Related Arts and Academic Support

Mr. Stephen Alexander

Mrs. Stephanie Beadle

Mrs. Desiree Cavanaugh

Mrs. Karissa Jones

Mrs. Jenilee Kukuchka

Mrs. JoEllen Shearer

Mrs. Robyn Smelko

### Nurse

Mrs. Makenzie Seyler

## Support Staff

Mrs. Vicki Eberhart

Mrs. Barb Gallo

Mrs. Brenda Kropp

Mrs. Sue Mazzante

Mrs. Carol Myers

Mrs. Gina O'Neal

Mrs. Kelly Riggle

Mrs. Beth Schneider

Ms. Aliya Taylor

### Maintenance

Mr. Ryan Miller

### Custodians

Mrs. Nicole Garman

Mrs. Michelle Webb

### Door Security

Mr. Daniel Ayers

Mrs. Kathryn Stutzman

## Important Dates

### PSSA's:

Language Arts  
Mathematics

### Testing Window:

April 20th - 24th  
April 27th - May 1st

### Grades:

All 3rd and 4th graders  
All 3rd and 4th graders

### SCHOOL CALENDAR– (School is NOT in session on these days)

August 29 & September 1 ----- Labor Day

October 10 -----Act 80 Day (Teacher In Service)

October 13 -----Teacher In-Service Day

November 24 and 25 -----Parent Teacher Conferences/Teacher Inservice Day

November 26 – December 1 -----Thanksgiving Break

December 23 ----- 2 hour Early Dismissal

December 24 – January 2 -----Holiday Vacation

January 19 -----Martin Luther King Day

February 16-----Presidents Day

March 13 ----- Act 80 Day (Teacher In Service)

March 16 -----No School (or Snow Makeup Day)

April 2 ----- No School (K-4 ONLY) / Parent-Teacher Conferences

April 3 & 6 -----Spring Break

May 22 & 26 -----Memorial Day

June 4 AM (tentative)-----Last Day for Students & Staff / Graduation

## Trimester and Progress Report Dates

|                  | Trimester 1                | Trimester 2                | Trimester 1                 |
|------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Trimester Begins | Aug. 21, 2025              | Nov. 19, 2025              | March 5, 2026               |
| Interim Reports  | Oct. 3, 2025<br>(30 days)  | Jan. 20, 2026<br>(30 days) | April 22, 2026<br>(30 days) |
| Trimester Ends   | Nov. 18, 2025<br>(60 days) | March 4, 2026<br>(60 days) | June 4, 2026<br>(59 days)   |
| Report Cards     | Nov. 24, 2025              | March 12, 2026             | June 4, 2026                |

## Pennsylvania's Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators

### Section 1. Mission

The Professional Standards and Practices Commission is committed to providing leadership for improving the quality of education in this Commonwealth by establishing high standards for preparation, certification, practice and ethical conduct in the teaching profession.

### Section 2. Introduction

(a) Professional conduct defines interactions between the individual educator and students, the employing agencies and other professionals. Generally, the responsibility for professional conduct rests with the individual professional educator. However, in this Commonwealth, a Code of Professional Practice and Conduct (Code) for certificated educators is required by statute and violation of specified sections of the Code may constitute a basis for public or private reprimand. Violations of the Code may also be used as supporting evidence, though may not constitute an independent basis, for the suspension or revocation of a certificate. The Professional Standards and Practices Commission (PSPC) was charged by the act of December 12, 1973 (P. L. 397, No. 141) (24 P. S. § 12-1251 - 12-1268), known as the Teacher Certification Law, with adopting a Code by July 1, 1991. See 24 P. S. § 12-1255(a)(10).

(b) This chapter makes explicit the values of the education profession. When individuals become educators in this Commonwealth, they make a moral commitment to uphold these values.

### Section 3. Purpose

(a) Professional educators in this Commonwealth believe that the quality of their services directly influences the Nation and its citizens. Professional

educators recognize their obligation to provide services and to conduct themselves in a manner which places the highest esteem on human rights and dignity. Professional educators seek to ensure that every student receives the highest quality of service and that every professional maintains a high level of competence from entry through ongoing professional development. Professional educators are responsible for the development of sound educational policy and obligated to implement that policy and its programs to the public.

(b) Professional educators recognize their primary responsibility to the student and the development of the student's potential. Central to that development is the professional educator's valuing the worth and dignity of every person, student and colleague alike; the pursuit of truth; devotion to excellence; acquisition of knowledge; and democratic principles. To those ends, the educator engages in continuing professional development and keeps current with research and technology. Educators encourage and support the use of resources that best serve the interests and needs of students. Within the context of professional excellence, the educator and student together explore the challenge and the dignity of the human experience.

### Section 4. Practices

(a) Professional practices are behaviors and attitudes that are based on a set of values that the professional education community believes and accepts. These values are evidenced by the professional educator's conduct toward students and colleagues, and the educator's employer and community. When teacher candidates become professional educators in this Commonwealth, they are expected to abide by this section.

(b) Professional educators are expected to abide by

the following:

- (1) Professional educators shall abide by the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. § § 1-101 - 27-2702), other school laws of the Commonwealth, sections 1201(a)(1), (2) and (4) and (b)(1), (2) and (4) of the Public Employee Relations Act (43 P. S. § § 1101.1201(a)(1), (2) and (4) and (b)(1), (2) and (4)) and this chapter.
- (2) Professional educators shall be prepared, and legally certified, in their areas of assignment. Educators may not be assigned or willingly accept assignments they are not certified to fulfill. Educators may be assigned to or accept assignments outside their certification area on a temporary, short-term, emergency basis. Examples: a teacher certified in English filling in a class period for a physical education teacher who has that day become ill; a substitute teacher certified in elementary education employed as a librarian for several days until the district can locate and employ a permanent substitute teacher certified in library science.
- (3) Professional educators shall maintain high levels of competence throughout their careers.
- (4) Professional educators shall exhibit consistent and equitable treatment of students, fellow educators and parents. They shall respect the civil rights of all and not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, culture, religion, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, age, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, disabling condition or vocational interest. This list of bases or discrimination is not all-inclusive.
- (5) Professional educators shall accept the value of diversity in educational practice. Diversity requires educators to have a range of methodologies and to request the necessary tools for effective teaching and learning.
- (6) Professional educators shall impart to their students' principles of good citizenship and societal responsibility.
- (7) Professional educators shall exhibit acceptable and professional language and communication skills. Their verbal and written communications with parents, students and staff shall reflect sensitivity to the fundamental human rights of dignity, privacy and respect.
- (8) Professional educators shall be open-minded, knowledgeable and use appropriate judgment and communication skills when responding to an issue within the educational environment.
- (9) Professional educators shall keep in confidence information obtained in confidence in the course of professional service unless required to be disclosed by law or by clear and compelling professional necessity as determined by the professional educator.
- (10) Professional educators shall exert reasonable

effort to protect the student from conditions which interfere with learning or are harmful to the student's health and safety.

### **Section 5. Conduct**

Individual professional conduct reflects upon the practices, values, integrity and reputation of the profession. Violation of § § 235.6-235.11 may constitute an independent basis for private or public reprimand, and may be used as supporting evidence in cases of certification suspension and revocation.

### **Section 6. Legal obligations**

- (a) The professional educator may not engage in conduct prohibited by the act of December 12, 1973 (P. L. 397, No. 141) (24 P. S. § § 12-1251-12-1268), known as the Teacher Certification Law.
- (b) The professional educator may not engage in conduct prohibited by:
  - (1) The Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. § § 1-101-27-2702) and other laws relating to the schools or the education of children.
  - (2) The applicable laws of the Commonwealth establishing ethics of public officials and public employees, including the act of October 4, 1978 (P. L. 883, No. 170) (65 P. S. § § 401-413), known as the Public Official and Employee Ethics Law.
- (c) Violation of subsection (b) shall have been found to exist by an agency of proper jurisdiction to be considered an independent basis for discipline.

### **Section 7. Certification**

The professional educator may not:

- (1) Accept employment, when not properly certificated, in a position for which certification is required.
- (2) Assist entry into or continuance in the education profession of an unqualified person.
- (3) Employ, or recommend for employment, a person who is not certificated appropriately for the position.

### **Section 8. Civil Rights**

The professional educator may not:

- (1) Discriminate on the basis of race, National or ethnic origin, culture, religion, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, age, political beliefs, socioeconomic status; disabling condition or vocational interest against a student or fellow professional. This list of bases of discrimination is not all-inclusive. This discrimination shall be found to exist by an agency of proper jurisdiction to be considered an independent basis for discipline.
- (2) Interfere with a students or colleague's exercise of political and civil rights and responsibilities.

### **Section 9. Improper personal or financial gain**

- (1) Accept gratuities, gifts or favors that might impair or appear to impair professional judgment.
- (2) Exploit a professional relationship for personal gain or advantage.

#### **Section 10. Relationships with students**

The professional educator may not:

- (1) Knowingly and intentionally distort or misrepresent evaluations of students.
- (2) Knowingly and intentionally misrepresent subject matter or curriculum.
- (3) Sexually harass or engage in sexual relationships with students.
- (4) Knowingly and intentionally withhold evidence from the proper authorities about violations of the

legal obligations as defined within this section.

#### **Section 11. Professional relationships**

The professional educator may not:

- (1) Knowingly and intentionally deny or impede a colleague in the exercise or enjoyment of a professional right or privilege in being an educator.

### **GENERAL DUTIES & EXPECTATIONS–**

1. Teachers must be in their assigned room or at their morning assignment by 7:50 or at a time as assigned by the building administrators. Teachers may leave at either 3:22 or at a time as assigned by the building administrators. All staff are also responsible for monitoring the hallway directly outside their rooms.
2. All books must be stamped with the school stamp and numbered in ink before distribution. Maintain copies of an assigned book list (include student's name and the book's condition and number). It is extremely important to note and record the condition of each book before issuing. Please follow this procedure for all other school-owned materials and equipment. At the end of the year all book losses and/or damage must be reported to the office. Teachers are not to collect fines of any kind.
3. Staff members are not to use vulgarity.
4. Staff are not to allow students to address them by their first name or by a nickname.
5. All staff are to ensure that exterior doors remain closed at all times (do not prop exterior doors open).
6. Staff are to familiarize themselves with all school policies, particularly those in this handbook.
7. When teachers/staff take a group to assemblies, special meetings, trips, etc., they are to escort their groups and remain with them and supervise them. Do not leave students unsupervised..
8. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to state and enforce expectations of student behavior within the classroom. All staff are required to enforce the school wide rules.
9. Perform other duties as may be assigned by the building and district administration.
10. Faculty meetings will be planned for the following dates/times: Aug 18 (time TBA); Oct 10 (8:30 AM); Nov. 24 (8:15 AM); Jan. 6 (3:25 PM); Feb 2 (3:25 PM); Mar 13 (8:30 AM); April 2 (8:30 AM); May 4 (3:25 PM); June 4 (1:00 PM). If any adjustments to the scheduled meeting dates or times are necessary, staff will be provided timely notice. All professional staff members are expected to attend each faculty meeting unless specifically excused by the responsible administrator.

### **Morning Attendance Procedures**

At the 8:10 A.M. bell, all students will report to their assigned homerooms. All students must be in their assigned homerooms by 8:20 A.M. Teachers will take attendance and record the attendance in the Student Management System (C.S.I.U.). Tardy students will receive a tardy slip from the office.

### **Progress Reports, Interim Progress Reports & Grading Policies**

A progress report (interim) shall be issued to each student who is struggling to meet grade level standards either via the US mail or electronically via email to the parent/guardian from the classroom teacher. A report card will be issued to each student at the end of each trimester. The progress report should be a medium through which the teacher and the parents work with the student to improve his/her educational progress. Teachers and parents are also

encouraged to arrange conferences to discuss alternatives for helping students attain satisfactory progress whenever necessary. Communication with parents is critical and essential.

The grading system will be based on the following criteria:

1. Student achievement will be reported using a combination of number grades and standards-based grading, depending on the subject and grade level.
2. The report card and the interim progress report have optional comments on each one to reflect effort and conduct.
3. Elementary teachers will grade students utilizing the district's approved grading system in accordance with district policies. Teachers will maintain and document regular communication with parents regarding the academic and behavioral progress of the students. In order to maintain consistency in the grading process, the criteria for issuing of progress reports should be as follows.
4. Teachers will communicate their grading policy to parents/guardians and explain thoroughly.
5. **As a general rule, homework will not exceed 15% of the trimester grade for each subject area.**
6. An interim progress report will be issued by teachers by the mid-point of each trimester to those students meeting one or all of the following criteria: ***a failing average of 69 or below in a subject; a 70-74 average (in danger of failing) or a significant drop in grade (ten points or more) in any subject since the last report card.*** Interim progress reports may also be issued for satisfactory, improved and exemplary performance.
7. Behavior is not to be a part of the grade.
8. No grade below a 60 will appear on a report card. Teachers will use the comment section to provide necessary context to parents/guardians regarding a student's progress and performance.
9. Student grades for all subjects shall be updated on a weekly basis. These updates should accurately reflect students' ongoing progress, understanding, and performance in alignment with curriculum standards. Teachers are responsible for providing prompt and constructive feedback on key learning activities, including assessments, projects, and other significant assignments. Feedback should guide students in understanding their strengths and areas for improvement.
10. The progress report has optional comments to reflect effort and conduct

### Retention/Promotion Guidelines

Criteria which will be considered in the retention of elementary students:

1. Teacher recommendation
2. Parental input
3. Maturation level of student
4. Chronological age of student
5. Level of progress in language arts and math grade level standards
6. Standardized and district assessments

Names of students who are under consideration for possible retention (a.k.a. "the watchlist") are due to the building administrator no later than January 31. The parents of any elementary child, who is having difficulty and who is a potential candidate for retention, shall be notified by the district in writing by March 1. The parents shall be encouraged to arrange a telephone or personal conference with the child's teacher to discuss concerns prior to making a final determination regarding a retention within the current grade level

## Attendance Records

1. On each school day of the year, attendance will be taken by the homeroom teacher according to the guidelines provided at the beginning of each school year. Guidelines may be changed if the need exists.
2. Students will be required to present an excuse to the office on the day they return to school after the absence. Teachers are to remind students to bring in excuses.
3. Accurate attendance reporting is crucial. Also, it is required that attendance be taken at the start of each special area class period.

## Staff Absence Procedures: Tyler Tech Staff Portal

If a staff member (professional or support staff) is unable to report to work, he or she is to submit an absence request via the Absence Management link on the district website under the Staff tab as per district guidelines. The Absence Management link is where a staff member will submit a request for a substitute (if needed).

Staff members must submit an absence request via the Absence Management link when requesting personal, sick, emergency, bereavement, days without pay and/or approved conference days. **Submitting a paper form for absence requests is no longer required.**

**The district may request a written physician's statement from employees after three (3) consecutive days of absence.**

## Substitute Teacher Folders

All teachers must keep an **updated** folder on their desk for substitute teachers. Each folder will contain the following:

1. Location or copy of the Student and Teacher Handbooks.
2. Location or copy of bus, car rider, and walker students assignments.
3. Location or copy of Class Rosters and Seating Charts (Keep these current.)
4. Location or copy of Teacher's Schedule.
5. Emergency procedures and any pertinent student medical information.
6. Location or copy of Lesson plans for the week.
7. Location or copy of District Emergency Plan and Procedures.

## Lunch Procedures

Dismiss your class as a group for recess and lunch. Your supervisory responsibility ends in the classroom when **all** children are under the supervision of the staff on recess or lunch coverage.

## Fire Drill Procedures

In the event of a fire drill, teachers should make sure all *doors are closed and utilities are turned off*. Students should observe the following rules.

1. Do not run -- walk.
2. Be orderly - no talking or horseplay is permitted.
3. Proceed to the exit designated.
4. Follow the instructions of the staff carefully.
5. Stay with your group.
6. Everyone must leave the building during a fire drill



## Fire Drill & Emergency Evacuation

**Emergency Procedures (always refer to district Emergency Procedures Manual and A.L.I.C.E. Training)**

| <u>Room</u>          | <u>Nearest Exit</u>                                                    |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Main Office/Conf.Rm. | front door of building (Exit #1)                                       |
| A9                   | Exit through exterior door in classroom or Exit #13                    |
| A8                   | Turn right and use Exit #13                                            |
| A7                   | Straight to Exit #13                                                   |
| A6                   | Turn right and use Exit #13                                            |
| A5                   | Turn left and use Exit #13                                             |
| A4                   | Turn left and use Exit #1                                              |
| A3                   | Turn left and use Exit #12                                             |
| A2                   | Turn left and use Exit #1                                              |
| A1                   | Turn right and use Exit #1                                             |
| B2                   | Turn right and use Exit #1                                             |
| B4                   | Straight to Exit #1                                                    |
| Nurse                | Turn right and use Exit #1                                             |
| Library & Conf Room  | Exit through exterior door in classroom (#16) or Exit #1               |
| Library Classroom    | Exit through exterior door in classroom (#16) or Exit #1               |
| B8                   | Turn left and use Exit #1                                              |
| B9                   | Turn right and use Exit #1                                             |
| B10                  | Turn left and use Exit #1                                              |
| B11                  | Turn right and use Exit #1                                             |
| B13                  | Turn left and use Exit #11                                             |
| B14                  | Turn right and use Exit #11                                            |
| B15                  | Straight to Exit #11                                                   |
| B16                  | Turn right and use Exit #11                                            |
| B17                  | Turn right and use Exit #11                                            |
| B18                  | Turn left and use Exit #11                                             |
| B19                  | Turn right and use Exit #11                                            |
| B20                  | Turn right and use Exit #2                                             |
| C1                   | Turn right and use Exit #2                                             |
| C2                   | Turn left and use Exit #2                                              |
| C3                   | Turn right and use Exit #2                                             |
| C5                   | Turn right and use Exit #2                                             |
| C7                   | Turn right and use Exit #2                                             |
| C8                   | Turn right and use Exit #3                                             |
| C6                   | Exit through exterior door in classroom (#10) or turn right to Exit #3 |
| Security Office      | Turn right and use Exit #3                                             |
| Gym Office           | Turn right and use Exit #3                                             |
| Gym                  | Exit through exterior door in classroom (#9) or Exit #3                |
| Stage Area           | Exit through exterior door in gym (#9) or Exit #3                      |
| C9                   | Turn left and use Exit #3                                              |
| C11                  | Turn right and use Exit #3                                             |
| C13                  | Turn left and use Exit #4                                              |
| C15                  | Turn left and use Exit #4                                              |
| Kitchen Office       | Turn right and use Exit #4                                             |

### Assemblies

1. Teachers and students will wait for an announcement to move to the assigned performance area.
2. Classroom teachers will lead their group to the assembly and help seat them. Teachers/staff are to remain for the entire duration of the assembly and monitor their students.

## School Dress

The Montoursville Area School District realizes that proper student dress and grooming habits are best learned at home under the guidance and supervision of parents; therefore, the school does not wish to dictate what clothes students must wear. However, the school must provide the best possible educational climate for the understanding and development of good grooming habits. It is with this in mind that the following regulations have been adopted:

### NOT ACCEPTABLE

1. Nothing covering the head (hats, hoods, etc.) will be worn inside the building, unless worn for religious, medical, or safety purposes, as this is not demonstrating proper manners.
2. All shirts/blouses or other “tops” must cover the top of the shoulder. Sleeveless shirts WILL be permitted with a minimum of 3 inches of coverage of the shoulder on each side. Muscle shirts, tank tops, spaghetti straps, racerback, and open back shirts etc. will not be permitted.
3. Undergarments will be properly covered by appropriate clothing and not visible.
4. Clothing that inappropriately exposes body area, as with cropped tops that expose midriffs, may not be worn. Midriffs must be covered on all sides. Shirts should be long enough that the midriff is not exposed when raising your hand or stretching. No exposure of buttocks or high-cut thigh.
5. All shorts, skirts, and dresses must fall to the mid-thigh or longer.
6. Clothing containing holes, cuts, tears, or rips that expose undergarments or skin above mid-thigh are not permitted.
7. Bike shorts (ex. Spandex) or ripped shorts with holes exposing skin are not permitted.
8. Long shirts/sweatshirts that completely cover shorts/skirts are not permitted.
9. Students wearing transparent blouses MUST wear proper garments underneath. Blouses cut extremely low in front or in back are not permitted.
10. Clothing, buttons, or other insignia are inappropriate if they are intended to mock, ridicule, or otherwise deliberately demean or provoke others because of race, religion, national origin, or individual views.
11. Any clothing that presents a safety hazard or interferes with the educational process may not be worn.
12. Clothing with words or pictures that contain sexual reference, either explicit or implied, may not be worn.
13. Regulations prohibit student dress and grooming practices that promote or advertise the use of drugs including alcohol, gang paraphernalia, violence or discrimination.
14. Clothing containing vulgar or obscene messages may not be worn.
15. Chains (i.e. wallet chains), studs, or other exposed metal which can cause personal injury or damage to school property are not permitted.
16. Bandanas are not permitted to be worn or exposed.
17. Pajamas or sleepwear, unless worn for Spirit Week or a pajama day, are prohibited.

As a matter of general policy, the Montoursville Area School District expects that all students at all grade levels are to be neat and clean in appearance and dress when in attendance at school. The Montoursville Area School Board believes the responsibility for seeing that students meet these standards of dress ultimately rests with the parents or guardians. The principal, assistant principal, and teachers of each building are responsible for enforcing the regulations governing the proper dress and grooming of the students in their school. The administration holds the right to determine whether clothing is inappropriate for school. Students who are in violation of the school dress policy will be asked to exchange inappropriate clothing for more suitable attire. Failure to comply will result in further disciplinary action.

## Dress and Grooming/Professional Employees (Board Policy 425)

### Purpose

Professional employees set an example for their students to follow in dress and grooming and should present an image of dignity and encourage respect for authority. These factors act in a positive manner towards the maintenance of school and classroom discipline.

### **Authority**

The Board has the authority to specify reasonable dress and grooming guidelines for staff, within law, that will prevent an adverse impact on the educational program.

### **Guidelines**

When assigned to district duties professional staff members shall be physically clean, neat, well-groomed, and dressed in a manner reflecting professional assignment.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

If an employee feels that an exception to this policy would enable him/her to carry out assigned duties more effectively, a request should be made to the principal.

### **Dress Down Days:**

Casual Dress Days are permitted for staff every Wednesday and Friday school is in session as well as other dates throughout the course of the year as planned for a specific fundraiser. Jeans are permitted to be worn on approved casual dress days.

## **Building SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Maintaining a secure school environment is a collective responsibility. To ensure the safety of all students and staff, the following procedures must be strictly followed:

- All outside doors must remain closed and locked at all times during the school day.
- All visitors must register in the school's electronic Visitor Management System upon arrival in the front lobby.
- Visitors must present a government-issued photo ID (e.g., driver's license) to receive a visitor's pass, which must be worn while inside the building.
- If a staff member observes a stranger in the hallway without a visitor's pass, they should notify the office immediately.
- Classroom doors are recommended to remain locked during instructional time.
- No exterior entrance door should be propped open at any time.

### **Emergency Procedures Manual**

All staff are expected to be familiar with the policies and procedures outlined in the Emergency Procedures Manual. This document provides critical guidance on responding effectively to a variety of emergency situations. Regular review of these protocols is essential to ensure preparedness and maintain a safe learning environment. Staff should refer to the manual whenever necessary and reach out to building administrators with any questions or clarifications.

### **Reporting Safety Concerns**

To anonymously report suspicious or illegal activities on district property or at district events, contact School Resource Officer Marcus Watkins at (570) 368-3554. If an immediate response is required, call 911. All reports will remain confidential.

Additionally, the Montoursville Area School District employs armed security personnel to monitor each school campus. Any questions or concerns regarding safety and security should be directed to the building administrators. Each school building has a Building Threat Assessment Team that convenes throughout the year as needed, and the District Threat Assessment Team meets quarterly.

## VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

The Montoursville Area School District uses an electronic video surveillance system in its schools. This system covers the interior and exterior of the district's buildings and grounds to protect district property and ensure the safety of students, staff, community, and visitors. District surveillance cameras will only be utilized in public areas where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy and in areas deemed to be at risk for either vandalism or student misconduct. Any activities detected through use of video surveillance cameras that present a violation of school rules, breach of security, or possible criminal activity will be reported immediately to the appropriate authority and appropriate disciplinary action will be administered and/or criminal charges filed consistent with Board policy and procedures. Appropriate signage will be posted at entrances to the school campus and/or at major entrances into school buildings notifying students, staff and the general public of the District's use of surveillance cameras

## Email/Cell Phones

All staff should check their email prior to the start of the instructional day and before leaving school each day. Email should not be used during instructional time for personal business. Personal cell phones, smart phones, tablets, iPad, and Chromebooks unless being used for instructional purposes. Any email that comes through the district email server is the property of the school district, may be reviewed by the district, and can be requested for review by the public under the Right to Know Law. Please be very careful of what you say when using District Email, since it is subject to the Right to Know Law.

## Teacher Web Pages/Google Classroom

Maintaining accurate and current information on webpages and Google Classroom is essential for student and family access. Teachers should ensure updates are made regularly, with prompt adjustments to assignments or other important details to uphold clarity and consistency.

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The Montoursville Area School Board has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules to govern the conduct of students in its schools. This Code of Conduct serves as a guideline and not the final authority on matters of discipline. The administration has the authority in implementing the Student Code of Conduct. This authority is granted by Section 1317 of the School Code of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Discipline should, as a minimum, have three objectives in mind:

1. To provide the optimum environment in which to deliver instructional services.
2. To respond to disruptive students with corrective measures in a firm and consistent manner while attempting to provide a continuing education for all students.
3. To remove, as a last resort, the disruptive student from the school in order that the majority may pursue their educational goals in a peaceful environment.

The breach of discipline within the schools will usually fall into two major classes of offenses.

1. Violation of the rules of conduct of the school. (See Levels I and II)
2. Violation of rules of conduct of the school because they are a violation of state or federal law (a crime has been committed). (See Level III)

Student discipline referrals are maintained by the administration. Response to these referrals is at the discretion of the administration and consideration of the Code of Conduct.

The following process should be used for most Level I offenses and other level offenses at the discretion of the administration:

- |                          |                                                                  |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> offense: | Conference with student(s) regarding referral.                   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense: | Conference with student and parent contact regarding referral.   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> offense: | Conference with student, parent contact and disciplinary action. |

## 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 re-authorized in December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).<sup>1</sup> 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 a 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. In addition, 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:

The McKinney-Vento Act defines *homeless children* as “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.”

This definition includes (but is not limited to) children who are:

- sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing (e.g. doubled-up)
- living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds
- living in emergency or transitional shelters
- sleeping in places unfit for human habitation (e.g. park benches)
- living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, etc.

**Unaccompanied Youth** - Children or youth who meets the definition of homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

### CORE PROVISIONS:

#### Designated District Liaison:

Every local education agency (LEA) must designate a liaison for students experiencing homelessness whose key duties include:

- Ensuring that homeless children and youth are identified and enrolled in school, and have a full and equal opportunity to succeed in school.
  - ✓ Assisting with enrollment, arranging for transportation and free meals, monitoring school attendance.
  - ✓ Providing school supplies and other related items so they can fully participate.
  - ✓ Assist with accessing support services, such as, tutoring, Special Education, English Language Learning, and other resources.
  - ✓ Assist students so they can participate in school activities, field trips, sports, etc.
- Ensuring that homeless children, youth, and families receive referrals to health, dental, mental health, housing, substance abuse, and other appropriate community services.
- Ensuring that unaccompanied homeless youth are informed, and receive verification, of their status as independent students for college financial aid.

**STUDENT RIGHTS:****School Stability:**

-Children and youth experiencing homelessness can remain in their school of origin for the duration of homelessness and until the end of an academic year in which they obtain permanent housing, if it is in their best interest.

-LEAs must make best interest determinations that presume that staying in the school of origin is in the best interest of the child or youth; consider specific student-centered factors; prioritize the wishes of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth; and include a written explanation and right to appeal if the LEA determines that school stability is not in the best interest of the child or youth.

-Transportation to the school of origin is required, including until the end of the academic year when a student obtains permanent housing.

**School Enrollment and Full Participation:**

-Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to be enrolled in school of residence immediately, even if they lack documents normally required at time of enrollment or have missed application or enrollment deadlines.

-LEAs must develop, review, and revise policies to remove barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of homeless students in school, including barriers due to fees, fines, and absences. This includes procedures to ensure that homeless children and youth do not face barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities.

-If a dispute arises over eligibility, school selection or enrollment, the child or youth must be immediately enrolled in the school in which the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth seeks enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.

**Additional Rights:**

-Free lunch and breakfast (if applicable).

-Free school supplies and uniforms (if applicable).

-Educational resources and support services to help children and youth experiencing homelessness reach academic success.

The district's homeless liaison is Mr. Daniel Taormina, Superintendent. He can be reached at the following email address: [dtaormina@montoursville.k12.pa.us](mailto:dtaormina@montoursville.k12.pa.us) and phone number: 570-368-2491.

**CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES LAW (Policy 806)**

The PA Child Protective Services Act was signed into law in 1975 and revised in 2015. Twenty-three pieces of legislation were recently enacted, changing how Pennsylvania responds to child abuse. These changes significantly impacted reporting, investigation, assessment, prosecution and judicial handling of child abuse and neglect cases.

The new laws expanded and further defined mandatory reporters and the reporting process, increase penalties for those mandated to report suspected child abuse who fail to do so, and provide protections from employment discrimination for filing a good faith report of child abuse. It was enacted to protect children from abuse, allow the opportunity for healthy growth and development and whenever possible, preserve and stabilize the family.

**Child Abuse** shall mean intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following:

1. Any recent act or failure to act which causes or creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury or death to a child.
2. Any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act which causes or substantially contributes to serious mental injury to a child.

3. Any act or failure to act which causes or creates the likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child.
4. Any recent act, failure to act, or series of such acts or failures to act which places a child at imminent risk
5. Any act causing serious physical neglect constituting the following:
  - (1) Repeated, prolonged or egregious failure to supervise a child in a manner that is appropriate considering the child's developmental age and abilities.
  - (2) The failure to provide a child with adequate essentials of life, including food, shelter or medical care.
6. Engaging in Munchausen by proxy behavior.

No child shall be deemed to be physically or mentally abused based on injuries that result solely from environmental factors that are beyond the control of the parent or person responsible for the child's welfare, such as inadequate housing, furnishings, income, clothing, and medical care.

*Must School Employees Report? Yes!* Mandated reporters, by law must report suspected child abuse when they come into contact with children in the course of their employment. Teachers must report when they have reason to suspect, on the basis of medical, professional, or other training and experience, that a child coming before them in their professional or official capacity is an abused child.

**Mandated Reporter** – include but are not limited to:

1. A person licensed or certified to practice in any health-related field under the jurisdiction of the Department of State.
2. A school employee.
3. An employee of a child-care service who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
4. An individual paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child.
5. An individual supervised or managed by a person who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
6. An independent contractor.

*What Should A School Employee Do When They Suspect A Child Has Been Abused?*

Suspected child abuse procedure is as follows:

Employees who suspect child abuse shall immediately make a report to ChildLine via on the [Child Welfare Portal](#). It is suggested that staff acquire a login from this reporting site at their convenience so that a login exists in the case a report needs to be made. With online reporting, a written report on forms provided by the Department of Public Welfare (Report of Suspected Child Abuse [CY-47]) is not necessary. After making the report, the employee must notify the Superintendent and Principal or Assistant Principal via email.

Alternatively, oral reports made by telephone are also permissible. Oral reports of suspected child abuse shall immediately be made by telephone to ChildLine. Oral reports may also be made to the county children and youth agency in the county where the suspected child abuse occurred. After making an oral report, the employee must notify the Superintendent and Principal or Assistant Principal.

1. There is no requirement to notify parents. Montoursville Area School District is NOT notifying parents.
2. Immunity: A school employee making a report in good faith under the Act is given immunity from any civil or criminal liability that might otherwise arise out of their report. There is a presumption of good faith of their report.

Statewide toll-free number (Department of Public Welfare) 24 hours a day [1-800-932-0313](#).



## Acceptable Use of Digital Technologies

Code 815

Status Active

Legal 1. 47 U.S.C. 254

2. 20 U.S.C. 6777

3. 47 CFR 54.520

17 U.S.C. 101 et seq, 18 Pa. C.S.A. 5903, 18 Pa. C.S.A. 6312, 18 U.S.C. 2256, 24 P.S. 1303.1-A, 24 P.S. 4601 et seq, 24 P.S. 4604, Pol. 103, Pol. 104, Pol. 218, Pol. 218.2, Pol. 218.3, Pol. 220, Pol. 233, Pol. 237, Pol. 248, Pol. 317, Pol. 348, Pol. 417, Pol. 448, Pol. 517, Pol. 548, Pol. 814

Adopted August 10, 2004

Last Revised August 11, 2020

### Purpose

The Board recognizes the need to establish rules and regulations for the use by students, staff and other authorized users of district-owned or issued technology resources, consistent with the educational and operation goals of the district.

### Definitions

For purposes of this policy and the accompanying administrative guideline, district-owned or issued technology resources (district technology resources) shall mean:

1. All networks, servers and telecommunications systems maintained or operated by the district;
2. All district telephone, cellular phone, voicemail, electronic mail, intercom, and Internet resources;
3. All district-owned or issue hardware devices such as computers, laptops, tablets, telephones, cellular phones, fax machines, printers, copiers, scanners, etc.;
4. All web-based and cloud-based storage; and
5. Web and cloud-based applications provided by the district through a third party.

### Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, consistent with the general guidelines listed below, governing the acceptable use of district technology resources.

## Guidelines

The use of district technology resources shall at all times be in accordance with applicable law and other Board policies and administrative guidelines.

The use of district technology resources is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct or violation of the terms outlined in this Board policy or the accompanying Administrative Guideline.

District technology resources shall be used primarily for school, district employment, or approved educational-related activities only. Limited incidental personal use is permitted, so long as such use otherwise complies with this policy and the accompanying administrative guideline, and further provided that such limited incidental personal use does not interfere with and is not disruptive to district or school

operations or another user's use of district technology resources.

The district reserves the right to monitor, track, and document use of any activity conducted on, over, and through district technology resources to the extent permitted by law.

The district further reserves the right to prevent unauthorized, inappropriate or illegal use of district technology resources, and to administer appropriate discipline to users who violate this policy or the accompanying administrative guideline.

Discipline could include, but is not limited to, usage restrictions, loss of access privileges, restitution, referral to law enforcement, and/or any applicable consequence outlined in a student handbook, collective bargaining agreement, or Board policy/administrative guidelines, as appropriate under the circumstances.

Users of district technology resources shall have no expectation that their activity on or files or communications stored on or sent through such resources will be private; this includes, but is not limited to, anything that is created, stored, sent, deleted, received or displayed on, over or through district technology resources.

The district has the ability to collect, track and store data, such as IP addresses which identify technology devices using and communicating over and through the district's network and other district technology resources. The district reserves the right to utilize such data for troubleshooting and lawful investigative purposes.

Procedures regarding the individualized search of district technology resources when the district has reasonable suspicion that a user of district technology resources has violated the terms of this Board policy or the accompanying administrative guideline shall be included in the accompanying administrative guideline.

The availability of information on district technology resources does not imply endorsement by the district of such content, nor does the district guarantee the accuracy of such content.

The district shall not be responsible for any information lost, damaged or unavailable while using district technology resources.

The district will fully cooperate with local, state and federal officials in any investigation concerning or related to alleged illegal activities of any individuals misusing district technology resources.

Users of district technology resources shall immediately report any violations of this policy or the accompanying administrative guideline to their building principal, immediate supervisor, or the Supervisor of Information Technology.

Users of district technology resources may be required, as a condition of being given access to such resources, to sign a user agreement acknowledging and agreeing to be bound by this policy and the accompanying administrative guideline.