

State College Area School District



2023-2024 Student/Family Handbook

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This handbook is intended for general informational purposes and is not intended to address all situations that may arise, and are subject to interpretation, review and change by the District at any time without notice.

- **Applicable Board approved policies to support referenced information in this handbook can be found at [Board Policies](#) (select “Policies” from the banner at the top of the page).**
- **Information for the Office of Equity & Inclusion can be found at [Equity and Inclusion](#).**
- **References to guardian relationships throughout this document refer to, and only apply to, legal guardianship.**
- **Information and resources specific to the Student Services can be found at [SCASD Student Services](#).**

WELCOME

FOREWORD

Welcome to the new school year! If you are a new student, it's great to have you with us. If you are returning, we're glad to have you back.

This handbook is for you. It contains the policies and procedures for which you are responsible during your years at State College Area School District. It was prepared with your needs and the needs of all members of the school community in mind. The procedures for good school citizenship provided in this handbook are mostly matters of courtesy and common sense. They are meant for your benefit and that of your fellow students.

Your conduct at all times should reflect respect for the property, rights and privileges of others. In return, you may expect this respect from others. You are responsible to the school authorities and your parents/guardians for your conduct while you are a school citizen. Good behavior can help make your school life a happy and rewarding one. To ensure a safe and positive environment for all, if you see something we want you to say something. Please pay careful attention to what is in your handbook, discuss it with your parents/guardians and classmates, and if you have any questions, we encourage you to talk to us. Together, we can make the 2023-2024 school year successful.

The contents of this handbook are organized to include all K-12 students. Sections that have specific elementary, middle or high school specific guidelines will be noted at the end of each by this designation:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES
MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES
HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Our Mission

TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR LIFELONG SUCCESS THROUGH EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION.

Central Office Administration

STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT WEBSITE

www.scasd.org

Curtis Johnson

Superintendent
(814) 231-1016

Danielle Yoder

Assistant Superintendent Elementary
(814) 231-1042

Dr. Jonathan Bucher

Assistant Superintendent Secondary
(814) 231-1041

Linda Pierce

Human Resources Director

Randy Brown

Finance & Operations Officer

Christine Merritt

Director of Curriculum and Instruction K-12

Tonya Black

Director of Equity, Inclusion, and
Belonging

Mike Fisher

Director of Physical Plant

Justin Hetrick

Director of Technology

Jonathan Klingeman

Director of Federal Programs and Gifted
Services

Jeanne Knouse

Director of Student Services

Shannon Messick

Community Education Supervisor

Heather Pringle

Director of Special Education

Van Swauger

Director of Transportation

Building Administration

CORL STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

www.scasd.org/Domain/139

Dr. Kelly Mark

Building Principal, (814) 231-1185

EASTERLY PARKWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

www.scasd.org/Domain/198

Meredith Henderson

Building Principal, (814) 231-1170

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

www.scasd.org/Domain/255

Shelly Buckholtz

Building Principal, (814) 231-4119

GRAY'S WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

www.scasd.org/Domain/322

Dr. Kristen Dewitt

Building Principal, (814) 235-6100

MOUNT NITTANY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

www.scasd.org/Domain/477

Mark Feldman

Building Principal, (814) 272-5970

PARK FOREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

www.scasd.org/Domain/534

Dr. Jessica Quinter

Building Principal, (814) 231-5010

RADIO PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

www.scasd.org/Domain/620

Alex Raup

Building Principal, (814) 231-4115

SPRING CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

www.scasd.org/Domain/383

Paul Brigman

Building Principal, (814) 231-5026

MOUNT NITTANY MIDDLE SCHOOL

www.scasd.org/Domain/704 (814) 272-4050

Brian Ishler

Building Principal

Mike Fester
Assistant Building Principal

PARK FOREST MIDDLE SCHOOL
www.scasd.org/Domain/831 (814) 237-5301

Dr. Karen Wiser
Building Principal
Tina Chambers Greene
Assistant Building Principal

DELTA MIDDLE SCHOOL
www.scasd.org/Domain/2072

DELTA HIGH SCHOOL
www.scasd.org/Domain/1444

Jon Downs
Delta Building Principal
(814) 231-1000

STATE COLLEGE AREA HIGH SCHOOL
www.scasd.org/Domain/986

Laura Tobias
High School Principal
(814) 231-1111

Danielle Ambrosia
9th Grade Assistant Principal
(814) 235-4994

Jacqueline Saylor
Assistant Principal, students A-G
(814) 231-1111

Ryan Walsh
Assistant Principal, students H-O
(814) 231-1111

Brett Wilson
Associate Principal, students P-Z
(814) 231-1111

Dr. Ben Mordan
Director Career and Technical Center
(814) 231-4153

Christopher Weakland
Athletic Director
(814) 231-1143

Larry Walker
Dean of Students
(814) 231-1111

Loren Crispell
Assistant Athletic Director
(814) 231-1143

STATE COLLEGE VIRTUAL ACADEMY
www.scasd.org/Domain/1444

Administrator TBD
(814) 231-1011 (ext 2894)

INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS

As teachers, staff, and coaches alike, we are committed to continuous improvement of SCASD teaching, leadership, and organizational practices because they are the preconditions for higher levels of student achievement. The SCASD “Four Pillars” are the building blocks of the District’s professional practices as they frame what must be done in every classroom and system-wide, without exception, to ensure success for all students.

PILLAR #1: DATA-INFORMED, CULTURALLY-RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Build trust and relationships with open communication that promotes effective collaboration among all partners in the teaching and learning community.

PILLAR #2: COLLABORATIVE COMMUNITY BUILT ON TRUST

Curriculum, instruction, and learning are shaped by a growth mindset and guided by principles of differentiation.

PILLAR #3: INCLUSIVE AND SUPPORTIVE PRACTICES

Beliefs and practices reflect universally held high standards and shared responsibility for continuous growth and improvement.

PILLAR #4: HIGH-PERFORMING LEARNING ORGANIZATION

Which includes: Responsive, Transparent, and Efficient Operations; Equitable Allocation of Resources; and Evidence-based Decision-making

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

Pennsylvania’s Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a standards-aligned, comprehensive school improvement framework for enhancing academic, behavioral and social-emotional outcomes for all students. Cross-disciplinary teams represented at the District, school, grade and individual levels use a problem-solving process to integrate evidence-based academic, behavioral and social-emotional practices matched to student needs and with fidelity of implementation.

Commitment to Educational Equity and Inclusive Excellence

SCASD is committed to educational equity. Working towards **educational equity** involves:

- Ensuring equally high outcomes for all participants in our educational system (e.g. economically disadvantaged, marginalized, and/or minoritized students); removing the predictability of success or failures that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor.

- Interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases, and creating inclusive multicultural school environments for adults and children.
- Discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that every human possesses.
- Ensuring at-risk and below grade level students are educated by qualified, experienced teachers.
- Fostering an environment that promotes inclusion and establishes a strong sense of belonging for every student, employee, family, and community member.

An equitable school climate supports *every student's path* to a prosocial identity by being culturally responsive to the patterns and wide range of norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, leadership practices, and organizational structures within the school and broader community.

No Place For Hate

The State College Area School District is a No Place for Hate participant. No Place for Hate is a self-directed school climate initiative aimed at helping all stakeholders take the lead on improving and maintaining the school climate so all students can thrive. SCASD is excited to take part in this initiative and is working toward K-12 implementation. If you would like more information about No Place For Hate, click [here](#).

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO)

Each school has an active Parent Teacher Organization that works with the staff to strengthen the school community and further support enriching educational opportunities for students. Meeting dates and times are communicated by each school. The PTO benefits greatly from parent/guardian support.

Alma Mater

*Dear to our hearts our Alma Mater
Noble and fair to view
No other school will stand above you,
State College High so true.
Hail! All hail to Old State High,
Hail! Maroon and Gray!
To our Alma Mater fair;
We pledge all our lives for aye.*

*Circled by hills this Nittany Valley,
Cradles our school so fine.
In this green vale that molds our spirits.
We hail her strength sublime.
Hail! All hail to all her fame!
Hail! Maroon and Gray!
To our Alma Mater fair,
We pledge all our lives for aye.*

WELCOMING STATEMENT AND HANDBOOK GUIDELINES

The State College Area School District is proud of the diversity represented in our school community and is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for every member of our community including our students, families, faculty, and staff.

We are here to support all students and families. We want each and every student to know, see, and feel that *you are welcome here*.

The intent of these guidelines is to promote responsible and appropriate student behavior while enhancing the learning climate and creating school spirit. The idea of developing a “learning community” and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and restoring relationships are the driving forces behind this handbook. These guidelines contribute to a safe, secure and nurturing environment free of disruption, discrimination and harassment. We wish to create an atmosphere in our school that fosters success for all students.

Respect for ourselves and others is one of the most significant factors contributing to the success of our learning community. It is critical that you, as a community member, respect yourself, your peers and the adults who work here every day.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Parents/guardians will be notified as soon as possible in the event of an emergency at school. If parents/guardians cannot be reached in an emergency, a person designated by the parent/guardian will be called to assist. It is very important that parents/guardians designate a local individual as an emergency contact. In an extreme situation, an ambulance may be called to assist, and the child may be taken to the hospital emergency room. The health and safety of all students is an absolute priority.

Emergency Student Information Form

At the beginning of the school year, all parents/guardians should log into [ParentVue](#) to make sure their child’s emergency contact information is correct. Please update information immediately if there is a change of guardianship, address, phone number or any other information. It is critical that the school has updated emergency contact information for your child. In case of an emergency, the District will want to contact parents and guardians.

Custody

If there is a court order limiting or restricting the noncustodial parent's contact with the child, a copy of the court order should be brought to the school, communicated with appropriate school personnel, and inserted into the student record. Without a court order that restricts a parent's rights, both natural parents have equal access to the child and the child's records. However, the child will only be dismissed to a parent or guardian or to a designee identified by the parent or guardian in writing.

Accident Insurance For Students

While the District does not carry accident insurance for students, the District provides the opportunity to purchase an accident insurance plan, with information on coverage and enrollment available at [2023-24 Student Accident Insurance](#). In addition, [Pennsylvania's Children's Health Insurance Program \(CHIP\)](#) provides certain medical coverage to uninsured children and teens who are not eligible for or enrolled in Medical Assistance.

Students should report any injuries they incur to a teacher, the school nurse, or the principal immediately. Claims for accidents must be made on a special form obtained at each school's Main Office. Parents/guardians should contact their school's [Main Office](#) for further information.

Evacuation Drills

Students must take all evacuation drills seriously. When students hear a repeating series of short rings, they are to exit the building **quickly, orderly, and silently**. They must follow building evacuation procedures and report to their designated attendance area.

Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and could result in a meeting with school administration.

1. When a fire alarm is heard, students are to move quickly and quietly without talking, running or pushing to the nearest or designated exit and then proceed away from the building as directed. Teachers will take attendance at evacuation locations.
2. During a drill, an exit may be closed to simulate a condition which could happen during an actual fire. If a regular exit is blocked, teachers will direct the students to the nearest available exit.
3. The exit procedure will be posted near the door of each room.
4. The bell will sound the "All Clear Signal," at which time the students will return quietly to their assigned classrooms.

There are five different types of safety drills conducted during the school year:

1. **Evacuation Drills** – Students and staff evacuate the building and report to a predetermined site outside the building.

2. **Severe Weather Drills** – Students and staff report to a designated safe spot in the building, away from large windows.
3. **Stay Put Drill** – Students and staff remain in rooms with doors locked, windows closed, and blinds pulled down. Instruction can continue as normal unless otherwise communicated.
4. **Lockdown** - Possible imminent threat to those in and around the building.
 - a. **Run-Hide-Fight** – When facing an imminent threat, such as an armed intruder, the District will defer to the Lockdown protocol called Run-Hide-Fight. .
5. **School Bus Evacuation Drills** – Students exit the bus upon their arrival to school to practice for an emergency evacuation.

<u>EMERGENCY CLOSING/DELAY OF SCHOOL/EARLY DISMISSAL</u>

<i>When it is necessary to close or delay school due to inclement weather or any other emergency, an announcement will be through our Rapid Notification System, on local radio/TV stations, and via our district website and app. In the case of an early dismissal, students are expected to report to all classes prior to the early dismissal.</i>
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Main Office Phone Use

There is a phone available in the Main Office of each building for students to use. Smart devices and cell phones usage protocols are level-specific ([see Code of Conduct](#)).

Academic Calendar

The 2023-2024 Academic Calendar is available on the District website ([Academic Calendar](#)), and is also provided below.



2023-2024 Academic Calendar
Approved by the School Board of Directors December 19, 2022

August 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

K-12
Aug 14 New Staff Induction
Aug 15, 16, 17 In-service for Staff
Aug 18 New Staff Induction
Aug 22 First Day of School
Aug 25 No School

Instruction Days	
7	7

September 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

K-12
Sep 4 No School, Labor Day
Sep 25 No School

Instruction Days	
19	26

October 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

K-12
Oct 9 No School, Act 80
K-5
Oct 26, 27 No School, Parent Conf., Act 80
5-8
Oct 26 No School, Parent Conf.
Oct 27 No School, Parent Conf. AM, Records PM
9-12
Oct 26 No School, Act 80
Oct 27 No School, Act 80 AM, Records PM

Instruction Days	
19	45

November 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

K-5
Nov 22 No School, Records
5-12
Nov 22 No School, Act 80
K-12
Nov 10, 3 Hour Delay, Act 80
Nov 23, 24 No School, Thanksgiving

Instruction Days	
19	64

December 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

K-12
Dec 22-29 No School, Winter Break

Instruction Days	
15	79

January 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

K-12
Jan 1 No School, Winter Break
Jan 15 No School, Act 80
K-5
Jan 16 No School, Act 80
5-12
Jan 16 No School, Records Day

Instruction Days	
20	99

February 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

K-5
Feb 26 No School, Records
5-12
Feb 26 No School, Act 80
K-12
Feb 19 3 Hour Delay, Act 80

Instruction Days	
20	119

March 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

K-12
Mar 4-8 No School, Spring Break
Mar 29 No School
K-5
Mar 28 No School, Act 80
5-12
Mar 28 No School, Act 80 AM, Records PM

Instruction Days	
14	133

April 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

K-12
Apr 10 No School

Instruction Days	
21	154

May 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

K-12
May 24 No School, Snow Make-up Day
May 27 No School, Memorial Day

Instruction Days	
21	175

June 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

K-12
June 4 Last day of school, "Early Dismissal TBD"
June 7 Commencement
June 8 Commencement Rain Date
June 9 Commencement Rain Date

In-service day for staff follows the last student day.
Teacher Trade Day follows in-service day.

Instruction Days	
2	177

	First / Last Day of School
	K-12 No School
	K-12 No School / Teachers Report
	Snow Make-up Day
	PSSA Testing Window
	Secondary Marking Periods 44, 44, 44, 45
	Elementary Marking Periods Core Subjects
	End of Semester Secondary / Elementary
	3 Hour Delay, Act 80

Note: Snow days will be made-up in the following order: May 24, June 5-7, June 10.
High religious observance dates are noted on the district website.

District Calendar

In order to stay up to date on events taking place across SCASD, you can find the District calendar [here](#).

Critical Religious Holidays and Observances

In line with SCASD's Inclusive Excellence Policy and our continued effort to ensure all students experience a sense of belonging, information on religious observances can be found on the [Equity and Inclusion](#) website. Please navigate [here](#) for more information regarding absences due to religious observances below.

In-service Days

Certain days are scheduled throughout the school year for staff in-service activities and parent conferences. Please refer to the [Academic Calendar](#) for the days on which there is no school for students.

DAILY BELL SCHEDULE

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

- 8:09 a.m. - 3:00 p.m

MIDDLE SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULE (INCLUDING 1, 2 AND 3 HOUR DELAY INFORMATION)

- [MNMS](#): 8:40 a.m. - 3:40 p.m.
- [PFMS](#): 8:40 a.m. - 3:40 p.m.

HIGH SCHOOL BELL SCHEDULE (INCLUDING 1, 2 AND 3 HOUR DELAY INFORMATION)

- 8:40 a.m. - 3:40 p.m.

Daily Announcements

Student announcements will be made daily. All student announcements must pertain to school or school-related activities.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- **SCHOOLWIDE ANNOUNCEMENTS (INCLUDING THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE) OCCUR AT VARIED TIMES DEPENDING ON THE BUILDING**

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Requests for addition to the daily announcements must be submitted to administration at least 24 hours prior to broadcast.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- If a student wishes to have an announcement made regarding school activities, they must complete this form: www.tinyurl.com/scasdwsch.

STUDENT HANDBOOK

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

The compulsory attendance laws in Pennsylvania require children to attend school no later than six years of age until the age of 18 or graduation from a high school. Regular attendance is expected and an *absence* is defined as missing any time during normal school hours. There is a direct correlation between regular school attendance and academic achievement; therefore, students are encouraged to avoid any unnecessary absences from school.

A student may be legally absent from school due to sickness or other urgent reasons such as impassable roads, quarantine, or death in the family. Such absences may be verified by a written parental/guardian excuse. Parents/guardians may verify a maximum of ten (10) cumulative legal absences via written notification during the school year. Any additional absences beyond the 10 parental/guardian excuses (not counting educational trips and doctor's excuses) shall require a written medical excuse from a medical provider. Written notification from the school will be provided to parents/guardians informing them that a doctor's excuse is necessary for any future absences when they have exceeded 10 written parental/guardian excuses.

When a student has been to a medical provider, parents/guardians should provide a written medical excuse for the appointment. All parental/guardian and medical excuses need to be turned in within 72 hours of absence or the absence will be considered unexcused.

An unexcused absence for a student is considered an illegal absence. Based on the Pennsylvania School Code compulsory attendance laws, SCASD is required to take the following actions:

1. When three illegal absences have accumulated, the parents or guardians will receive a written first offense letter that will include the Pennsylvania School Code compulsory attendance laws, which cite the legal actions that could occur if an additional unexcused absence occurs.
2. Any additional unexcused absences, after the first offense, will result in a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) being held and a written plan of action steps is completed by the SAIP team (including but not limited to the principal, counselor, teacher, parent/guardian, student). This plan is Intended to make a positive change in the students' attendance.

3. If a student accumulates six (6) unexcused absences, and steps 1 and 2 have been completed, a complaint will be filed with the local District Magistrate.

The following legal action(s) can be taken for students younger than 18 who have six (6) or more illegal absences and their parents/guardians: 1) Parents/guardians/students are subject to a fine as well as court cost; and/or, students can be ordered to complete community service or lose their driver's license in addition to court costs.

SCASD also has the right to revoke or suspend a student's work permit.

All students who are absent or late to school must provide a signed excuse from their parent/guardian or medical provider. These signed notes may be emailed to the main office attendance secretary in your building, submitted in ParentVue the day of the absence or hand-delivered by students.

Excuses that are not acceptable under the Pennsylvania compulsory attendance laws, although signed by a parent/guardian and brought to school within three days following the absence or late arrival, will be considered unexcused or illegal. The administration will make the final determination on whether an absence or tardiness will be considered legal. If your child is absent or late, call us at the [Safe Arrival Option](#) and please follow the prompt. Please make sure to follow up with an excuse within 72 hours of an absence.

- [Attendance Cheat Sheet for Parents](#)
- [Religious Observances](#)

Exceptions for absence for educational, religious and medical reasons will be made when prior approval from the school office has been granted.

<u>EXCUSED ABSENCES</u>	<u>UNEXCUSED ABSENCES</u>
❖ Suspension	❖ Shopping
❖ Expulsion	❖ Babysitting
❖ Quarantine	❖ Hair appointment
❖ Death in the family	❖ Gainful employment
❖ Illness of the student (specify reason)	❖ Fishing or Hunting
❖ Medical or dental appointment	❖ Missing the school bus

❖ Parental request within district guidelines (example: trip policy)	❖ Absences for personal reasons ❖ Senior picture appointments
❖ Religious observance or instruction (includes religious beliefs, e.g. Ramadan, Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah)	❖ Trips not approved in advance ❖ Community service

Non-Cumulative Absences

The following absences will not appear on the student's permanent record:

- ❖ Absence for school-approved activities
- ❖ Physical disability of extended duration (after homebound instruction has begun)

Leaving School Grounds

Students are not to leave the school property once the school day has started without following proper sign-out procedures. If a student's parent/guardian needs them to be excused before the regular dismissal time, they must send a note with their student on the day they need to be excused early. Before the start of school, the student must take this note to the attendance secretary, and they will be given a pass. The student then must show this pass to the teacher whose class they are leaving. The student is to report to the office at the appropriate time. Students can help us from interrupting classes by remembering to report to the office at their designated dismissal time. Schools understand that last-minute appointments may arise. In these cases, the student will be dismissed from class upon parent/guardian arrival at school. **A parent/guardian must come into the office to sign their student out.**

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- A parent/guardian must come into the office to sign their student out.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- A parent/guardian must come into the attendance office to sign their student out.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Students are not to leave the property or school area once the school day has begun (including trips to their cars in the parking lot once the school day has started, going to neighboring apartment complexes, or going over to the Weis shopping complex) without following proper sign-out procedures. Non-compliant individuals will be considered truant and receive a day of In-School Suspension. Students and their backpacks or personal belongings are also subject to a search when they leave school property without permission — including those going to the parking lot without permission.

Family Educational Trips

For educational trips, including partial days, parents or guardians will need to complete and submit the [Educational Trip Request Form](#). This form needs to be submitted to the main office. After submitting the Educational Trip Request form, that attendance secretary will give the student an educational trip form that requires signatures from their teacher(s). The student must return this form to the Main Office one day prior to the scheduled trip otherwise the absence will be unexcused. Unexcused absences will result in the inability to make-up missed work. The educational trip guidelines are as follows:

1. A total of ten (10) school days in any academic year will be excused for educational trips. Additional absences for trips will be unexcused unless an exception is granted by Central Office administration.
2. For trips of **four (4) or more days**, parents/guardians are asked to notify the school with at least **two (2) weeks advance written notice**.
3. For trips of **three (3) or less days**, parents/guardians are asked to notify the school with at least **three (3) days advance written notice**.
4. Parents/guardians should provide a written request for such educational trips. To do so, they can download a copy of the [Educational Trip Request Form](#). The attendance secretary will provide the student with the necessary forms to be signed by teachers to make arrangements for missed work.
5. Upon returning from a trip, students will be given a specified number of days to make up the missed work. This number is equal to the number of days of the trip.

In the event educational trip requests extend beyond ten days in an academic year, those will be considered unexcused absences; and, should requests result for a length of time beyond twenty cumulative days, a school withdrawal will be initiated. Any exceptions due to extenuating circumstances must be approved by the cognizant assistant superintendent.

Requests for educational trips for students receiving educational support services through the District's Special Education Department will be supported, accordingly, to ensure quality programs and services are provided. Depending upon the length of an educational trip request, there may be occasions when it is not practical or possible to provide such supportive services or modified educational experiences outside of the student's approved educational plan. Parents/guardians are encouraged to consult with the Director of Special Education, accordingly.

Late to School and Late to Class

Definition of late to school or late to class

The definition of being late to school is entering the school or classroom after the bell rings. If a student arrives at school after the official start of school, they will be directed to the office to sign in and receive a late pass. This is the only late pass the office will issue. No late passes for between classes will be issued from the office. If a student is late to class without a written excuse, the teacher will record the lateness according to the late-to-school, late-to-class class and absence procedure found below. If a student is detained in the office, or by a teacher, they should ask for an excuse from the person who detained them before going to class. Such lateness will not be counted against the student.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Parents/guardians must accompany their student into the building when arriving late to school.
- Students must be inside the building by 8:09 a.m. in order to be considered on time for school.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Official start of school is 8:40 a.m.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Official start of school is 8:40 a.m.
- If a student receives a sixth late to 1st and/or 5th Block, their parking pass will be revoked for the remainder of the semester.
- Additional consequences could be the loss of privileges, such as senior option, Diversified Occupations, prom, dances, after-school activities and field trips, and may result in athletic eligibility consequences. Arriving late to school as a result of “school traffic” is not a valid reason to be late to school.

Cutting Class

Cutting class is a serious offense. A student will receive a “zero” for all work due that period, with no opportunity for making up missed work ([see code of conduct](#)).

Interscholastic Practices, Competitions and After-School Activities

Students who wish to participate in an after-school PIAA event must be in attendance by 9:25 a.m. in order to be eligible to participate in an interscholastic practice or competition that day. If there is a delayed start to the day, the student is expected to be at school on-time. Friday attendance will affect eligibility for weekend activities.

- ❖ If a student has been issued an In or Out of School Suspension (OSS), the student will not be permitted to participate in any school activity during the day or after school. This includes participation in any extracurricular practices and/or competitions.

Request for Leaving School

Early dismissal from school will be granted for the same reasons allowable for legal absences. A written request from a parent/guardian for early dismissal should be presented to the attendance secretary.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule appointments with doctors and dentists after school hours, if possible. Requests to be excused for hair appointments, shopping and other personal matters will be denied, and absences for these reasons will be unexcused.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned as a learning activity to support our curriculum. Parent/guardian permission notes are required because their student will be taken off of school property. Since safety is such an important factor, transportation to or from the field trip site cannot be made in private vehicles unless specific written permission has been given by a student's parent/guardian. Parents/guardians may be asked to assist or chaperone field trips.

Field trips often require that a licensed medical professional attend. The school district does its best to manage the high demands but there may be situations that result in the cancellation of a field trip as a result of no licensed medical professional being available. Our school nurses' primary responsibility must be the health and safety of our school buildings, and therefore we are working with nursing agencies to help us meet our field trip demands. We will continue to negotiate all field trip requests and provide the necessary coverage, only canceling as a last resort. Please note: A parent/guardian, or parent/guardian designee, can attend a field trip to administer medication to their child only, but if they are not available to do so, only a medical professional can administer.

- [Policy 121 - Field Trips](#)

Support Strategies for Planned Absences

Please refer to the tips below as a regular practice when missing instruction.

BEFORE	Before my absence I should... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Bookmark each of my teacher's online resources for quick reference.<input type="checkbox"/> Inform my teacher via email or in person, in advance, regarding my absence.<input type="checkbox"/> Ask my teacher if I could sit in during another block to compensate for the one I will be missing.<input type="checkbox"/> Make a "to-do" list of work that will be missed during absence from teacher's online resource or from direct communication<input type="checkbox"/> Check if I am to miss a quiz, test, lab, or presentation... then e-mail and/or meet with my teacher to offer several times (e.g., before/after school, study hall, or over lunch) to make up the assignment in person.<input type="checkbox"/> Check to see if I will not be able to make a future due date, and ask for an extension in advance rather than waiting until it is due or past due.
DURING	While I am absent I should... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Review my "to do" list of work to be completed.<input type="checkbox"/> Take and use reading or other materials with me that I will need to study or prepare for class.<input type="checkbox"/> If needed, be in touch with a reliable classmate while I am away.
AFTER	When I return back to school I should... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Check for any missing work or indicators that I missed something.<input type="checkbox"/> Hand in work that was due while I was out.<input type="checkbox"/> Check in with the teacher regarding my missed work.<input type="checkbox"/> Review notes or other class materials that may help me understand missed instruction.

Address Change

The respective building's attendance secretary should be notified of any changes to a student's address, telephone number, or parent/guardian email addresses. They can let the building secretary know or change email in Parentvue.

Withdrawal From School

If a student is moving from the District, their parent/guardian should notify the student's building secretary/school counselor several days in advance. The student will be given a withdrawal form that is to be signed by all of their teachers. All records will be mailed to the student's new school upon that school's request. Any books or equipment not returned must be paid for prior to withdrawal.

Bus Regulations

Free transportation is provided for a student if they live more than 1.5 miles from school. School bus transportation is provided for the student's safety and convenience. Transportation is provided as a privilege; it is not a mandate, and therefore can be revoked at any time for misconduct. Students are expected to help maintain the good condition of the bus on which they ride.

School Bus Regulations

The District transportation director is responsible for establishing bus runs and assigning students to a particular bus. Students are to get on and off the bus at their assigned stop. Students wishing to ride a bus other than the one assigned must present a note written by a parent or guardian to the main office to receive a signed bus pass. The pass must be presented to the bus driver on the day listed. This request can only be granted if there is seating available on the bus. A student getting off the bus at any stop other than their own without a signed bus pass is in violation of school procedures.

Students should be at the bus stop five minutes prior to the scheduled arrival of the bus. When a school bus does not arrive at the bus stop on time due to mechanical failure or weather conditions, students are expected to wait a reasonable length of time, depending on weather conditions (a reasonable time would be at least a half-hour). After that time, the student should return home and contact the school to determine the reason for the delay.

The following rules are designed for the safety of those riding a school bus. It is the student's responsibility to obey the rules established and approved by the Board of School Directors.

A. Bus Stop Regulations

1. Arrive at the bus stop on time five (5) minutes prior to the time the bus is scheduled to arrive.
2. Wait for your bus in a safe place, well off the roadway. Bus riders must conduct themselves in a safe, orderly manner while waiting (no foolishness or horseplay).
3. Respect the property rights of people who reside at or near the bus stop.
4. Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before trying to get on the bus. Enter the bus single file with no crowding or pushing.
5. Be careful if crossing the roadway to board the bus. Check to make sure all traffic has stopped.

B. Bus Riding Regulations

1. Observe the same conduct as in the classroom.
2. Be courteous; use no loud or profane language.
3. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
4. Keep the bus clean; pick up any mess you make.
5. Do not throw objects in the bus or outside the bus.
6. Squirt guns and open water bottles of any kind are not permitted on the bus.
7. Remain seated at all times while on the bus.
8. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
9. Do not be destructive; defacement or destruction of property will be dealt with according to the school disciplinary code.
10. Smoking or the use of tobacco products on the bus will be dealt with according to the disciplinary code. Lighting matches or lighters is not permitted on or around the school bus.
11. The driver has similar authority to the classroom teachers and the students are to obey, cooperate and show respect.
12. Be courteous to fellow students.
13. Bus drivers are authorized to assign seats.
14. Radios, Bluetooth speakers or any form of larger sound systems are not permitted on the bus. The bus driver has been instructed to confiscate these items and turn them over to the school principal. They will be kept in the school office until parents/guardians pick them up.
15. Enter the building promptly upon arrival at the school.
16. Setting off caps or other explosive devices on the bus will result in suspension from riding the bus for three days or longer, and be dealt with according to the disciplinary code.

C. Bus Unloading Procedures

1. Students should exit the bus in a quiet, orderly manner and proceed directly to their assigned area at school or to their home.
2. Students who must cross the road should cross 10 feet in front of the bus. Check traffic in both directions before proceeding across the roadway. Watch the driver for a signal to cross.

D. Extra-Curricular Activities

1. The above regulations apply to any trips under school sponsorship.
2. Students should respect and obey the chaperones assigned to the trip.

E. Emergency Procedures

1. Evacuation drills are scheduled so that students on the bus know exactly what to do in case of an emergency.
2. The driver or the assigned helpers must have the cooperation of the students. Students are to remain quiet during drills or an emergency so that they can hear directions.
3. Students are not to leave the bus for emergencies unless instructed to do so by the bus driver.

F. Discipline Procedures

Students who create discipline problems on the bus may have their riding privileges suspended by the principal. The parent/guardian of the suspended student is then responsible for transporting their student to and from school safely. Students who disobey these rules may be assigned detention, suspended from riding the bus or may face other appropriate disciplinary action.

G. Being Driven to/from School

If a student's parent/guardian drives them to school during regular drop-off times and picks them up during regular pick-up times, please check with your school for explicit instructions to ensure the safety of our students as they exit and board their buses.

STUDENT PARKING PROCEDURES (HIGH SCHOOL ONLY)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA
MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA
HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking will first be offered to seniors and students who are enrolled in the following classes: Clinical Observations, Nurse Aide Training, and Health Professions. Applications can be found on the website through the "Student Parking Application" found here. If more parking becomes available, students will be notified through email at the beginning of the next semester. • Seniors can access the parking application by going to the MySchoolBucks. This link will be available one week before school begins. Once you fill out the application, please bring the following items to the security office at the Lower Main Office beginning the second week of school: confirmation email, valid

driver's license, and payment of \$60 to obtain a parking permit. Please make checks payable to SCASD.

- The following information will be needed for the application process:
 - ❖ Student ID
 - ❖ Email address of parent or guardian
 - ❖ Valid driver's license (NO applications will be accepted without a photo driver's license)
 - ❖ Vehicle information
 - ❖ Signing off on the parking pass rules
- Students with outstanding fines will be unable to receive a parking permit until the fine is paid in full.
- Temporary parking passes will be available to students with a pre-approved parent/guardian note for the reason of medical appointments during school hours.
- Possession of a parking pass does not guarantee a parking space.
- Please report any changes to vehicle information to the security office. **Permits are not transferable.**

STUDENT PARKING GUIDELINES:

Student parking at State College Area High School is a privilege that requires adherence to the rules listed below. Please note that if you decide to drive to school, it is your responsibility to get to school on time.

The following rules must be followed or your parking permit will be revoked. Any student who has had their parking pass revoked for two weeks, two or more times, will have their parking pass permanently revoked. There is no refund for revoked permits.

- ❖ Parking permits must be displayed in the rear view mirror whenever you are parked on school grounds.
- ❖ You may not sell or transfer your parking pass to another student.
- ❖ Park in the red painted spaces ONLY at the North Building.
- ❖ Lock your vehicle upon arrival at school. The State College Area School District is not responsible for articles lost or stolen from vehicles, or to any damage to or from any vehicle while parked on school property.
- ❖ Provide proper ID when leaving school grounds.
- ❖ Weapons may not be brought onto school grounds.
- ❖ The State College Area High School reserves the right to search vehicles while parked on school property when deemed necessary for reasonable suspicion.

- ❖ Students will have their parking pass revoked for two weeks for the following offenses: Driving recklessly, leaving school without permission, and disregarding instruction from the parking lot monitor.
- ❖ Students will have their parking pass revoked for the remainder of the semester if they have three unexcused absences or unexcused absences for 40 or more blocks. Students can also lose their parking pass for six tardies for the remainder of the school year.
- ❖ Students suspended for any Level 4 violation will have their parking pass revoked for the rest of the year.
- ❖ Students who park without a parking pass will receive a parking citation on their windshield. No notification other than a windshield citation will be given. On the third violation, the car will be towed at the owner's expense.

Student Parking & Personal Property

Students parking/leaving personal vehicles, bicycles and other personal property on district grounds, parking lots, or in district facilities do so at their own risk. The District holds no liability for personal property.

CAFETERIA

Our cafeterias provide an opportunity for children to have healthy meals at school each day.

Breakfasts at school may be free of charge this school year but this is dependent on funding being approved through the state budget. At this printing, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has not passed a state budget. If funding is not approved, the cost for breakfast will be \$1.50 (elementary), \$2.00 (middle school), and \$2.25 (high school).

The cost of school lunches is the responsibility of families. Lunches cost \$2.75 (elementary), \$3.00 (middle school), and \$3.55 (high school). Families who need help paying for school meals can submit an application and may be eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Further information about applying for subsidized school meals can be found [here](#).

School lunches are planned to include meat/meat alternate, bread, vegetables, fruit, and milk. Students can decline items that they do not intend to eat but must choose at least three of the five components offered. One of the components chosen must be a serving of fruit or vegetable, and students are encouraged to take the entire meal.

Breakfast is available each morning in all of our schools, and students must choose at least three food items, one of which must be fruit or juice, for the meal to be considered complete.

If a student chooses to take less than the required components, they will be charged the a la carte price for the items taken (\$.65 - \$2.80). Cafeteria staff help students understand what must be selected and guide them to make good choices.

Milk can be purchased for \$.70 by students who pack their lunches. Monthly menus are posted on [the Food Service web page](#). Parents/guardians are encouraged to review the menu with their children to assist with lunch selections.

An electronic account is created for all students. Parents/guardians are expected to deposit money to the account as needed to pay for purchases that their student may make. Students who are approved for free school meals do not need to maintain a balance. Students will never be denied a meal for lack of funds, but a la carte purchases are not allowed unless funds are available. Payments to students' accounts can be made on-line at [My School Bucks](#). A \$2.75 convenience fee applies. Checks can be mailed to: SCASD FSD, 653 Westerly Parkway, State College, PA 16801. Please include the name of the student(s) for whom the check is intended, the school(s) they attend, and a phone number in case of questions. Make checks payable to SCASD FSD. Middle and high school students may also bring payments to school and give them to a cashier for deposit. Payments are not accepted in the elementary schools and must be made online or by mailing a check to the Food Service Office. Parents/guardians can monitor their child's lunch account activity and request low balance email alerts at [My School Bucks](#). There is no fee to use the site for these services.

Special dietary needs may be accommodated. Please review our [procedures](#) and contact the Food Service Office directly at (814) 231-5095 to discuss.

Student behavior in the cafeteria should follow the rules of respect, courtesy, and common sense. Theft of food from the cafeteria, disrespect towards adults or fellow students, failure to clean up after yourself or general misbehavior in the cafeteria will result in disciplinary consequences. Students may not order take-out food to be delivered to the school. If students have food delivered, office personnel will dispose of the food.

Additional information concerning the food service program can be found on [the District web page](#). Students and parents/guardians are also encouraged to call the Food Service Department at (814) 231-5095 with any questions or comments.

When a school is made aware that a student may be engaged in an extended period of religious fasting, the student may be excused from lunch and strenuous physical activity. School personnel will work collaboratively with the student's family and may use their discretion regarding whether testing or assessment for a particular student should be rescheduled. Please contact your child's school counselor to discuss your child's needs, including the option of identifying an alternative location for your child during the designated lunch period.

Lunch Schedules

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- All students are provided a 30-minute lunch.
- Lunch schedules are determined by each building.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- All students are provided a 30-minute lunch.
- Lunch schedules are determined by each building.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Lunch period is scheduled during 3rd period on A days and B days. The high school operates a CLOSED LUNCH PERIOD. All students are to remain on the school property for lunch.

Food and Drink in School

Consuming food and drinks during class time is at the discretion of the teacher.

Selling Items in School

Wholesaling and retailing are not permitted in school unless it is a school-sponsored fundraising activity. Students cannot sell things in school without administrative approval.

COUNSELING SERVICES

School Counseling Program and Services

All SCASD school counselors are master's degree-level school counselors who have specific training in career, academic and social-emotional development. Although school

counselors are not clinical mental health care professionals, they are key in assisting in determining if students need a higher level of care, at which time they will refer students to an outside therapist and/or connect students to our Integrated Mental Health (IMH) team.

Counselors work with students, teachers and families in order to make school more rewarding and the future less intimidating. Counseling services are an integral part of the total educational process. The services provided by the counseling staff are designed to help each student develop the knowledge, skills and self-reliance needed to make good decisions and to make personal, social and academic adjustments. Counselors are also helpful to students who are experiencing conflicts. Students may make an appointment to see their school counselor, preferably during study hall or lunch. The primary role of the counseling program is to address all students' academic, career and social/emotional development needs by offering comprehensive school counseling services that promote and enhance student success.

The counseling offices offer the following services (among many others):

1. Assistance in planning the high school and middle school program/schedule.
2. Assistance in making post-secondary plans and the college application process.
3. Assistance in vocational planning.
4. Counseling for students with personal, social/emotional and academic concerns.
5. Help in facilitating parent/teacher communication/conferences regarding student progress.
6. Referrals to outside agencies as needed.

Counselors are assigned to follow students by school at the elementary level, by grade at the middle school level and by alphabet at the high school level. Visit our [K-12 Counselor Staff](#) page for K-12 counselors.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Every elementary school has one full-time counselor on staff. These counselors support students' social and emotional well-being and can work with students one-on-one, in small groups, or in the classroom setting

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Middle schools have three full-time school counselors on staff. These counselors support students' social and emotional well-being and can work with students one-on-one, in small groups, or in the classroom setting.

HIGH SCHOOL

- The High School (including Delta) has 10 full-time school counselors on staff. These counselors support students' social and emotional well-being, academic choices and career investigations with a strong emphasis on post high school planning.

Parent/Guardian Conferences

Parents/guardians are urged to contact teachers about any questions regarding their child's school work. Appointments for conferences with teachers, counselors and/or principals may be made by calling the school office to make a request. Parents/guardians are encouraged to email their child's teacher directly with any specific concerns, set up a meeting with their teacher and counselor if the issue persists, and then finally contact the grade level or building administrator for further services or support.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

SAP is a program that helps students who are having problems in school because of issues that may involve drugs, alcohol or emotional problems. SAP is a team consisting of SAP trained adults who meet regularly to process SAP referrals. Referral forms are available in the counseling offices. Referrals may be anonymous. Upon referral, the SAP team gathers information, determines if the student does need help and develops a plan of action utilizing both school and community resources.

Safe2Say Something

[Safe2Say Something](#) is meant to protect students by making reporting of safety concerns easier. Safe2Say Something, a partnership between Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General and all Pennsylvania school districts, is a 24/7 reporting system that allows students, faculty and parents/guardians to send anonymous tips via phone, texts and online reporting. This tip line is a valuable asset to our district because it gives our community an additional place to report concerns outside of traditional methods.

Homebound Instruction

If a student experiences a disability or an extended illness, a parent may request homebound instruction through the principal. In order for the District to obtain state approval for homebound instruction, certain information must be submitted relative to each individual case. Please contact your assigned school counselor and building administrator for more information. For reference, please see [Homebound Instruction Policy 117](#).

Homelessness Information

School districts are required to support the education of homeless youth under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Section 752(2) of the McKinney-Vento Act defines “homeless children and youths” as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes:

- ❖ Children and youths who are:
 - Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason (sometimes referred to as “doubled up”);
 - Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters; or
 - Abandoned in hospitals
- ❖ Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- ❖ Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- ❖ Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

If you are experiencing homelessness or know someone who is, please call SCASD’s Homeless Liaison at (814) 231-1054. For reference, please see [Homeless Students Policy 251](#).

Academic Interim Progress Reports (IPRs)

If a student is having difficulty in any subject and/or is in danger of failing, parents and/or guardians will be notified by the teacher.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Progress reports will be available online three times a year for academic subjects and twice a year for specials. The first online progress report will be available in December, the second one in March and the last one in June. The specialists’ reports will be available in early February and in June. If you would like a paper copy of your child’s progress report, please inform your elementary school office.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Students earning a D or E in any course will be notified by the school counseling office at the midpoint of each marking period. Students will be offered support

and resources to improve academic performance, including access to the Student Work Center, the after-school tutoring program, and team interventions at no cost to the student's family.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- At mid-marking period, the parent/guardian of each student that has a D or E (marking period or cumulative) will receive an email from the teacher (counselor will also receive a copy) as a notification of the concern. Information on how to contact the teacher will be included and further communication with that teacher is encouraged.
- Parents/guardians of seniors will also be informed at the end of each marking period of failing or incomplete grades in any subject that is required for graduation.

INTEGRATED MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

SCASD recognizes the importance of a team approach and appreciates the essential roles schools and families provide in promoting positive development and academic performance. We believe that when educators and parents/guardians work together as partners, they create important opportunities for children to develop social, emotional and academic competencies. In SCASD, we have an Integrated Mental Health System (IMH) of Support, both internal teams and external teams designed specifically to help navigate the mental health and wellbeing of our students. IMH teams consist of professionals who play key roles in ensuring positive mental health for all.

Integrated Mental Health-Internal Mental Health Team

SCASD adheres to the guidance of Act 147 of 2004 that guides the provision of mental health treatment and maintenance of mental health records. Please note, although this occurs in rare situations, pursuant to Act 147 of 2004, "Any minor who is fourteen years of age or older may consent on their own behalf to outpatient mental health examination and treatment, and the minor's parent or legal guardian's consent shall not be necessary." All mental health counselors aim to work closely with parents/legal guardians as family involvement is key in the treatment and support of students with mental health needs.

School Counselors

Our school counselors are master's-level school counselors who have specific training in career, academic and social-emotional development. Although school counselors are not clinical mental health care professionals, they are key in assisting in determining if students need a higher level of care at which time they will refer students to an outside therapist, and/or connect students to our Integrated Mental Health (IMH) team.

The SCASD school counselor team can be found [here](#), and a more explicit description of the school counselor's role can be found [here](#).

School Psychologists

School psychologists are highly trained in both psychology and education. They must complete a minimum of a post-master's degree program that includes a year-long internship and emphasizes preparation in mental health, child development, school organization, learning styles and processes, behavior, motivation, and effective teaching.

School psychologists help children and youth succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. They collaborate with educators, parents/guardians, and other professionals to create safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments for all students that strengthen connections between home and school.

School psychologists work to find the best solution for each student and situation and use different strategies to address student needs and to improve school and District-wide support systems.

The SCASD school psychologist team can be found [here](#).

SCASD Mental Health Clinicians

All of our mental health clinicians are master's level clinical mental health professionals, actively pursuing licensure. Mental health clinicians have specific training in community mental health counseling, mental health disorders, treatment planning, mental health assessment, and culturally responsive, mental health counseling processes. Mental health clinicians must complete a year-long internship placement in a setting in which they are providing clinical mental health services. Mental health clinicians work closely with a clinical supervisor who is a licensed professional counselor and has a Ph.D. in clinical counseling and supervision. Mental health clinicians aim to provide outpatient individual counseling, small group counseling, family consultation, and treatment planning to support student needs and potentially transition students and families to mental health services outside of SCASD.

Typically, mental health clinicians provide ten sessions and aim to connect students and families with outside services. If a student and their family are experiencing difficulty connecting to external services, the family will not be prematurely discharged unless a referral process is completed or the presenting issue has been addressed. All referrals to the internal integrated mental health team are made by a school counselor or building administrator. See the SCASD Clinical Mental Health Team [here](#).

Herr Clinic at Pennsylvania State University

The Dr. Edwin L. Herr Clinic is run by the Department of Educational Psychology, Counseling, and Special Education at Penn State. The Herr Clinic delivers strength-based counseling services by both doctoral and master's level students in the Counselor Education program.

Thanks to generous gifts to the Mental Health Matters Fund, SCASD has been able to expand its partnership with Penn State's Herr Clinic and fund a role that quickly establishes connections between individuals and families to service providers. The overall mission of this partnership is to remove barriers and provide equitable access to students, families, faculty, and staff seeking mental health support.

Dr. Katie Kostohryz is currently on location at SCASD as the PSU Herr Clinic supervisor. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor and an associate teaching professor at Penn State in Counselor Education & Rehabilitation and Human Services, who has been providing individual and group counseling to children, adolescents, and families since 2005. Her objective is to develop an infrastructure to connect the Penn State Counselor Education Program and SCASD through the provision of clinical supervision and administrative support aimed at expanding access to mental health services.

Integrated Mental Health External Team

IMH services are dedicated to providing comprehensive mental health services that are strengths-based, developmentally-appropriate, data-driven, youth-guided and family-focused. Services primarily include assessment and evaluation; consultation and collaboration; individual, group and family therapy; and targeted training.

Referrals to IMH Services can be made by any SCASD staff member, though we recommend student referrals are initiated through building level teams, such as MTSS teams or the SAP team. Referrals are typically made by school counselors, school psychologists, teachers, and/or administrators. Before making a referral, staff will engage the student and family to discuss possible intervention options and determine if a referral to IMH services is appropriate.

The IMH team is composed of district leaders of student services and special education, contracted mental health providers, and the county mental health authority. The team reviews referrals on a bi-weekly basis during the school year to ensure students receive indicated services and support in a timely manner. Information for the referral is obtained from the student, family, teachers, counselors, and other individuals working with the student and family.

EDUCATIONAL NETWORK GUIDELINES

Under the State College Area School District's one-to-one technology plan, users enrolled in grades K-12 will receive equipment for educational use in school and/or at home. This equipment is the District's property and is on loan to the student for the current academic school year.

The use of District networks and computing systems is a privilege that requires users to adhere to policies and procedures established by the District.

- [Policy 814 - Copyright Material](#)
- [Policy 815 - Use of Information Technology Resources](#)
- [Policy 815.1 - Identity and Access Management](#)
- [Policy 815.4 - Information Assurance and IT Security](#)
- [Policy 815.5 - Acceptable Use of Technology](#)
- [Policy 708 - Lending of School Owned Equipment](#)

Terms and Conditions

All users (including parents/guardians) must comply with the terms and conditions of this document. The use of this technology is for educational purposes. Users are responsible for using the technology and all related programs, files, accounts, and equipment in an ethical and legal manner.

General Conditions of Use

- Users must return equipment upon request by the State College Area School District. If a student withdraws from the District before the end of the school year, all equipment must be returned to the District prior to the date of withdrawal. If the equipment is not returned before withdrawing, the District has the right to charge the student for the full replacement cost of the equipment. For unpaid fines and fees, the District may seek full restitution (repayment) through collection efforts by a third party. The District may also file a report of stolen property with the local law enforcement.
- In grade levels where students take equipment home, they must do so each night. Families not wishing to participate may contact the District to opt-out and the equipment will be turned in at a predetermined location at the end of each school day and picked up at the start of the school day.
- Users are responsible for charging their device's battery before the start of the school day.

- Users are not to deface or destroy the equipment, including, but not limited to, the removal or damage of equipment identification labels.
- Students are permitted to use their district account only for school purposes during appropriate times and as allowed by the classroom teacher or staff member.

Using the Internet and Email

- All use of Internet resources are governed by district Policies 815, [Use of Information Technology Resources](#), 815.1, [Identity and Access Management](#), 815.5 [Acceptable Use of Technology](#), and 815.4, [Information Assurance and IT Security](#). Users may also be accountable for content accessed and downloaded at home and brought into the school network.
- Users should use District-assigned email for educational purposes only.
 - Keep communications school-appropriate.
 - Don't engage in personal attacks or harassment. Inform a teacher or a staff member if an inappropriate email or message is received.
 - Use clear, concise and appropriate language.
 - Respect privacy (yours and everyone else's). Do not repost a message without the permission of the person who sent it. Don't share personal information.
 - District email and network traffic can be monitored and reviewed. Please use these resources appropriately.

Safety and Security

- Students must not share login information or protected information with anyone. IT Services will never ask students for their password; therefore, any requests for password identification must be considered fraudulent.
- Users are not permitted to add, delete or modify other user accounts in any way.
- No person may record a class in any fashion unless they have informed the teacher/class and have written permission from the school.

Privacy

- Users have no expectation of confidentiality or privacy with respect to any usage of district -wned equipment, regardless of whether that use is for District-related or personal purposes.
- The District may, without prior notice or consent, log, supervise, access, view, and monitor the use of student devices at any time for any reason related to the operation of the District. By using District-owned equipment, programs and/or network, users agree to such access and monitoring of their use.

Care and Handling of Equipment

- Students are responsible for the general care of their equipment issued by the District. In the event of accidental, negligent, malicious, or willful damage to the equipment, the parent/guardian will be responsible for repairs or replacing the equipment at full cost. Users who willfully cause damage to school property shall be subject to disciplinary measures and may be prosecuted and punished under the law. Parents and guardians of users shall be held accountable for student actions. For more information, see the [District One-to-One Program Handbook](#).
- In the event that a device is stolen, users must file a police report of stolen property and provide that report along with notification of the stolen device to the school officials.

Consequences of Violating The Agreement

- A violation of the above terms and conditions may result in a restriction of technological resources and/or other discipline under the Code of Conduct.
- In cases of extreme or illegal violations, legal action may be taken against the student and/or other participants under the law.

Electronic Device Procedure

The school administration recognizes that electronic communication devices can be beneficial and used for educational purposes. However, ordinary use of electronic communication devices in school situations that disrupts and interferes with the educational process is not acceptable. For the purposes of this rule, an electronic communication device includes cell phones, MP3 players, personal computers and any other telecommunications or computer device that emits an audible signal, displays a message, or otherwise summons or delivers a communication. If the device is used inappropriately, teachers may confiscate the device for the instructional period only and it should be returned at the end of the period. Elementary and middle schools have a schoolwide approach to electronic devices while high school teachers hold the right to implement their own procedures regarding electronic devices. Students whose electronic device(s) repeatedly cause a disruption/distraction to instruction will be subject to consequences from their teacher as stated in [the Code of Conduct](#). Teachers may request that all electronic devices be turned off during assessments (e.g., presentations, tests, quizzes, speeches). Students should schedule their cell phone communications with friends and family members for non-instructional times only. Teachers will follow the discipline hierarchy for classroom disruption. Refer to Level 1 offenses in the [Code of Conduct](#).

- ❖ No student may record the class in any fashion unless they have informed the teacher/class and have written permission from the teacher and the recording device is visible to everyone in the classroom.

- ❖ No student may record, possess, take or distribute inappropriate (i.e. nudity, sexually suggestive, illegal activities, vulgar gestures, fights) media during any school-related activity.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Activities and Clubs

All SCASD students should consider participating in extracurricular activities. For many students, these activities provide opportunities and experiences that not only make school more enjoyable, but also influence and sometimes determine future choices in both education and career paths.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- MUSIC ENSEMBLES AND INTRAMURALS ARE AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS IN FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADE.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- [PFMS ACTIVITIES](#)
- [MNMS ACTIVITIES](#)

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- STATE HIGH [CLUBS LINK](#)

STUDENT-ATHLETE/PARENT HANDBOOK

Behavior at Athletic Events

Athletic events are among the most popular activities for SCASD students. When you attend an athletic contest, you assume the role of a spokesperson for our school. Your actions are noticed by others, and those around you hear your comments. With that in mind, a display of good sportsmanship will always show you and our school in the most positive light. Furthermore, we are asking that all elementary and middle school students be accompanied by a responsible parent, guardian, or adult in order to attend high school sporting events.

The following rules of sportsmanship serve as a behavior guide for spectators at District athletic events. We hope that they offer you direction and guidance that help to make the contests enjoyable and educational for all in attendance.

- ❖ Learn the rules of the sport so that you may understand and appreciate the action that takes place.
- ❖ Show respect for the opposing players, coaches, spectators and cheerleaders. Treat them as you would treat a guest in your own home.
- ❖ Encourage our athletes to perform their best by applauding good performances and accepting that mistakes are sometimes made. Remember that athletics are a learning experience and praise your classmates for assuming the risk of testing themselves in the open field, court or pool of play.
- ❖ Exhibit respect for the integrity and judgment of contest officials. Understand that they are doing their best to help and promote the student-athletes and admire their willingness to participate in full view of the public.
- ❖ Use only those cheers/chants, signs and gestures that support and uplift the teams involved. Refrain from any that would redirect that focus by antagonizing the teams or drawing attention away from the game.
- ❖ Demonstrate concern for an injured player regardless of the team.
- ❖ Sit in appropriate sections of the arena, stadium or gym that may be designated for student fans.
- ❖ At no time are fans permitted on the playing surface or near team benches during the game.
- ❖ Use of controlled substances (e.g., alcohol, drugs, tobacco) is illegal and should not be used.
- ❖ No student may record or take inappropriate pictures during any school related activity.

We expect that you will use good judgment in fulfilling your responsibility as a school representative, thereby displaying sincere pride in yourself, your school and your community. Your words and your actions will identify you as a leader in genuine sportsmanship. If your behavior does not meet these expectations, you may be requested to leave the event by the game management/security.

After-School Events

After-school events are provided for the students and at times for the community as a whole. Acceptable school standards are expected of all in attendance. Any deviation from this will result in the removal of the individual from the event. If the individual involved is a State College Area School District student, they will be subject to the Code of Conduct.

All-School Events

Students are expected to observe the rules and regulations of the school at all extra-curricular activities. Students who leave a school activity early must leave the school grounds. Students will not be permitted to leave the school building and re-enter.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- EACH SCHOOL, PRIMARILY THROUGH THEIR PBIS TEAM, OFFERS ALL-SCHOOL EVENTS.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- **Dances** - Any student organization planning a dance must obtain permission from the faculty sponsor or advisor. The representative students, together with the advisor, will meet with the principal and arrange for final approval after working out the details, including those for chaperones and police. There must be an appropriate number of approved adult chaperones at each school-sponsored dance. Tickets will be pre-sold (no tickets will be sold at the door). No bags larger than a small clutch will be permitted. The activity sponsor/advisor will be in attendance and may have parents/guardians and/or other teachers to assist the sponsor/advisor.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- **Dances** - Any student organization planning a dance must obtain permission from the faculty sponsor or advisor. The representative students, together with the advisor, will meet with the principal and arrange for final approval after working out the details, including those for chaperones and police. There must be an appropriate number of approved adult chaperones at each school-sponsored dance. Tickets will be pre-sold (no tickets will be sold at the door). No bags larger than a small clutch will be permitted. The activity sponsor/advisor will be in attendance and may have parents and/or other teachers to assist the sponsor/advisor. All State High students will be required to present their student identification card and ticket for admission. State High students requesting to bring a non-State High student to the dance must obtain a form from the main office. These guest students must be attending another high school. No guest over the age of 20 will be permitted into any dances. Middle school students are not allowed to attend dances. The guest permission form must be completed and returned prior to the dance. Students may not be allowed to enter the dance later than one hour after the start time or leave more than one-half hour prior to the end of the dance.

FUNDRAISING

Before a school-sponsored activity can sell any product in the school or community, it must secure approval from the [building administration](#). No products are to be sold by individuals during school hours without prior administrative approval.

SECONDARY GRADING SCALE

At the middle and high school level, the school year is divided into two semesters with report cards issued every nine weeks.

Report cards also show the number of days the student has been absent. **Grades are rounded to the nearest whole number.** The marking system is as follows:

A+	= 98-100%	C+	= 78-79
A	= 92-97	C	= 72-77
A-	= 90-91	C-	= 70-71
B+	= 88-89	D+	= 68-69
B	= 82-87	D	= 62-67
B-	= 80-81	D-	= 60-61
		E	= 0-59

To compute the grade point average (GPA), use the following numerical values:

<u>Mark</u>	<u>Numerical Value</u>
A+, A, A-	4
B+, B, B-	3
C+, C, C-	2
D+, D, D-	1
E	0

Multiply the numerical value of the grade received for each course by the credit for that course, total these values from all courses and then divide this number by the total number of credits.

Final Grades

A final grade will be given for all courses. The final grade will be determined by averaging the points received by a student for each nine-week grading period plus the final exam grade.

Honor Roll

Seventh- and eighth-grade students can earn honor roll if they have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher (based on internal calculation) at the end of each marking period. GPAs are not published in middle school. Students are ineligible for honor roll status if they receive a grade of D or lower or any incompletes, regardless of the GPA.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

ELEMENTARY PROGRESS REPORT

- Elementary students receive a progress report three times a year.
 - Progress reports are standards based and progress is reported out using the following indicators:
 - Exceeding
 - Meeting
 - Approaching
 - Not Yet
 - Not Currently Emphasized
 - Alternate Goals

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Middle school students receive a progress report four times a year if they are earning a D or below.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES :

- A system of weighted grades for “advanced” courses is practiced in this district. This means that the numerical value of a grade in each advanced course is increased by one point. For example, A=5, B=4, C=3 and D=2. Weighted grades are used to compute a student’s grade point average. The criterion for honor roll is a GPA of 3.0 for honors and 3.5 for high honors. Courses may be coded as “modified curriculum” if a student is required to master fewer learning outcomes than are stated in the course requirement. Coding of courses and grades must be distinguished from awards and recognition efforts. The attainment of those honors should be equally available to all students based upon the same criteria, and if the criteria include grades without respect to course content, grades must form the basis for honors recognition.
- Lab courses (i.e. AP Physics, Adv. Chem, and Adv Chem 2) that meet more frequently in one semester compared to another will be weighted accordingly. The midterm and final will together count as 10% of a course grade. For example, if your class meets more frequently during the first semester, the first and second marking periods will each be worth 30% of your total grade and the third and fourth marking periods will each be worth 15% of your total grade.
- **Promotion Guidelines:** In order for students to be promoted to the next grade in school, the following credits must be achieved:

- 9th grade into 10th: 5.5 credits
- 10th grade into 11th: 10.5 credits
- 11th grade into 12th: 17.0 credits

- **Graduation Requirements**

- To graduate from the State College Area School District, students must successfully complete the academic credits distributed across the following areas. Twenty-five (25) credits in the appropriate categories as outlined are required for graduation. Any student who wants to participate in the commencement ceremony at the end of the senior school year must meet all graduation requirements prior to the ceremony.

Subject Area	Credits Required
English	4.00
Social Studies	4.00
Science	3.00
Mathematics	3.00
Physical Education	1.50
Health Education	1.00
Driver Safety Education	.25
Electives (Chosen from any area of student interest or concentration)	8.25
Community Service	Number of hours reflected on transcript
Total Credits Required	25.0

GIFTED EDUCATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Gifted Annual Public Notice

SCASD is committed to providing Gifted Support services to those students who are eligible and require specially designed instruction. Instruction is in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education's stipulation:

Each school district shall conduct awareness activities to inform the public of gifted educational services and programs and the manner by which to request these services and programs. These awareness activities shall be designed to reach the parents of students enrolled in the public schools and the parents of school-age children not enrolled in the public schools.

Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP)

School-age children who have been identified as gifted and are in need of specially designed instruction must be described in a Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP).

Screening

Each educational agency must establish and implement procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate school-age students potentially eligible for gifted education. The State College Area School District provides a variety of opportunities for the screening and evaluation of students thought to be gifted. Students in grade 3 are annually screened in both literacy and math. Additional screening activities result from reviewing student data at all grade levels in an ongoing fashion throughout the school year. If parents need additional information about the purpose, time, and location of screening activities, they should call or write to their [student's building principal](#) or the Director of Federal Programs and Gifted Services, Jonathan Klingeman, at (814) 231-1042 or jtk21@scasd.org.

Evaluation

When a review of screening data indicates that a student may be eligible for gifted education, the District will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. In this context, an "evaluation" means procedures used in the determination of whether a child is gifted and the nature and extent of the specially designed instruction and related services that the child needs. This evaluation is called a Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE). It is conducted by a multidisciplinary team (MDT), which includes a teacher, other qualified professionals who work with the child, and the parents. The GMDE process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and must include protection with evaluation procedures. For example, tests and procedures used as part of the multidisciplinary evaluation may not be racially or culturally biased.

The GMDE process results in a Gifted Written Report (GWR). This report makes recommendations about a student's eligibility for gifted education and the need for specially designed instruction. Once parental consent for evaluation is obtained, the school has timelines and procedures specified by law which it must follow. Parents who think their child is eligible for specially designed instruction may request at any time that

SCASD conduct a GMDE. Requests for a GMDE should be made in writing to a child's building principal or the Director of Federal Programs and Gifted Services, Jonathan Klingeman, at (814) 231-1042 or jtk21@scasd.org.

Educational Placement

The determination of whether a student is eligible for specially designed instruction is made by the Gifted Individualized Education Program (GIEP) team. A single test or procedure may not be the sole factor in determining that a child is eligible. The GIEP team must include at least three members in addition to the parent(s). Other required members include at least one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment); at least one gifted education teacher, or where appropriate, at least one gifted education provider; and a representative of SCASD acting as the Local Education Agency (LEA). If the student demonstrates a need for specially designed instruction, the team develops a written education plan called a GIEP. The GIEP shall be based on the results of the gifted multidisciplinary evaluation.

A GIEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals and objectives, as well as the individualized programs and services which the student will receive based on the student's areas of strength. GIEPs are reviewed annually. The GIEP team will make decisions about the type and level of services and the level and location of intervention. Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with specialized instruction.

Mode of Communication

The content of this gifted public notice has been written in straight-forward, simple language. SCASD will arrange for an interpreter for parents with limited English proficiency. If a parent is deaf or blind or has no written language, the District will arrange for communication of this notice in the mode normally used by the parent (i.e., sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

For more information you may contact the State College Area School District or visit the [PDE Gifted Education website](#).

Learning Enrichment Services

Enrichment services vary by student need and across the grade levels. Students may qualify for services regardless of gifted ability. Students and families are encouraged to reach out to each building's gifted support/learning enrichment teacher for more information and potential opportunities.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Annual Notice of Rights Under FERPA

[The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. Parents have the right to inspect and review a child's education record. SCASD will comply with a request to inspect and review education records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding a GIEP or any due process hearing, but in no case more than 45 days after the request has been made. Requests should be submitted in writing, indicating the records the parents wish to inspect, to the school principal or other designated school official. Parents have the right to a response from the school to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records. Parents have the right to request copies of the records. While SCASD cannot charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information, it may charge a copying fee as long as it does not effectively prevent the parents from exercising their right to inspect and review the records. Parents have the right to appoint a representative to inspect and review their child's records. If any education record contains information on more than one child, parents have the right only to inspect and review the information relating to their child.
2. If parents think information in an education record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of their child, they may request an amendment of the record. Requests should be in writing and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. SCASD will decide whether to amend the record and will notify the parents in writing of its decision. If SCASD refuses to amend a record, it will notify the parents of their right to a hearing to challenge the disputed information. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. SCASD will inform parents when personally identifiable information is no longer needed to provide educational services to a child. Such information must be destroyed at the request of the parents. Parents have a right to receive a copy of the material to be destroyed. However, a permanent record of a student's name, address, and telephone number, grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed may be maintained without the limitation. The "destruction" of records means physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers from information so that the information is no longer personally identifiable.

4. The school will provide, upon request, a listing of the types and locations of education records maintained, the school officials responsible for these records, and the personnel authorized to see personally identifiable information. Such personnel receive training and instruction regarding confidentiality. The school keeps a record of parties obtaining access to education records, including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.
5. Parents have the right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. "Consent" means: the parent (s) have been fully informed regarding the activity requiring consent, in their native language or other mode of communication; they understand and agree in writing to the activity; and they understand that consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time; and information may be disclosed without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the SCASD school, as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); state agency representative, person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing the tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility. Directory information may be released without parental consent. Parents have the right to refuse to let an agency designate any or all of the above information as directory information.
 - a. Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two (2) federal laws require the District to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information on its junior and senior class students– names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the District that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent¹.
 - b. If you do not want the District to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the school counseling office in writing by March 1st of the student's Junior year in high school.

6. Upon written request, SCASD discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
7. Parents have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by SCASD to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

Information Definitions

SCASD protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding its eligible, thought-to-be eligible, and protected “students with disabilities” (if not protected by IDEA '97) in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and its implementing regulations as well as IDEA '97 and its implementing regulations.

- **Educational Records:** These are records which are directly related to a student, and are maintained by the school district or any party acting for the district.
- **Personally Identifiable:** This means that the data or information includes, but is not limited to (a) the name of a student, the student’s parent/guardian or other family member; (b) the address of the student or the student’s family; (c) a personal identifier, such as the student’s social security number or student number; (d) a list of personal characteristics, which would make the student’s identity easily traceable; or (e) other information, which would make the student’s identity easily traceable.
- **Directory Information:** This is information not generally considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Name, address and telephone number
 - Field of study
 - Weight and height of athletes
 - Previous school most recently attended
 - Photographs
 - Date and place of birth
 - Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
 - Dates of attendance, degree and awards
 - Primary language
 - I.D. number, user I.D., or other unique personal identifier used by the student for electronic systems, but only if the I.D. number is used in conjunction with a password or other factor known or possessed only by the user.

- [Policy 216: Student Records](#)
 - [Q&A related to FERPA](#)
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HOMEWORK

Foundation Beliefs and Expectations

Belief Statement

The State College Area School District believes that homework is an important and valuable part of the educational process. Homework is a part of the learning process, as preparation and practice for the instruction that takes place in the classroom.

Cooperation and communication among students, teachers and parents is necessary to ensure the success of our students.

Purpose

Homework is designed to review and to apply the concepts and content learned in the classroom, to prepare for assessments, and to introduce important content for upcoming lessons. Homework should be an opportunity for students to challenge themselves to reveal their learning and roadblocks.

For Students

- Homework is an opportunity for students to engage in self-reflection and to assess their own understanding.
- Maintaining a calendar of assignments and due dates correlates with higher levels of assignment completion.
- Seeking clarification and feedback from teachers when confused or unclear about homework and/or expectations can improve student success.
- Homework typically takes longer, and may not be as effective, when completed while students are engaging with social media and other technology prone to cause distraction.

For Teachers

- Homework should be meaningful and purposeful and respectful of students' time.
- Timely communication regarding academic needs and success to parents/guardians helps to ensure student growth.
- It is important to maintain accurate records weekly and electronic resources pertaining to the current unit of study. Students must be able to access course information and assignments electronically.

- Teachers should interact with every student to better understand student learning.
- Feedback is necessary as a way to assist students and instructors in identifying areas of growth and academic need.
- Teachers should clearly communicate end-of-unit dates electronically in order for parents, support staff, and students to successfully meet deadlines.

For Parents/Guardians

- It is most effective when parents and guardians consistently provide a supportive environment for students to work independently.
- Parents and guardians can be meaningful partners in helping students learn to allocate their time wisely, meet their deadlines, and develop good personal study habits.
- Open communication between parents/guardians and students regarding homework is an important part of the educational process. Parents/guardians are encouraged to address any concerns related to the course/homework directly with the instructor.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- The SCASD [Homework Policy](#) includes nightly reading in all grades because of the importance of reading to and with children at home. In addition, students in grade 3 can expect up to 10 minutes of homework each night and students in grades 4 and 5 can expect up to 20 minutes of homework each night.

Student Make Up Work Procedure

Excused Absences

In the event of an excused absence from class, students will make arrangements to submit their work, take a test/quiz, and get assignments that were missed.

- It is the student's responsibility to check teacher websites and/or contact the teacher for work. Students are expected to make up all work missed within a time period not to exceed the total number of days absent from that specific class, unless other arrangements have been made with the instructor. Students who only missed class on the day of the assessment (test/quiz) should plan to take the assessment upon returning to class, unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher. Thereafter, a 10% deduction may be taken for each class meeting day the assignment / assessment is late following the student's absence from class.
 - ❖ Example: Student is out Monday (A), Tuesday (B), and Wednesday (A). Students will get A day work on Friday, and it will be due two classes later on Thursday. Students will get B day work on Thursday, and it will be due Monday.

- Students are strongly encouraged to make up missed work and keep up with assignments while they are out.
- Extensions may be given at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Unexcused Absences

If students cut class and are unaccounted for in the attendance system they may not earn higher than half of the credit for an assignment/assessment that was given on the day of the absence. All assignments and assessments must be turned in by the conclusion of the unit in which the assignment was given. Teachers are empowered to use their discretion and may choose to modify this procedure if doing so provides an academic benefit to the student(s).

Late Work

It is the expectation that all students will turn in assignments on the given due date.

Late work is an assignment not turned in by the established due date/class period. Ten percent may be deducted for each class period that the assignment is late. A student who turns in the assignment more than three class periods past the due date may receive no less than half of the credit that they earned on the assignment. In order to receive credit for late work a student must turn in any late work by the end of the scheduled unit (final summative assessment) in which the assignment was given. Assignments not turned in by the completion of the unit will be recorded as a zero. Teachers are empowered to use their discretion and may choose to modify this procedure if doing so provides an academic benefit to the student(s).

LABORATORY SAFETY

Laboratory activities are essential components of many of our classes. Following safe procedures is crucial, because safety in the laboratories is paramount for the wellbeing of students and staff. Thus, students must practice safe use of chemicals, materials and equipment in the lab. General safety instructions, presented by the teacher, must be followed at all times. Students will be required to sign a safety contract to participate in lab activities. **Students must wear approved safety goggles at all times, as directed by the teacher. Students are expected to provide their own goggles. They can be purchased through the ROAR Store and use them throughout their tenure in the District.** Spills or accidents must be reported to the teacher immediately. Students demonstrating unsafe practices or negligence may be removed from laboratory activities or the course. Disciplinary consequences may also be applied.

LIBRARY

The SCASD Library program empowers students and staff to become enthusiastic readers, effective researchers, problem solvers, ethical users of information, and global citizens.

Instruction

The SCASD Library program provides information literacy instruction that integrates and supports other disciplines in authentic and diverse ways. These learning opportunities foster student growth, inquiry, critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, creativity, civic engagement, and lifelong literacy.

Materials

The SCASD Library program offers equitable access to diverse materials in a variety of formats. The school librarian selects and provides resources connected to the curriculum, personal interests and the local and global communities. Digital collections remove barriers by being accessible anytime, anywhere.

Space

The SCASD Library program provides a flexible and dynamic environment based upon students' learning and social needs. The libraries are active, welcoming spaces where learning is visible and collaborations are fostered. The school library extends to classrooms, virtual learning spaces, and the wider community.

- [Borrowing Practices and Procedures](#)

[ELEMENTARY LIBRARY OVERVIEW](#)

[ELEMENTARY LIBRARY CURRICULUM](#)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARY WEBSITES:

- [Corl Street Library](#)
- [Easterly Parkway Library](#)
- [Ferguson Township Library](#)
- [Gray's Woods Library](#)
- [Mount Nittany Library](#)
- [Park Forest Library](#)
- [Radio Park Library](#)

- [Spring Creek Library](#)

[MIDDLE SCHOOL LIBRARY OVERVIEW](#)

MIDDLE SCHOOL LIBRARY WEBSITES:

- [MNMS Library](#)
- [PFMS Library](#)

[HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY OVERVIEW](#)

HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY WEBSITE:

- [High School Library](#)

LOCKERS/CUBBIES

All lockers or cubbies on school premises are the sole and exclusive property of the State College Area School District and are under the supervision and regulation of the school at all times.

A locker or cubby, as appropriate, is provided to the student for storing school-related items. The school has an obligation to ensure that these spaces are properly used and not used for the storage or keeping of any item which is illegal, against school rules, or which jeopardizes the health, safety and welfare of the students, faculty, school property or the educational process. Students are permitted to use their own locks on the locker(s) assigned to them, provided that the combination(s) or master key for each lock has first been filed with the administration office of the building in which the locker is situated.

It is recommended that the students do not bring large sums of money or valuables to school. The school is not responsible for articles that are lost or stolen from the individual or out of their school locker or cubby.

Students should not consider a locker or cubby as private property. Lockers and cubbies are subject to being opened (lockers), examined, inspected or searched at any time under proper supervision of school officials. At any time, school officials may access student lockers or cubbies for upkeep and to make general repairs as needed without notice to the students.

LOST AND FOUND

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the office where the owner can claim them. If you lose something, report it immediately to security or the main office.

NURSE SERVICES AND HEALTH INFORMATION

Health Screenings and Physical Exam Requirements

School health services supplement, but are not a substitute for, the health care that parents/guardians provide for their children. School services devote attention to student health problems and encourage parents/guardians to use the services of their physicians, dentists, and community agencies when attention is needed.

The following health services are provided:

- Dental Inspection (Kindergarten, grade 3, and new students)
- Physical Examination (Kindergarten, all new students who have no record of a physical examination and 11th-grade students). Private physical exam report forms are available in the nurse's office or online [at the Health Services/Nursing webpage](#).
- Hearing (Kindergarten, grades 1, 2, 3, 7 and 11)
- Height and Weight (all grades). A Body Mass Index (BMI) score (available through the parent portal for you to access within a week of screenings) will be sent home to show the results of this screening.
- Vision (all grades)
- Color vision/stereo depth screening: (Kindergarten or grade 1, and new students not previously screened)

Immunization Requirements for Children Entering School for the First Time

Immunization for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, measles (rubeola), mumps, German measles (rubella), hepatitis B, and varicella immunity, via vaccine or history of the disease, are required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a condition of entrance to school. Failure to comply with this requirement can result in the student's exclusion from school. Boosters for Tetanus and Meningitis are required for entry into 7th grade and a second Meningitis for entry into 12th grade. A child's birth certificate and immunization records are necessary for registration. Questions about immunizations should be directed to [your child's school nurse](#) or the Registrar's office at (814) 231-1017.

- Follow this [link](#) for a complete list of the required doses of each immunization.
- Exemptions are granted for medical, religious, moral, ethical or philosophical reasons. A written request for exemptions must be submitted to the school nurse.

Medications

Administering Medication

Licensed school health personnel are permitted to administer medication to the elementary child with a written order from a physician or health care provider, and a signed consent from a parent/guardian.

Scheduled or Prescribed Medication

Medication, whenever possible, should be given at home. However, in the event that there is a need for a student to require any medication during school hours, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the health room nurse with the following:

- An order signed by a physician/healthcare provider. This order must include the name, dosage, time, route and duration of order. The order only applies to the current school year. Forms for completion are available in the health room office or [online](#).
- Signed consent by parent/guardian.
- Original labeled container, which will be stored in the health room or nurse office.
- Do not send anything unlabeled, in a Ziplock bag, lunch box or backpack.
- Any controlled substance medication must be delivered to the health room by a parent or legal guardian.
- Parents or legal guardian must pick up any unused portions at the end of the school year, or it will be destroyed.

Over-the-counter Medication (for middle and high school only)

Parents can complete a permission form for Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen to be administered on an “as needed” basis. The HS27OTC form can be found on the [District website](#) and applies to the current school year. A new form must be completed every year.

The same HS27OTC form for grades K-12 applies to over-the-counter medication that includes cough drops, bacitracin and other common remedies. Please choose the correct form for elementary, middle or secondary. This form may be available through ParentVue.

Self-Medication

If they have a prescribed order, written parent/guardian request (available in the health room office or [online](#)) and the original storage container, students of all grades are permitted to carry and self-medicate with inhalers, diabetic supplies, and auto-epinephrine administration devices. This is provided that the student does so in a responsible manner.

Health services staff supports this approach, but ask that the parent/guardian and student be responsible in having all labeled required self-medications with them while at school. The school nurse must be provided with the above paperwork and notified of any self-carry medication. Please contact the certified school nurse in your child's building to discuss usage and storage.

- (Severe Allergy [Policy](#) and [Brochure](#))

Illness Guidelines

A sick child is unable to concentrate in class and effective learning is often impaired during illness. As a parent/guardian, you know your child the best. If you feel your child is sick, please keep them home and seek the advice of your health care provider. Doing so helps prevent the spread of germs to fellow students and faculty/staff and puts your child on the road to a quicker recovery. In general, students should be kept home when they have:

- Fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Ideally, the child should remain home until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Unexplainable rash or sores
- Red eyes accompanied by drainage
- Untreated case of head lice (please note that the child must be examined by the school nurse before returning to class).

If your child becomes ill with any of the above symptoms while at school, you will be contacted by either the nurse or licensed health care paraprofessional. It is extremely important that we have a telephone number where you can be reached in case of emergency/illness. Please remember that a school nurse is not a doctor, and may not diagnose a child's illness or injury. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to have the child treated by a physician/health care provider whenever necessary.

- [List of SCASD Certified School Nurses](#)
 - [Health Forms and Information](#)
-

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students are required to participate and pass physical education classes as mandated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. A change of clothes is required when participating in the physical education classes. This change will include appropriate dress for indoor and outdoor activities. Appropriate athletic shoes are required. Physical

education teachers reserve the right to determine appropriate attire prior to each unit (i.e., loose-fitting shorts, sweatpants, T-shirts and warm clothing for outdoor activities). Students should not bring valuables to the locker room or to class. iPods and cell phones should be stored in a secure locker, and students are asked to bring a lock. The Physical Education staff is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

When a student is unable to participate in regular physical education classes for a physical or other compelling reason, a doctor's excuse will be submitted to the physical education teacher. The excuse will give the nature of the injury or illness, length of time to be excused from regular physical education classes and a description of the activities in which the student can participate (including exercises that can help in rehabilitation). When a doctor's excuse is submitted, the student may be offered an alternative program, different from the regular physical education program.

Schools will permit students of any gender engaged in physical education to wear longer shorts, sweatpants, or other types of clothing suitable for physical activity when a request is made to do so based on the student's religious beliefs. A parent/guardian requesting an accommodation should contact their child's physical education teacher.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- All students in Kindergarten through Fifth grade will receive 40 minutes of physical education per week taught by a certified health and physical education teacher. Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing and footwear in order to safely participate in class activities.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- All students in 6th, 7th and 8th grade will receive two class periods of physical education during every 6-day cycle, taught by a certified health and physical education teacher. For safety and hygiene reasons, a change of clothes is required when participating in the physical education classes. This change should include appropriate dress for indoor and outdoor activities and appropriate footwear to safely participate in class activities.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- All students in grades 9-12 are required to successfully complete 1.5 credits of physical education to meet the SCASD graduation requirement. Students have the opportunity to acquire certification to use our fitness center during their physical education class.
- **FITNESS CENTER** - www.scasd.org/fitnesscenter

POSTERS AND DISPLAY CASE MATERIALS

All posters and signs must be approved and signed by an administrator. Posters will be for school-related functions only. Persons posting the signs and posters are responsible for their removal and for clean-up of the area used. Posters should not be taped, glued or stapled to other surfaces in the display case or walls. Once the posters have served their purposes, they should be removed by the sponsor or student organization.

Images viewed by the general public and student population should reflect our high standards and educational purpose and be respectful to all those who use the school building. Therefore, images that are displayed in hallways and spaces of the school used by the general public must not depict content that could be viewed as advocating or promoting sex, drugs, nudity, violence, or hatred, nor be vulgar or obscene in nature. The display of such pictures or messages is in violation of school policy and those who post them are subject to disciplinary action.

- Student Expression [Policy 220](#).

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- The principal must approve and sign off on all non-instructional posters and signage.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- The principal must approve and sign off on all non-instructional posters and signage.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Candidates for class officers should check with class advisors or administrators concerning the number and size of signs to be posted. Information may be posted only on the cork strips, tile walls or glass.

RECESS

Recess is a supervised break and, whenever possible, should:

- Be scheduled before lunch.
- Be provided to each student and not be withheld for academic makeup or punitive reasons.

- Be scheduled at a time other than adjacent to physical education classes.
- Be held outside within the following parameters:
 - When temperatures are above 20 degrees Fahrenheit (provided children have appropriate outer garments), in accordance with the following decision-making framework based on National Weather Service (NWS) wind chill temperatures in Fahrenheit:
 - 20 degrees and above = full outdoor recess (grades K - 5 → 30 minutes, grade 6 → 15 minutes)
 - 15 to 19 degrees = the principal determines, based on all available data, how long outdoor recess should be (15-30 minutes)
 - 10 to 14 degrees = 15-minute outdoor recess
 - 5 to 9 degrees = possible 5-minute brisk walk outside (principal discretion)
 - Other factors that may impact outdoor recess include wind gusts, moisture, and current blacktop/playground conditions (principal discretion).
- If a student does not bring appropriate outer garments to school, then every effort will be made to locate temporary replacement garments.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- According to the District's recess policy and guidelines, each elementary school will have at least 30 minutes included in the daily schedule for recess.
- Primary students (K-2) will have an additional scheduled daily recess of 15 minutes.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- 6th grade has a scheduled recess during the school day
- 6th-8th grade have the opportunity to go outside (weather permitting) after they are finished with their lunch.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- NA

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

Critical Religious Holidays and Observances

In line with SCASD's Inclusive Excellence Policy, please note the below information regarding absences due to religious observances below.

Absences Due to Religious Observance

According to Policy 105.2 and in compliance with the requirement of the State Board of Education, parents have the right to excuse their children from specific instruction which conflicts with their religious beliefs. For more information, please refer to [Policy 105.2](#).

Upon the request of a parent or guardian, a student may be excused from attending school in observance of a religious holiday. Students will be allowed to make up assignments and testing/assessments in the same manner as with any excused absence. Absences based on religious observances will be marked as an excused absence if a note from a parent/guardian is provided to the main office prior to the absence or within three days following the absence.

Space for Prayer or Meditation

Students who are in need of a private space to pray or meditate due to religious observance should go to the main office and speak with an administrator. A space will then be identified for the student to use. Alternatively, the student can speak with their assigned school counselor.

General Nutritional Needs

Upon request of a parent/guardian, the school's food services department will provide information regarding the availability of meal selections to meet the nutritional needs of the student. Please contact your school's food service office.

Religious Fasting

When a school is made aware that a student may be engaged in an extended period of religious fasting, the student may be excused from lunch and strenuous physical activity. School personnel will work collaboratively with the student's family and may use their discretion regarding whether testing or assessment for a particular student should be rescheduled. Please contact your child's school counselor to discuss your child's needs, including the option of identifying an alternative location for your child during the designated lunch period.

Student Religious Attire

As noted elsewhere in this handbook, students may wear religious attire provided that the attire is not materially and substantially disruptive to the educational process or infringe

on the rights of others. Religious messages on clothing are subject to the same rules as generally applied to comparable nonreligious messages and expression.

In addition, schools will permit students of any gender engaged in physical education to wear longer shorts, sweatpants, or other types of clothing suitable for physical activity when a request is made to do so based on the student's religious beliefs. A parent/guardian requesting an accommodation should contact their child's physical education teacher.

Opt Out

[Exemption from Instruction Policy 105.2](#) complies with the requirement of the State Board of Education that school districts provide parents the right to have their children excused from specific instruction which conflicts with their religious beliefs.

RESTROOM PROCEDURES

Bathroom procedures are in place for the safety of students. Should you need more allowances, please speak with individual teachers, administration, or counselors. We discourage trips during class/instructional periods, but if you find it necessary to use the restroom, please try to minimize your time away from class and return as quickly as possible.

- Students must follow building specific hallway/bathroom pass procedures.
- Students should use the closest appropriate bathroom to their assigned classroom.

Please report any restroom damage or malfunction that you see immediately to any staff member.

INDIVIDUAL RESTROOM OPTIONS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Contact your school nurse, school counselor, or building administration for needed access to single-stall restrooms.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Contact your school nurse, school counselor, or building administration for needed access to single-stall restrooms.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Inclusive Restrooms

- A138 C104
- A326 D005
- B206 F110
- C025 F111
- D205

SAFETY AND SECURITY

In the event of a threat inside or outside of the school such as armed intruder, bomb threat, fire, threatening person, and/or severe weather conditions, please remain quiet and calm and follow the described district protocol.

Traumatic Events

This is an event in which a crisis exists requiring an immediate response.

Declaration of a Traumatic Event

A traumatic event may be determined by any member of the administration, staff, faculty, or student body when evidence concludes such to be the case.

Declaration of an End of a Traumatic Event

A building or central office team member will declare the end of a traumatic event when the team concludes such to be the case.

Threat Assessment Process

A threat is a communication of intent to harm someone that may be spoken, written, gestured, or expressed in some other form, such as via text messaging, email, or other digital means. An expression of intent to harm someone is considered a threat regardless of whether it is communicated to the intended target(s) and regardless of whether the intended target is aware of the threat. There are two types of threats:

Imminent Threat: An individual/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward others that requires containment and action to protect identified or identifiable target(s); and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that requires intervention.

Direct Threat: An individual/situation poses a significant risk to the health or safety of themselves and/or others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies,

practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services. The direct threat standard applies when the Threat Assessment Team or school entity administration determines that an individual/situation poses a direct threat and that applicable disciplinary procedures are not available or sufficient to mitigate the threat.

Each SCASD school will establish a trained threat assessment team that will complete the process of identifying, reporting, assessing, responding to, and intervening with threats, including identifying and avoiding racial, cultural, or disability bias. The approach the threat assessment teams will take will include identifying, inquiring, assessing and managing the situation.

Threat assessment teams consist of the building principal(s) and the school counselor and may also include the school psychologist, school nurse, special education teacher, or any person that has special training in threat assessment processes. The responsibilities of the Threat Assessment Teams include:

- Assessing and intervening with individuals who may pose a threat to self or others
- Ensuring school employees know:
 - Who the team members are
 - How – and to whom – to report threatening or at-risk behavior, including through the Safe2Say Something program
- More information on [Armed Intruder Protocol](#)
- More information on [Threat Assessment Process](#)

Prolonged Evacuation

In the event of an emergency where students need to be out of a building for a long period of time, they will be directed to go to the designated safe location(s). Safe locations will be determined based on event circumstances.

Searches

General Searches

It is the policy of the State College Area School District to conduct, in certain circumstances, periodic searches of lockers located in school facilities. School authorities may search a student's locker and seize any illegal or unauthorized items or materials, including but not limited to: weapons, knives, firearms, ammunition, firecrackers, smoke bombs, or any other incendiary or explosive device; tobacco products, "look-alikes" and paraphernalia; drugs or controlled substances, drug paraphernalia, or "look-alikes" in any form; alcohol or "look-alikes" in any form; obscene materials; stolen property; any other poisonous or harmful material or item.

Searches may include, but are not limited to, the utilization of a certified police drug detection dog or any other device deemed useful for protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the school population. Before district personnel open a locker or search a car, a student shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present, but not to stop the search. Any and all lockers and cars parked on school property may be searched and any contents therein can be seized. Any contraband or unauthorized items or materials discovered can be seized and may be the subject of disciplinary action and/or criminal charges.

Individualized Searches

Where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that a student's clothing, possessions, backpacks, cars on school property, locker or electronic device contains materials which pose a threat to the health, welfare, and safety of students, faculty, administration, visitors and /or school property, any student and any student's locker(s) may be searched without proper warning or, in the case of a student's locker, without the presence of the student. If these certain circumstances arise, the student and any and all contents of the locker may be subject to search, including, but not limited to, items such as coats, book bags, purses, gym bags, containers or any other object where the contents may be kept. Any contraband or unauthorized items or materials discovered can be seized and may result in disciplinary action and/or criminal charges. Refusal to comply with a search request by authority will result in an automatic 10-day out-of-school suspension.

Surveillance Cameras

SCASD has surveillance cameras located inside and outside school buildings to support our efforts to maintain a safe and secure school environment while protecting individuals and their property from harm. Video surveillance may be used in proceedings related to law enforcement for purposes authorized by District policy, the School Code and related laws. Students observed by video surveillance in acts which break school district policy, procedures, or disciplinary guidelines will be subject to the consequences of sanctions imposed for violating those policies, procedures or disciplinary guidelines. Surveillance footage is for administrative use only. Surveillance cameras may also be utilized in District-owned, operated or contracted school buses or school vehicles, except in circumstances when the school bus or school vehicle is not being used for school-related purposes.

SCHOOL ID

SCASD expects all middle and high school students to possess their school issued student identification.

We expect all of our students to visibly display their school-issued student identification for entering the building. To ensure school safety we must be able to easily identify all individuals on our campus.

Students without an ID need to report to the main office to verify their student status and sign in. If you need a replacement ID, the cost will be \$5.00.

SCHOOL SPIRIT/PEP RALLIES

School spirit accompanies every phase of school activity, whether it is sports, music events, academic contests or daily schoolwork. School spirit is a feeling of loyalty to our school. Each of us must contribute to it to possess it, and, because we are a part of it and have helped to make it what it is, we have a common bond — a feeling of togetherness and of belonging.

School spirit is that feeling which will keep the memories of our school days precious to us throughout the years. At all times — in the classroom, in the halls, in the cafeteria, at the games — school spirit is teamwork. Let's strive to make each year at SCASD schools a better year than the one before. On pep rally days, a special schedule will be followed so that no classes are missed.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES/SECTION 504 PLANS

Annual Public Notice to Parents

According to state and federal special education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. School districts and intermediate units are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information related to Section 504/Chapter 15 services, the parent may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled [Implementation of Chapter 15](#) or contact Jeanne Knouse, Section 504 Coordinator and Director of Student Services at jmk37@scasd.org or (814) 231-1011 ext. 1071. Also, school districts are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for gifted services via 22 PA Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding gifted services, the parent may refer to [22 PA Code Chapter 16](#). If a student is

both gifted and eligible for special education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence.

This notice shall inform parents throughout the school district and intermediate unit of the child identification activities and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children. In addition to this public notice, each school district and intermediate unit shall publish written information in the handbook and on the website. Children ages three through 21 can be eligible for special education programs and services. If parents believe that the child may be eligible for special education, the parent should contact their district of residence. Contact information is listed at the end of this public notice.

Children ages three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need special education and related services. Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least three years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) The child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas, or (ii) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help. For additional information contact the intermediate unit. Contact information is listed at the end of this public notice.

Evaluation Process and Timeline

Each school district and intermediate unit has a procedure in place by which parents can request an evaluation. For information about procedures applicable to your child, contact the school which your child attends. Parents of preschool age children, ages three through five, may request an evaluation in writing by addressing a letter to the Early Intervention Program Director, Central Intermediate Unit 10, 60 Decibel Road, State College, PA 16801.

According to Pennsylvania law, *Chapter 14 Special Education Services and Programs* and *Federal Regulations Part 300, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*, special education services must be delivered according to mandatory timelines. Chapter 14 regulations are adopted by the State Board of Education. These provisions are in addition to the federal regulations adopted for the delivery of special education to students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

LAW	ACTION	TIMELINE
14.123(c)	When a parent orally requests an evaluation, the local education agency (LEA) must provide a copy of the <i>Permission to Evaluate-Evaluation Request</i> form to the parent.	10 Calendar Days
300.503(a) 300.300(a)	When a parent presents a written request for an evaluation, if the LEA agrees to evaluate as requested, the LEA must provide the <i>Permission to Evaluate-Consent</i> form and <i>Notice of Recommended Educational Placement/Prior Written Notice (NOREP/PWN)</i> form to the parent.	Within a reasonable amount of time, generally considered to be 10 Calendar Days
14.123(b) 300.300.309(b) 300.300.309(c)	After the LEA receives written parental consent, the initial evaluation must be completed and a copy of the <i>Evaluation Report</i> presented to the parent.	60 Calendar Days*
14.123(d)	The parent must receive a copy of the <i>Evaluation Report</i> prior to the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting (unless a waiver is signed).	At least 10 School Days

*There are several exceptions to the 60 calendar day timeline requirement.

Note: The calendar days from the day after the last day of the spring school term, up to and including the day before the first day of the fall term, will not be counted.

Consent

School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation or with the initial provision of special education and related services without the written consent of the parents. For additional information related to consent, please refer to the Procedural Safeguards Notice which can be found at the PaTTAN website, www.pattan.net. Once written parental consent is obtained, the District will proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the evaluation, the parent can request an independent educational evaluation at public expense.

Program Development

Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professionals and the parents determine whether the child is eligible. If the child is eligible, the individualized education program (IEP) team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program and determines the

educational placement, school district staff or intermediate unit staff will issue a notice of recommended educational placement/prior written notice. Your written consent is required before initial services can be provided. The parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

Confidentiality of Information

The school districts and to some extent the intermediate unit maintain records concerning children enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. Your consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under state law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The age of majority in Pennsylvania is 21. Each participating agency must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction states. One official at each participating agency must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. Each participating agency must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information.

In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.624, please be advised of the following retention/destruction schedule for the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), and Keystone Exam related materials:

- PSSA, Keystone Exam, and PASA test booklets will be destroyed one year after student reports are delivered for the administration associated with the test booklets.
- PSSA and Keystone Exam answer booklets and PASA media recordings will be destroyed three years after completion of the assessment.

For additional information related to student records, the parent can refer to the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#).

This notice is only a summary of the special education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents. For more information or to request evaluation or screening of a public or private school child, contact the responsible entity listed below. For preschool age children, information, screenings and evaluations requested, may be obtained by contacting the intermediate unit.

The State College Area School District provides a variety of opportunities for the screening and evaluation of students thought to have disabilities. In kindergarten, all

students receive screenings on readiness as well as standardized indicators of early literacy. All elementary schools in the District have an identified and trained Instructional Support Team (IST). The Instructional Support Team works with school staff to provide screening in various areas (cognitive, emotional, social, motor, vision and hearing). Parents may request IST consideration through the building principal. The IST process can recommend interventions, further screening and/or a referral for multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE) for special education services for a student with a disability.

MDE can be requested at any level by school teams and/or parents. Parental requests should be made in writing to the building principal. Requests for screening and/or evaluation of students in preschool settings should be directed to the preschool provider who, in turn, will contact the Preschool Program Supervisor of the Central Intermediate Unit #10. Requests for screening and/or evaluation of students in non-public schools should be directed to the non-public school director/principal, who, in turn, will contact the District Special Education Office.

Special education services are provided to exceptional students under IDEA Federal Regulations Part 300 and Chapter 14 of the Pennsylvania Special Education Regulations. Special education is defined as specially designed instruction to meet the needs of an exceptional student including specially designed instruction that is the following:

- Conducted in the classroom, in the home, in community settings, in hospitals, in institutions and in other settings.
- Provided in an instructional or skill area, including physical education, speech and vocational education. A specially designed program of instruction is available for a student who meets one of the categorical exceptionalities: autism deaf-blindness, deafness, emotional disturbance, hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, visual, impairment including blindness and who needs a specially designed program of instruction.

Parents or teachers may refer students for a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE) if a student is thought to be eligible for special education services. The District conducts screening to identify students who may need special education through health screenings, group intelligence tests and achievement tests. Regularly scheduled Child and Pupil Study Teams as well as Student Assistance Teams, and Instructional Support Teams review student records and teacher reports for relevant information. These activities are ongoing during the school year.

The State College Area School District does not discriminate against protected students with disabilities. Such students are assured equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate. It is the policy of the school district to provide a free and appropriate public education to each student with disabilities within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. It is the intent of the District to ensure that students with disabilities within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be considered as having a disability under this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the corresponding Pennsylvania Special Education Regulations. Written service agreements may be developed annually in order to detail necessary services for students with disabilities under section 504. The State College Area School District policy on [confidentiality of student records](#) and the Pennsylvania Special Education Regulations section addressing confidentiality protects rights of students and parents.

Questions concerning any matters relative to special education evaluation, identification, programs, services, due process rights of students and parents, or the Surrogate Parents Program should be directed to the Special Education Office at (814) 231-1072. For further information about child identification, screenings, referral for evaluation, or public awareness, please contact the Special Education Office in writing at 240 Villa Crest Drive, State College, PA 16801 or by phone at (814) 231-1072/4172. Questions about written service agreements for Protected Students with Disabilities should be directed to the Director of Student Services at (814) 231-1011 ext. 1071.

The State College Area School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or religion in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and Americans with Disabilities Act. For information regarding civil rights, grievance procedures and services, or activities and facilities that are accessible to and usable by disabled persons, contact the Director of Human Resources, Compliance Officer, State College Area School District, 240 Villa Crest Drive, State College, PA 16801, (814) 231-1011 ext. 1051.

TITLE I PARENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

2022-2023 [Title I Parent and Family Engagement Policy](#)

It is the policy of the State College Area School District's Title I program to encourage active participation of parents and those in the role of parents as required in Section 1116 of ESSA. This policy includes a commitment to guide/reinforce/increase parent and family

engagement by building a strong partnership emphasizing the shared responsibilities among students, families, and school teams.

In compliance with Federal law, the State College Area School District and parents/guardians of students participating in Title 1 Programs shall jointly develop and agree upon a written Family Engagement Plan for a Title I school. When implementing, the District shall:

Objective 1: Involve parents/guardians in the joint development of the Title 1 plan and the process of school review and improvements and coordinate and integrate parent and family engagement strategies with other Federal, State, and local laws and programs (ESSA, Section 1116(a)(2)(A)).

Objective 2: Provide support and technical assistance and other supports in order to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective family engagement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance (ESSA, Section 1116(a)(2)(B)).

Objective 3: Conduct, with the meaningful engagement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and the effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools and Identifies barriers to greater participation by parents and family members, with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background; the needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers; and strategies to support successful school and family interactions (ESSA Section 1116(a)(2)(D)(i-iii)).

Objective 4: Use the findings of the annual evaluation to design strategies for more effective evidence-based parental/family engagement, If necessary, the parent and family engagement policies (ESSA, Section 1116(a)(2)(E)).

Objective 5: Involve parents and guardians in the activities of schools served under Title I through activities that promote school and parents' capacity for strong family engagement that meets the needs of all stakeholders in assisting them with the learning of their children at school and into the home through the use of Title 1 Committee Meetings and surveys (ESSA, Section 1116(a)(2)(F)).

To accomplish this goal, our schools involve parents in the development of the Local Educational Agency (LEA) policy and the process of school review and improvement through parental and family engagement group meetings, parent surveys, consultation with Title I, general education teachers, and district administration, and conferences.

Parent Right to Know Information as Required by The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

[Section 1112(e)(1)(A)] and the Every Student Succeeds Act [Section 1112(e)(1)(A)]

At the State College Area School District, we are very proud of our teachers and feel they are prepared to give SCASD students a high-quality education. As our district receives federal funding to support programming in our elementary schools, you may at any time ask our schools:

- Whether your child's teacher/s meet/s state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and subject they are teaching, and
- Whether your child's teacher/s received an emergency or conditional certificate through which state qualifications were waived, and
- What undergraduate or graduate degrees your child's teacher/s hold/s, including graduate certificates and additional degrees, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration.

You may also ask whether your child receives help from a paraprofessional. If your child receives this assistance, we can provide you with information about the paraprofessional's qualifications.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which was signed into law in December 2015 and reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1956 (ESEA) includes additional right to know requests. At any time, parents and family members can request:

- Information on policies regarding student participation in assessments and procedures for opting out, and
- Information on required assessments that include
 - o subject matter tested,
 - o purpose of the test,
 - o source of the requirement (if applicable),
 - o amount of time it takes students to complete the test, and
 - o time and format of disseminating results.

Our teams are committed to helping your child develop the academic knowledge and critical thinking they need to succeed in school and beyond. That commitment includes making sure that all of our teachers and paraprofessionals meet applicable Pennsylvania state requirements.

If you have any questions about your child's assignment to a teacher or paraprofessional, please contact your building principal.

TRANSGENDER OR GENDER EXPANSIVE

Accommodations Request

SCASD aims to provide support and services to meet the needs of students who identify as transgender and/or gender expansive. If a student has a specific need or accommodation, the student may contact their school administrator or school counselor.

The District may ask the parent/guardian and student to review and complete a [gender support plan](#), if needed, to prepare for a discussion to determine how the school can meet the student's needs.

Name Change

Students have a right to be referred to by the name with which they identify. A student who wishes to change their name within the SCASD Student Information System can do so by having their parent/guardian complete this [form](#). A signature from a parent or guardian is recommended, but not mandatory to change a student's name in the Student Information System. Students will be informed in such cases that if they make this change without a parent signature, their parent will be able to view the changes in ParentVue. The form must be submitted to the Registrar's Office.

- [Policy 250 - Gender-Expansive and Transgender Students - Ensuring Equity and Nondiscrimination](#)
 - [Administrative Regulations 250 - Gender Expansive and Transgender Students - Ensuring Equity and Nondiscrimination](#)
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TEXTBOOKS AND SCHOOL-ISSUED EQUIPMENT

Textbooks and school issued equipment are furnished by the District and all students must assume full responsibility for the care of the books and equipment assigned to them. Books, calculators and other materials are issued by the subject teacher and must be returned to the same teacher upon completion of the school year or withdrawal from school. If these items are not returned, the student will be assessed a prorated cost for their replacement. Loss due to theft or other circumstances will not be accepted as an excuse for non-payment. If a student has an outstanding fine for loss of textbook and/or school issued equipment, they will be unable to apply for a parking permit until the fine is paid in full.

If a student pays for a lost item and it is found and returned, a refund will be made to the student. If an item is damaged, the student is required to pay damage charges up to the original price of the item, depending on the degree of damage and the condition of the item when it was issued. If a textbook is misused, a fine will be imposed. If a textbook is lost, the student will pay the current cost of replacing the same textbook.

VISITORS

Guidelines for Classroom and Program Site Visitations

The State College Area School District encourages parents and guardians to make informed decisions about the programs and services recommended for, or to which the District has assigned, their children. Informed decision-making could involve visiting a recommended or assigned classroom or program site. The District also encourages parents to become involved in the ongoing education and development of their children and recognizes that occasional classroom or program site visits can promote effective parental involvement. That said, all visitors must follow all district policy, procedures while on school property, or while attending a school function for both curricular and extracurricular events before and after school hours.

The interest that parents and guardians often have in visiting classrooms and program sites must, however, be weighed against the disruption and distraction that often accompanies such visitations. Many children require a high level of consistency and predictability and low levels of visual and auditory distraction to learn and develop. The purpose of this policy is to establish rules that recognize the need of parents and guardians to make informed decisions about the education of their children without compromising unnecessarily the rights of other children to a stable, safe, and disruption-free learning environment.

Classrooms and Program Sites Subject to Visitation

A parent or guardian, or a person with appropriate professional expertise designated by a parent or guardian, may visit a classroom or program site when (a) the District has specifically recommended that classroom or program for their child; (b) the District has assigned the child to that classroom or program; or (c) the child is currently placed in that classroom or program.

Scheduling Advance Notice

Parents or guardians must arrange visitations at least 3 to 5 school days in advance with the principal of the building in which the classroom or program is located or, in the case of a special education program or gifted service, with the director of special education or director or learning enrichment/gifted education, respectively. All visitors including parents or guardians wishing to observe the program, their child, and/or outside agency support personnel may be requested to complete a Visitor Observation Request Form prior to an observation or visitation.

Scheduling Time

The following shall apply to the timing of visitations, other than visitations that are by teacher invitation as part of a planned parent activity:

- ❖ Visits shall not exceed one hour of silent observation in areas where children are receiving instruction or are participating in activities.
- ❖ The total number of visits to any one classroom or program site shall not exceed two (2) observations for any one child during any month.
- ❖ The timing of visits shall be determined by the District, in its sole discretion, depending on such factors as the type and intensity of planned instruction or activities, the susceptibility of individual students to the disruption known or likely to be caused by the visit, the stated purpose of the visit, the number of adults the visit will place in the room at the same time, and the total amount of traffic in the classroom at or near the time of the visit.

Conditions of Visitations

The following conditions shall be observed for all:

- ❖ All visitors must sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's pass. Visitors shall consist of not more than two parents, legal guardians, grandparents, or surrogate parents, or one appropriately qualified professional designated by the parents, at any one time.
- ❖ Parents or guardians must identify in writing the name, address, telephone number, and professional credentials of — and must sign a release permitting the disclosure of personally-identifiable information to — any appropriately-qualified professional that they have designated to visit the classroom or program site of their child.
- ❖ A building administrator may assign a district staff member other than the teacher, assistant teacher, or related service provider working with the child to accompany any visitor.
- ❖ Visitors shall refrain from conversation and from interaction with children, staff and other personnel during the period of classroom and program observation. Cell phones should be on silent and any necessary phone conversations would need to occur outside of the classroom.
- ❖ The District staff member accompanying a visitor or the staff member responsible for the classroom or program may, in the staff member's sole discretion, terminate a visit at any time if, in the judgment of that staff member, the visit is significantly disrupting children, staff, or the learning process or becomes a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of children or staff.
- ❖ During the visit, all visitors shall remain in such locations within the classroom or program site as are designated by the accompanying district staff member, or the staff member responsible for the classroom.

- ❖ Questions or concerns about a visit or about anything observed during a visit must be addressed to the accompanying district staff member or, by appointment, to the building administrator or the staff member responsible for the classroom, before or after the visit and outside the presence of children or working staff members.
- ❖ District staff shall not share with any visitor personally identifiable information concerning any students other than the student who is the subject of the observation.
- ❖ For reasons of safety and the smooth operation of schools, those not obtaining a pass, those who are on school grounds without permission, and those who have been denied permission to be on school grounds will be considered to be trespassing. Trespassers may be prosecuted.

In response to extraordinary circumstances, or to comply with the requirements of law, regulation or order, the District may waive any timeline or condition established in these guidelines. No waiver given in accordance with this section shall be deemed to establish a revision or modification, or to establish a policy, practice, or custom contrary to the terms and conditions of these guidelines.

VOLUNTEERING IN SCASD

The District encourages volunteering by parents, guardians, and community members and we appreciate our community's support. Pennsylvania Act 15 requires that adults (those 18 years of age or older) having direct volunteer contact with children will need [background check clearances](#).

Most volunteer opportunities require clearances, however some do not. If you would like to be a guest speaker in a classroom, a mystery reader or simply have lunch with your child, you do not need clearances. Examples of volunteer activities requiring clearances include, but are not limited to: classroom volunteers, chaperones for field trips, homeroom parents, [volunteer coaches](#) and exchange student host families. Please note that it takes 10 business days for paperwork to be reviewed and cleared. We encourage you to plan accordingly when asked to volunteer for an event.

For more information on becoming a volunteer, email the VIPS Supervisor at volunteers@scasd.org or visit www.scasd.org/volunteer.

CODE OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR

GUIDELINES FOR BEHAVIOR

Administrators and school staff play a vital role in supporting students by managing behavior not only during school hours, but also at any out-of-school activity connected with the school, including but not limited to school functions, internships, field trips, or athletic games. In most cases of inappropriate behavior of students, the school staff can respond to the situation and help the student change their behavior. If a student repeats an infraction several times, it may be necessary to involve a school principal or counselor. Communicating with a student's caregiver about repeated infractions is also an important step in this process.

Student Caregivers are SCASDs best ally in the classroom. They can help support the school by teaching at home, backing up fair discipline measures, making sure homework and projects are done, and by helping in the classroom.

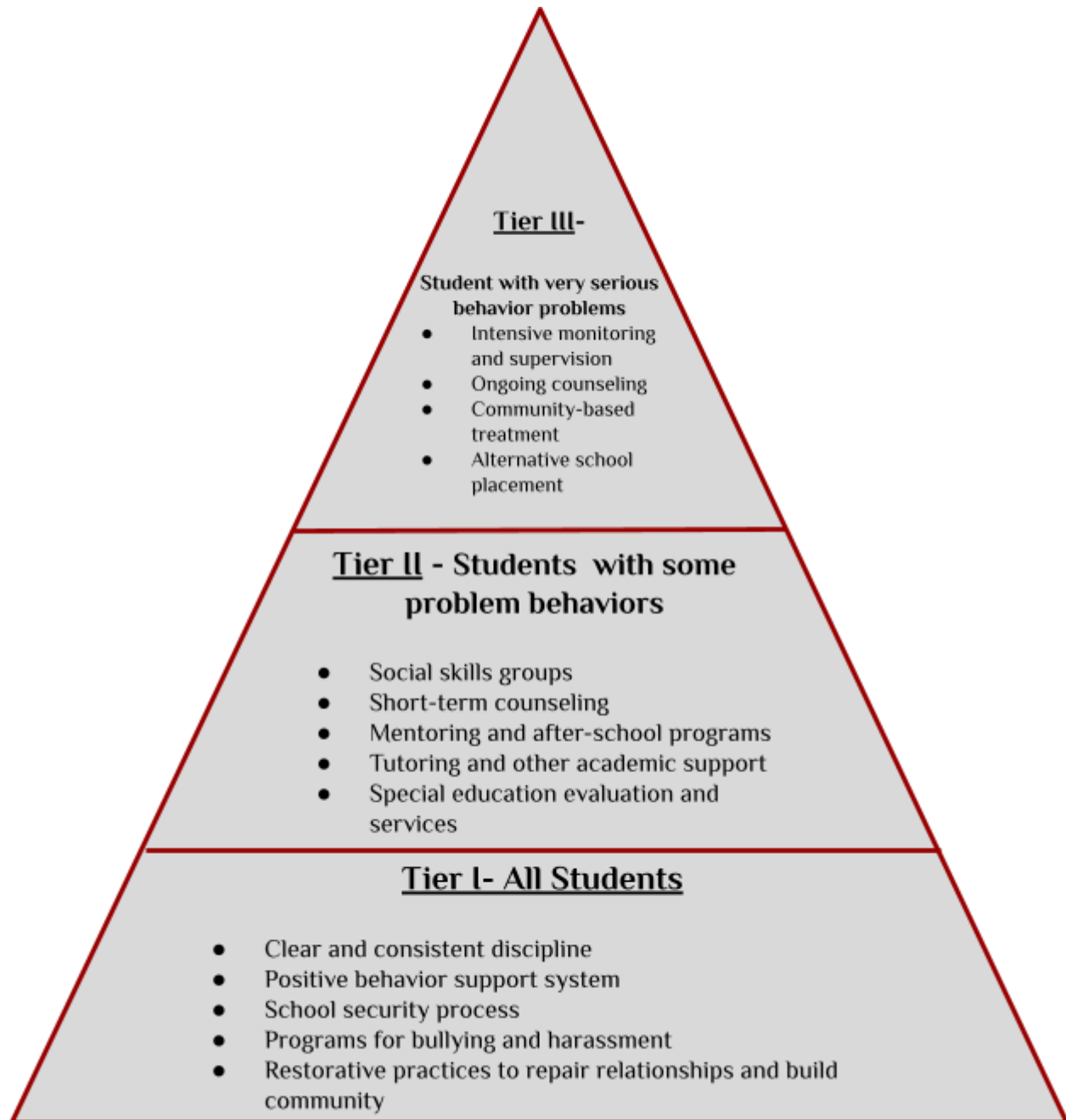
All students are expected to behave in a manner that will reflect favorably on the school, not only during school hours, but also at any out-of-school activity connected with the school, including, but not limited to, school functions, internships, field trips, and athletic games. Behavior at any such activities will be part of the student's record and misbehavior will be dealt with accordingly by school officials.

The following guidelines are expected to govern and characterize student behavior:

- **Attendance:** Students are expected to attend school on a regular basis, as required by state law, and to come to school on time.
- **Safety:** Students are expected to behave in ways that are safe for themselves and others. Students, parents, faculty and staff are expected to follow the rules that SCASD has adopted to ensure the safety of all in the school. Likewise, all persons involved with the school are expected to respect other people's property. Every attempt will be made to allow students to become equal partners in decision-making in regard to school rules and policies.
- **Cooperation:** Students are expected to cooperate fully with faculty, staff and administrators, and other adults in the school not only when they are in the classroom but also when they are in the cafeteria, hallways, stairways and other common areas. Students are expected to always be polite and helpful when dealing with others.
- **Orderly movement:** Students are expected to move between classes and other activities in common areas, inside or outside of the school, in an orderly and timely manner.

- **Entering the building:** When entering the building, students should keep their voices low and should not run, wrestle, push, or shove.
 - **Electronic Devices:** SCASD acknowledges that electronic communication devices such as cell phones are increasingly common and provide students and their families with a sense of security and safety through immediate and direct communication. Additionally, electronic devices may serve as an invaluable learning tool when used appropriately by students and advisors. Therefore, electronic device use during school hours will be at the discretion of the teachers and school leaders.
 - **Drugs and alcohol:** Illegal drugs and alcohol are strictly forbidden at all times. Exceptions will be made for use of controlled substances prescribed by a physician, as provided for in the [District medication policy](#).
 - **Attire Standards:** Acceptable attire standards, as noted in [Policy 221](#), should support equitable educational access, and addressing or enforcing standards should not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, household income, gender identity or cultural observance. The [Administrative Regulations](#) to supplement the policy are not all-inclusive nor all-exhaustive; rather they are intended to assist students and parents/guardians in making decisions about attire selections.
 - **Bullying:** SCASD recognizes that safe learning environments are necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Our schools strive to provide safe learning environments for all students and all employees. All incidents of bullying, cyber bullying, and hazing are strictly prohibited.
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COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLWIDE APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE



SWPBIS

School-wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) is an evidence-based three-tiered framework to improve and integrate all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. SWPBIS aims to create schools where all students succeed.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- All elementary schools have their own SWPBIS framework and teams in place.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- [PFMS R.O.A.R.](#)
- [MNMS R.O.A.R.](#)

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- 2023-2024 school year Implementation

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

In the event that students misbehave and do not abide by the principles outlined in the [Code of Conduct K-12](#), SCASD will use the “restorative practices” approach to discipline (but not a replacement), pioneered by Ted Wachtel at the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP). Restorative practices are grounded in “restorative justice,” a new way of looking at wrongdoing that focuses on repairing the harm done to people and the relationships rather than on punishing offenders. Restorative practices are based on the belief that human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them. The most critical function of restorative practices is restoring and building relationships. Students, staff, faculty and school board members must meet with those they have wronged, explore what happened, and make necessary amends. The restorative practices process can happen in groups as small as three and as large as a whole class. www.thedelawaremet.org

Restorative Practices Principles

- Restorative Practices focuses on harms rather than rules or persons and the consequent needs of victims, offenders and communities.
- Restorative Practices addresses obligations of the offender resulting from those harms, and the community’s obligations to both victims and offenders.
- Restorative Practices uses inclusive, collaborative processes.

- Restorative Practices involve all individuals (victims, offenders, parents, students, staff and faculty) who have a legitimate stake in a given situation.
- Restorative Practices seek to right the wrongs that have been done, so that victims feel safe and valued, and offenders feel restored to the school community.

Restorative Practices Discipline

- Acknowledges that relationships are central to the building of the school community.
- Must establish policies and procedures that harm and misbehavior is handled in a way that strengthens relationships.
- Focuses on harms done rather than rules broken.
- Gives voice to the person who has been harmed.
- Engages in collaborative problem solving.
- Empowers change and growth for all involved.
- Enhances responsibility for actions and attitudes for all involved.

The goals of these restorative practices are that:

- SCASD will be a safe, friendly and enjoyable learning environment.
- SCASD will foster an environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and included.
- SCASD will be a school district where students are motivated to learn and faculty and staff enjoy meaningful and fulfilling work.

Restorative practices with discipline are rooted in the core assumption that everyone wants to be in a good relationship with others and themselves. Everyone wants to feel respected, to have a sense of dignity, to feel as if they matter to others, to feel that they are valued. Building strong and positive relationships within a school community is key to using restorative practices with discipline when students and adults make mistakes. Establishing a school culture where all members of the community are cared for and respected forms the foundation. The use of restorative practices with discipline is effective only if there is a whole school approach that rests on the shared aspiration to build a caring school community.

When something goes wrong in a school setting, the question arises: What needs to happen to respond to what went wrong? Restorative practices with discipline says that what happens next is that the parties involved explore ways to understand the harm and to determine how to fix it. The restorative framework emerges from the assumption that wrongdoing must be examined from the perspective of what harm has happened as the result of a specified incident, what needs to be done to repair the harm and what needs to happen so it does not occur again.

Whether the harm involved breaking a rule, harming another person, or disrupting a classroom, the initial focus is on the specific harm of that event. To understand the specific harm, we must work with those who were harmed: this is absolutely necessary. No one else can define the harm. The institution or third parties, such as the teacher or principal, cannot define the harm. A restorative response attends to those harmed by a specific indicator to understand how they were affected. The focus is on repair. What are the obligations for repairs that emerge from the harm? What can the wrongdoer do to repair the harm to individuals and to the community of the classroom or school? What can the community (friends, classroom) do to repair the harm to the person hurt? What do the students or adults who are affected by the harm need in order to feel safe again in the school? www.thedelawaremet.org

The restorative questions used in a variety of formal and informal process are:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time? How did you feel? What have you thought of since?
- Who was affected by what happened?
- What are your strengths?
- What needs to be done to repair the harm?
- What needs to be done to prevent it from happening in the future?

In the restorative framework, accountability means taking responsibility for your actions and taking steps to repair any harm resulting from your actions. Accountability is not imposed from the outside. Accountability arises from within — from the recognition that your action hurts others. This recognition makes you consequently aware that you have an obligation to repair the harm or make things right. The most powerful way to understand the impact of your action is to hear directly from those who were hurt by your actions. When appropriate, a fact-to-face process is the most meaningful form of accountability.

Accountability has five dimension in a restorative framework:

- Acknowledging that you caused harm with your action or behavior.
- Understanding how others were affected by your actions.
- Taking steps to repair the harm to those hurt.
- Giving back to the community
- Making a plan, so it does not happen again.

*In face-to-face restorative *practices with a discipline* process, the first two elements of accountability are achieved by the dialogue itself. The remaining three elements are addressed in the discipline plan that emerges from the dialogue.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Restorative reflections, conversations and circles can be modified for our youngest students to ensure comfortability and comprehension. Restorative practices are in addition to discipline; they do not replace it.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Restorative practices are in addition to discipline; they do not replace it.

HIGH SCHOOL SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- Restorative practices are in addition to discipline; they do not replace it.

POLICIES SECTION

ALCOHOL, DRUG, TOBACCO, AND ELECTRONIC SMOKING DEVICE INFORMATION

It is the goal of the State College Area School District to eliminate the improper use of drugs and behavior-altering substances. In doing so, we are cognizant of the state regulations and guidelines on “Students’ Rights and Responsibilities” and the necessity to create a climate of trust. However, we are equally determined to protect the school community as a whole, to ensure the absolute right to work in a safe environment, and to maintain an atmosphere that encourages learning, personal growth and respect for democratic and human values. To accomplish this goal, it is necessary to provide ample instructional programs, effective and confidential counseling services, close communication with families, and high standards of conduct, with fair but firm penalties for drug involvement.

Standard of Conduct

No student of the State College Area School District shall possess, use, sell, distribute, or be under the influence of any drugs, controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, behavior-altering legal substances or paraphernalia on school property, at any school-related function or school sponsored activity.

For the purpose of this policy, the term “drugs” includes controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, behavior-altering legal substances, prescription and nonprescription drugs.

“Controlled Substances” are defined by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and include mind- and behavior-altering drugs such as marijuana, THC-pen(s), LSD, crack, PCP, alcohol, amphetamines, bath salts, and cocaine.

“Alcoholic Beverages” refers to all alcoholic beverages, including beer, wine and liquor.

“Behavior-Altering Legal Substances” and “Health-Endangering Compounds” are substances which can be purchased legally and are not controlled, but when misused can alter behavior. Examples include, but are not limited to, whippets, cold medicine, butyl nitrate and glue.

“Opioid” shall mean illegal drugs such as heroin, as well as prescription medications used to treat pain such as morphine, codeine, methadone, oxycodone, hydrocodone, fentanyl, hydromorphone and buprenorphine.

Use of controlled substances as prescribed by a physician, must be followed as provided for in the [District medication policy](#), including proper documentation requirements submitted in accordance with the policy.

If a student is suspected of being under the influence of a drug, the matter will be handled as a medical emergency. The student will be taken to the nurse. All known or suspected incidents of drug involvement will be reported directly to an administrator who will conduct an investigation. If evidence indicates drug involvement, parents/guardians will be notified by an administrator.

During the course of an investigation, if there is reasonable suspicion or cause, a student’s backpack or person can be searched.

- [Policy 222 - Smoking/Tobacco Products](#)
- [Policy 227 - Drugs and Alcohol](#)

WEAPONS

Possession of a weapon in a school setting is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by law.

A student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker or assigned storage area; or 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.

A “weapon” shall include, but is not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica or a weapon, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. In addition, it is also recognized that other items, not typically presenting a danger, can be used as a weapon to threaten, strike terror, or cause bodily injury or death to others.

Any student violating this weapons policy must be expelled from school for a period of no less than one year; however, the superintendent (or Board of School

Directors) may modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. Students with disabilities shall be disciplined and receive the due process afforded by state and federal law.

- [**Policy 113.1 - Discipline of Students with Disabilities**](#)

Individuals and families have the option of an informal hearing for any suspension over five days. The ban does not apply to weapons used as part of a program or an unloaded weapon carried by a person crossing school property for lawful hunting, if authorized by school authorities.

The possession of look-alike toy or replica guns in school is very disruptive to the learning environment. The possession of such items is not permitted and will result in disciplinary and legal consequences including suspension.

- [**Policy 218.1-Weapons**](#)

THREATS

A threat is a communication of intent to harm someone that may be spoken, written, gestured, or expressed in some other form, such as via text messaging, email, or other digital means. An expression of intent to harm someone is considered a threat regardless of whether it is communicated to the intended target(s) and regardless of whether the intended target is aware of the threat. There are two types of threats:

- **Imminent Threat:** An individual/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward others that requires containment and action to protect identified or identifiable target(s); and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that requires intervention.
- **Direct Threat:** An individual/situation poses a significant risk to the health or safety of themselves and/or others that cannot be eliminated by a modification of policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services. The direct threat standard applies when the Threat Assessment Team or school entity administration determines that an individual/situation poses a direct threat and that applicable disciplinary procedures are not available or sufficient to mitigate the threat.

Each SCASD School will establish a trained threat aAssessment team that will complete the process of identifying, reporting, assessing, responding to, and intervening with threats, including identifying and avoiding racial, cultural, or disability bias. The approach

the threat assessment teams will take will include identifying, inquiring, assessing and managing the situation.

- [SCASD Threat Assessment Page](#)
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DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

The State College Area School District is committed to providing to all students access to equitable educational programs and activities in a safe, positive learning environment that is free from all forms of bullying, harassment and discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, or handicap/disability.

All members of the SCASD community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others. Discriminatory conduct and harassment, including bullying, violates the dignity of individuals and will not be tolerated. These behaviors are inconsistent with the educational and programmatic goals of the District and are prohibited on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities and on any conveyance providing transportation to or from a school entity or school-sponsored activity.

Acts of discrimination, harassment or bullying should be immediately reported to the teacher, counselor, or principal.

We expect our students to understand what discrimination, harassment, and bullying are and to know how to avoid these behaviors. As a result, consequences will vary based on the extent of the behavior and the degree of intentionality and/or the number of incidents. Some actions that occur outside of school may be beyond the school's jurisdiction and disciplinary reach.

- [Policy 103](#) Nondiscrimination and Discriminatory Harassment - School and Classroom Practices
 - [Policy 103.1](#) Title IX Nondiscrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Sex - School and Classroom Practices
 - [Policy 103.2](#) Discrimination and Harassment Affecting Students
 - [Policy 249](#) Bullying
-

TITLE IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a comprehensive federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. The nondiscrimination mandate of Title IX and its procedural requirements include a procedure for receiving and resolving sex-based discrimination complaints.

As provided in Policy 103.1, Title IX Nondiscrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Sex - School and Classroom Practices, all members of the SCASD community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others. Title IX discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual misconduct and relationship violence, violates the dignity of individuals, as well as state and federal laws, and will not be tolerated. These behaviors are inconsistent with the educational and programmatic goals of the District and are prohibited in district buildings, on district grounds, at District-sponsored activities and on any conveyance providing transportation to or from a district entity or District-sponsored activity.

The District encourages anyone (students, parents, staff, third parties) who reasonably believes that they have witnessed acts of Title IX discrimination or sexual harassment, as described in Policy 103.1, to make a report to the District, even if some elements of the related incident took place or originated away from district grounds, district activities, or district conveyances. Employees are required to report such acts. The District will comply with applicable law in investigating and resolving complaints made pursuant to this policy. Appropriate corrective or preventive action shall be taken when allegations are substantiated.

TITLE IX ROLES

Compliance/Title IX Officer

The Title IX regulations require that an employee is designated to serve as the Compliance/Title IX Officer to oversee compliance with all aspects of Title IX regulations and ensure a prompt, equitable and supportive response to all reports received

- Linda Pierce - Officer, (814) 231-1051, lep16@scasd.org
- Jeanne Knouse - Deputy Officer, (814) 231-1011 ext. 1071, jmk37@scasd.org

Informal Process Facilitator

After a formal complaint is filed, the parties can elect to resolve the complaint through an informal resolution process if each party voluntarily agrees to do so in writing.

Investigator

The investigator will interview the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses to determine whether the alleged conduct occurred. The investigation will be concluded expeditiously, but thoroughly.

Decision-Maker

A decision-maker or decision-making panel will issue a written outcome determination regarding responsibility simultaneously to the parties within ten (10) instructional days following the hearing/administrative review date. The decision maker or decision-making panel will determine the sanction if, after deliberation, the respondent is found responsible.

Appeal Decision Maker

Each party has the right to appeal the outcome determination of the decision maker or decision-making panel. If an appeal is filed, an appeal decision maker or decision making panel will be assigned the matter for review.

TITLE IX COMPLAINT PROCESS

Any person electing to utilize this complaint resolution procedure will be treated courteously and the problem will be handled swiftly and as confidentially as feasible in light of the need to take appropriate corrective action. The registering of a good faith report will in no way be used against the student, nor will it have an adverse impact on the individual's student status. While reporting such incidents might be a difficult personal experience, allowing these activities to continue will most certainly lead to less desirable outcomes. For that reason, employees are required and students are strongly urged to utilize this procedure.

Students can discuss their complaint with the Title IX Officer and/or Deputy, a teacher, a principal, or a counselor.

Administrator/Employee Responsibilities

Administrators and employees must deal expeditiously and fairly with allegations of inappropriate behavior whether or not there is a written or formal complaint. This includes:

- Obtaining medical and counseling resources as applicable.
- Taking all complaints or concerns of alleged or possible harassment or discrimination seriously no matter how minor or who is involved.
- Contacting law enforcement and Child Line when appropriate.
- Ensuring that harassment or inappropriate sexually oriented conduct is reported to the Title IX Officer immediately so that a prompt investigation can occur.

- Taking any appropriate action to prevent retaliation or prohibited conduct from reoccurring during and after any investigations or complaints.

Response to Complaint

All reports of sexual harassment received by district staff shall be promptly reported to the Title IX Officer. The Title IX Officer will promptly contact the complainant to gather additional information as necessary and to discuss the availability of supportive measures. The Title IX Officer will consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

The grievance process is the process by which a formal complaint of sexual harassment is addressed equitably and promptly under Title IX and in a manner that ensures due process for the complainant and the respondent. The District's Title IX policy ensures the fair implementation of the grievance process.

After a formal complaint is filed and the Title IX Officer has provided both parties with information about allegations and explained the informal resolution process, the parties can elect to resolve the complaint through an informal resolution process if each party voluntarily agrees to do so in writing. The complainant or respondent can decide to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process before the conclusion of the informal resolution process.

Confidentiality

During the investigation, while the confidentiality of the information received, the privacy of the individuals involved, and the wishes of the complainant regarding action by the office cannot be guaranteed in every instance, they will be protected to as great a degree as is legally possible. The expressed wishes of the complainant for confidentiality will be considered in the context of the District's legal obligation to act upon the charge and the right of the charged party to obtain information.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

It is the expectation of the State College Area School District that students will adhere to ethical academic practices, including the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Academic dishonesty is the attempt to give or obtain assistance without due acknowledgement. Examples of academic dishonesty may include, but not be limited to cheating, fabrication or plagiarism, and forgery. Examples provided below are

non-exhaustive and are provided for illustrative purposes.

Cheating

Cheating includes, but is not limited to: a student copying an assignment or test and submitting it as their own; allowing someone to copy an assignment or test and submit it as their own; unauthorized use of or communicating with notes, calculators, computers, textbooks, websites and cell phones during an exam or project; and telling other students what is on a test or quiz or providing specific questions or answers before or after the test.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work. Intentional plagiarism occurs when a student knowingly submits someone else's words or ideas as if they were their own. Unintentional plagiarism occurs when writers and researchers use the words or ideas of others but fail to quote or give credit (perhaps because they don't know how). When in doubt, students must check with a teacher or librarian.

Examples of plagiarism may include but are not limited to:

- Purchasing or copying work produced by others (homework, reports, take-home exams, tests, research papers, music, art, images, etc.).
- Direct copying ("cutting and pasting") of selected sections (words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs) from another source without quotation marks and/or documentation.
- Paraphrasing, summarizing, or otherwise rewording another's original work that is not common knowledge without documentation.
- Failing to document the use of charts, graphs, diagrams, statistics, or other materials not created or compiled by the student.
- Working together on an independent assignment and then submitting individual copies of the assignment as one's own individual work.
- Fabricating data or in any way falsifying the results of an experiment or inquiry process.

Suspension and Expulsion

The Board recognizes that exclusion from the educational program of the schools, whether by suspension or expulsion, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student and one that cannot be imposed without due process. The Board shall define and publish the types of offenses that would lead to exclusion from school. Exclusions

affecting students with disabilities shall be governed by applicable state and federal law and regulations.

The Board may, after a proper hearing, suspend or expel a student for such time as it deems necessary, or may permanently expel a student.

You may find additional information on suspension and expulsion, including due process and continuation of educational access and activities, at [Policy 233: Suspension and Expulsion](#)

CODE OF CONDUCT K-12

The State College Area School District believes that improved conduct is closely related to a positive environment for learning and an effective instructional program. It is expected that students follow the rules and regulations governing student conduct in school, during the time spent in travel to and from school and at all school related events before, during and after school hours.

Such rules shall require that students:

- Abide by reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior.
- Respect the rights, person, and property of others.
- Positively engage in course curriculum and with others.

To ensure a safe learning environment, students are expected to have appropriate behavior, attendance and a willingness to contribute to overall school safety, as expressed by the saying: [*"If you see something, say something."*](#)

Detentions, suspensions and possible expulsion from school could result when students are in violation of code of conduct.

- ❖ Participation in any school function or activity including athletics is prohibited for the duration of the suspension and could result in exclusion from extracurricular activities for part or all of the school year.
- ❖ We encourage student participation in athletics, extra-curricular activities, and co-curricular activities. A student's participation in these activities and the reputation of the school are dependent, in part, on the student's conduct as an individual.

Please note: Board policy [216 - Records](#) and the Administrative Regulations attached to that policy, provides information on the maintenance, access and amendment provisions of records.

SCASD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

SCASD MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

The State College Area School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, national origin, or disability in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and Americans with Disabilities Act. For information regarding civil rights, policy violations, grievance procedures, services, or activities and facilities that are accessible to disabled persons, contact:

Jeanne Knouse: Section 504 Compliance Officer, (jmk37@scasd.org, 814-231-1071)

Linda Pierce: Title VI, Title IX, and ADA Compliance Officer, (lep16@scasd.org, 814-231-1051)