

STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Elementary Handbook

2018-2019



Mission

To prepare students for lifelong success through excellence in education

Elementary School Directory

Corl Street Charlotte Zmyslo	235 S. Corl Street State College, PA 16801	K-5	814-231-1185
Easterly Parkway Danielle Yoder	234 Easterly Parkway State College, PA 16801	K-5	814-231-1170
Ferguson Township Shelly Buckholtz	P. O. Box 237 215 West Pine Grove Road Pine Grove Mills, PA 16868	K-5	814-231-4119
Gray's Woods Dr. Kristen Dewitt	160 Brackenbourne Drive Port Matilda, PA 16870	K-5	814-235-6100
Houserville Dr. Todd Dishong	217 Scholl Street State College, PA 16801	3-5	814-231-5026
Lemont Dr. Todd Dishong	675 Elmwood Street Lemont, PA 16851	K-2	814-231-5034
Mount Nittany Mark Feldman	700 Brandywine Drive State College, PA 16801	K-5	814-272-5970
Park Forest Tom Weed	2181 School Drive State College, PA 16803	K-5	814-231-5010
Radio Park Zac Wynkoop	800 West Cherry Lane State College, PA 16803	K-5	814-231-4115

Panorama Village Administrative Center

	240 Villa Crest Drive	
	State College PA 16801	
Superintendent	Dr. Robert O'Donnell	814-231-1016
Assistant Superintendent - Elementary	Mr. Vernon Bock	814-231-1042
Director of Curriculum K-5	Mrs. Deirdre Bauer	814-231-1183
Director of Gifted Services	Mr. Jonathan Klingeman	814-231-1054
Director of Special Education	Dr. Sharon Salter	814-231-4172
Director of Student Services	Mrs. Jeanne Knouse	814-231-1054

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission Age

Children may be admitted to kindergarten if they are five years old on or before August 31. Children may be admitted to first grade if they are six years old on or before August 31.

Registration of Students

Registration for kindergarten children begins in the spring. New residents to the area should register as soon as possible, especially during the summer months, in order for the school administration to plan for necessary school staffing.

Student Registration Office
131 W. Nittany Ave, Room 100
M-F 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m
814-231- 1017

An original birth certificate or passport, proof of residency, and immunization records are required for registration.

Assignment of Students

Students are assigned to the elementary school serving their attendance area. Parents/guardians may request to have their child attend another school subject to space being available in the school. If such a request is approved, parents/guardians will be responsible for their child's transportation. [Requests for Optional Assignment](#) should be made in writing to Mr. Vernon Bock, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education, 240 Villa Crest Drive, State College, PA 16801. Assignments, which are determined in the summer, are made on a first-come, first-served basis.

School Calendar

[The State College Area School District Calendar](#) is available online. This calendar contains the dates of all important district-wide functions and other general information for parents/guardians. In addition, the [Academic Calendar](#) includes the days designated as instructional, inservice, and built in make-up days.

School Hours

Children attend classes from 8:10 AM until 3:00 PM. They have a thirty-minute lunch period and may purchase lunch in the school cafeteria or bring a lunch from home. Breakfast is also available for purchase prior to the start of the day.

"No School" Days

Certain days are scheduled throughout the school year for staff inservice activities and parent/guardian/teacher conferences. Parents/guardians should refer to the [Academic Calendar](#) for these "no school" days.

Unscheduled School Closings

In the event weather conditions or other emergencies necessitate the closing or early dismissal of one or more schools in the district, information will be announced via local television/radio stations, through the school district web page and social media, and via text and email alerts through School Messenger. Please make sure that your contact information is up to date and that the school has an early dismissal plan for your child. Days lost for such reasons will be made up according to the school calendar or as decided by the Board of School Directors.

Delayed School Opening

It may be necessary for the district to delay the school opening. When this occurs, the cancellation will be announced

via local television/radio stations, through the school district web page and social media, and via text and email alerts through School Messenger. Please make sure that your contact information is up to date and that you have a plan at home to accommodate a delayed start to the school day.

School Bus Transportation

Children living more than one mile from the school are eligible for bus transportation. In addition, children living less than one mile from the school may be eligible for transportation if the route has been declared hazardous by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

Safety considerations require the strict enforcement of rules for school bus conduct. Guidelines for responsible bus behavior are located below. They are also available on the [transportation website](#).

The District reserves the right to suspend any student from riding the bus who cannot follow the guidelines for responsible behavior. Suspensions from bus transportation range from one day to an indefinite number of days.

Students who want to ride a bus other than the one regularly assigned can do so only if a note has been sent from a parent or guardian to the principal on or before the day of the bus change. This is also true before a student is allowed to walk home rather than use the assigned bus transportation. If there is space available on the bus and the child will be getting off at an established bus stop, the principal will sign the note, and the student will give the note to the driver upon entering the bus.

Transportation Guidelines

The school bus is an extension of the classroom. The conduct of students to and from school is an important part of the total school program. Our goal is to provide a positive and safe beginning and ending to your child's day.

Maintaining good order on school buses requires the cooperation of students, parents, bus drivers and building principals. The role of the bus driver is to be in complete command of the bus and students. Because the driver must give his/her total attention to driving, students must conduct themselves in a manner that will not distract the driver. Parents and building principals contribute by reinforcing the importance of proper behavior. Please note: all school bus have video recording equipment.

School bus rules are similar to those established for an effective classroom. Because everyone's safety is affected, not following the rules may be cause for suspension of riding privileges. The following rules are enforced in all school buses.

- Observe same conduct as in classroom.
- Be courteous; use no profane language.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.
- Help keep the bus clean by not littering.
- Cooperate with the driver.
- No cigarettes, alcohol or drugs on bus.
- Do not be destructive.
- Stay in your seat while bus is moving.
- Keep hands, head and feet inside the bus.
- Bus driver is authorized to assign seats.
- Ride only your assigned bus unless you have permission from your driver and principal.

Any concern or question regarding transportation should be brought to the attention of the SCASD Transportation Office at (814) 231-1033.

When waiting for the school bus in the morning:

- Arrive at your bus stop location **at least 5 minutes** before the scheduled stop time.
- Wait for the bus in an area off of the main roadway, being respectful of others property.

When boarding the bus:

- Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop. The red flashing lights and stop arm will be activated, and the door will open.
- If you must cross the street, always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
- Board the bus, go directly to your assigned seat, and sit down.

While on the bus:

- The driver is in charge. Follow the driver's instructions at all times.
- Students must remain seated.
- Students may talk quietly. Shouting or profanity is not acceptable.
- Items that can be safely held on your lap, without endangering the safety and comfort of others, may be brought on the bus. No animals of any kind are allowed on the bus.
- Students must keep hands and head inside the bus windows.
- Objects may not be thrown in or out of bus windows.
- Do not damage the bus in any way.

When exiting the bus:

- Students must remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Check the area around your seat - pick up trash and take belongings with you.
- Leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- If you must cross the street, always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus. Look both ways before crossing.
- NEVER walk along the side or in back of the bus.

Cafeteria Program

The school cafeterias provide an opportunity for children to purchase healthy meals each day. Lunch and breakfast menus are planned to provide students with balanced meals at a nominal cost.

A school lunch is planned to include meat/meat alternate, bread, vegetables, fruit, and milk. Students can decline items that they do not intend to eat, but they 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. The lunch cost is \$2.65.

Breakfast is available each morning for \$1.45. Milk is available for students who carry their lunches for \$.65.

Monthly menus are sent home with children to assist with lunch selection. Parents can monitor their child's lunch account activity, request low balance email alerts, and make online payments at [My School Bucks](#).

Special dietary needs may be accommodated. Please review the [dietary guidelines](#) and contact the Food Service Office directly at 814-231-5093 to discuss.

Under the federally funded National School Lunch Program, free and reduced-price lunches are available based on need. Information is sent home to all families at the beginning of each school year or can be picked up in any school office or via this [online application](#).

Student Attendance and Absences

Compulsory attendance becomes effective when a student enters school for the first time, which shall not be later than the age of eight years, and continues until the student becomes seventeen years of age.

As part of our Student Safe Arrival Program, each elementary school has an answering machine in the office for you to use when your child is going to be absent from or late arriving to school. You may leave your message on the answering machine in the evening or before 9:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. School personnel will monitor the

messages received from the parent/guardian of absent students each morning after the student attendance is taken. **If your child is marked absent and you have not called to notify the school office that your child will be out, you will be contacted at home or your place of work to make certain you are aware that he/she did not arrive at school.**

Any time a student is absent from school, a **written excuse** explaining the reason for the absence must be sent to the child's teacher. If a written excuse form is not on file in the office within 72 hours (3 school days) following the date of return to school, the absence will be considered unexcused. Emails will only be accepted if a signed written excuse is attached. A student is limited to ten (10) parent-written excuses per school year. All absences beyond ten (10) for illness require a doctor's excuse or will be considered unexcused. There is no limit to doctor's excuses; however, a meeting to create a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) may be called to determine if additional steps are necessary to improve school attendance.

School attendance is mandatory and important for all students' learning. Students who need to be absent because they are sick, going on a trip, attending a funeral, etc. will be excused from school when the appropriate and required documentation is submitted to the school.

Educational Trips

Parents/guardians who are considering travel plans that would take their child out of school for educational purposes are asked to submit an [Educational Trip Form](#) to the school office two weeks in advance of the absence.

Please note that student absence for travel must be pre-approved by the principal. The maximum number of excused educational trip days per school year is ten (10). Days in excess of ten (10) will be considered unexcused absences.

Teachers may provide specific assignments to be completed during the trip. Educational travel can provide very meaningful learning for children when engaged in thoughtful discussion regarding the trip. Students are encouraged to maintain a daily written log during the trip.

Frequent Absence From School

Regular attendance in the daily instructional program is essential for student success in school. Effective school programs rely on the continuity provided by regular school attendance.

In accordance with the PDE Compulsory Attendance law, the following processes are required for all school age students from the time the child enters school until the age of 17 years:

- All student absences are considered unexcused until your child's school receives the appropriate documentation detailing the reason for the absence.
- If a written (parental or medical) excuse is not received at your child's school within 72 hours (3 days), the absence will be permanently coded as unexcused.
- Upon three (3) days, or the equivalent, of unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will be notified by

mail. This is considered a First Offense and serves as a formal warning regarding attendance concerns.

- Upon the fourth (4th) day, or the equivalent, of unexcused absences, the parent/guardian will be required to attend a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) meeting at the school.
- After receipt of a First Offense letter and the completion of an SAIP, a subsequent unexcused absence results in a Second Offense that is filed with the magisterial district judge and requires an appearance before the judge.
- Six (6) unexcused days, or the equivalent, results in the designation of a student being “habitually truant.” If a student accumulates six (6) days of unexcused absences or the equivalent, the district is required to notify Children and Youth Services (CYS) and notify the magisterial district judge on a weekly basis.

Additional attendance information can be found on the [SCASD Attendance Web Page](#):

Elementary Attendance Accounting

Tardy/Absent

Students arriving after 8:09 AM but before 11:45 AM, are considered tardy. Students arriving after 11:45 AM, are considered absent for the morning (half-day absence) and tardy for the minutes they are absent beyond 11:45 AM.

Tardiness

If a student is tardy, the parent/guardian will be asked to provide a written excuse. A cumulative record of the time the student has missed through late arrival will be kept and combined with other absences from school. Please refer to the previous section of the handbook for consequences associated with unexcused absences from school.

Sign-In/Sign-Out Sheets

Any student arriving late or leaving early must be signed out in the office by the parent/guardian or previously noted designee. The record indicates the time and reason, and the signature of the adult. Parents/guardians are discouraged from signing out their children just prior to the regular dismissal time unless absolutely necessary for an appointment.

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 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.

Appropriate School Attire

Appropriate school attire supports and enhances a respectful school environment.

Ball caps and hats are appropriate during recess and before/after school. Students may not wear them inside the building. Occasionally, this expectation may be relaxed for a special event or spirit day.

Tank tops are permitted as long as they do not expose stomachs or are cut too low and are too revealing. All shirts, including tank tops, should cover stomachs and backs. Camis and spaghetti straps are not allowed. Shorts and skirts are permitted as long as they are not excessively short. (A general rule has been no shorter than the ends of the fingertips extended while standing - though discretion may be applied on a case-by-case basis). Pants that are cut too low and fall well below the waistline and expose undergarments are not appropriate.

Flip-flops are discouraged as they are not the safest foot attire in crowds or at recess. Sneakers are required for Physical Education and “Heelies” are **not allowed** in school or on school grounds.

Any clothing or jewelry with printed materials that may be offensive or obscene, including anything that advertises the use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs, is not permitted.

If a student's attire violates the dress code policy, the counselor, or adult designee, will work with the student to call a parent/guardian for a change of clothing. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the student will have access to spare clothing available in the nurse's office.

Use of Electronic Equipment

Personal electronic equipment used on the bus, or for after school activities, must be stored in student backpacks during the school day. Parents and students assume the responsibility for safekeeping these items, and the school is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft of such devices.

Anti-Harassment/Anti-Bullying Policy

It is the policy of the State College Area School District to provide a safe and orderly educational environment that is free from harassment and/or bullying and conducive to the mission of the school district. We strive to provide each and every student the best opportunity to receive the education to which s/he is entitled under state and federal law. The school district asserts that it has a compelling interest in promoting an educational environment that is safe and conducive to learning.

It is the intention of the SCASD, consistent with state and federal law, to maintain a learning environment which is free of harassment and/or bullying because incidents of harassment and/or bullying prevent students from receiving the education to which they are entitled, materially disrupt the mission of the school district, and substantially interfere with a student's educational performance.

It is the purpose of district policy to prohibit and prevent acts of harassment and/or bullying and violence. Additional information regarding the district's policies can be found [here](#).

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

Academic Integrity

It is the expectation of the State College Elementary Schools that students will adhere to ethical academic practices. Students will complete their own work, free of plagiarism, fabrication, and forgery. Students will cooperate with others in the use of educational resources. Students will submit original work. Parents play a valuable role in providing guidance, support, and encouragement to their students while promoting an ethical approach to academic work. Violations of ethical academic practices will be addressed on a case-by-case basis between the student, teacher, parent, and principal.

Discipline

The SCASD believes that a major function of the elementary schools is to assist in the development and reinforcement of responsible and appropriate behavior. Schools are designed for learning, and responsible behavior is an integral part of the overall learning mission. The promotion of responsible behavior is enhanced through appropriate modeling by members of the school community, parents/guardians, and other students.

Each elementary school follows the framework for School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBS or PBIS). This is not a program or a curriculum. Rather, it is a school-based, collaborative process for teaching, supporting, and acknowledging positive student behavior in order to maintain a productive learning environment through establishing clear and consistent expectations for student behavior. These expectations are explicitly taught to all students across the various venues in the school setting (classroom, hallway, bus, cafeteria, playground, etc.). Students are positively reinforced for following school wide expectations and demonstrating appropriate behavior. **See Sample PBIS Framework below.**

Weapons Policy

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

The State College Area School District prohibits possession of weapons and replicas of weapons in any school district building, on school property, at any school sponsored activity, and in any public conveyance providing transportation to or from school or a school sponsored activity. If weapons are found in the schools, the District will take all appropriate steps to remove the weapons and carry out the relevant provisions of Act 26 of 1995.

Act 26 of 1995 states that any student violating the law will be expelled from school for a period of not less than one year. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law and SCASD policy. ***Discipline short of expulsion for one (1) year is legal only when recommended by the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent's decision to recommend a modification of the one (1) year expulsion will be made on a case-by-case basis. In the case of an exceptional student, the Superintendent shall take all necessary steps to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.***

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The use, possession, and/or exchange of drugs or alcohol is prohibited. This includes look-alike drugs and drug paraphernalia. Violations are addressed in a clear and timely manner consistent with SCASD policy. Prescription and over-the-counter medications **cannot be carried** to and from school by students. These medications must be in their original container and delivered to the school nurse by a parent/guardian. Please contact the school nurse for all guidelines and documentation necessary for the distribution of medication at school.

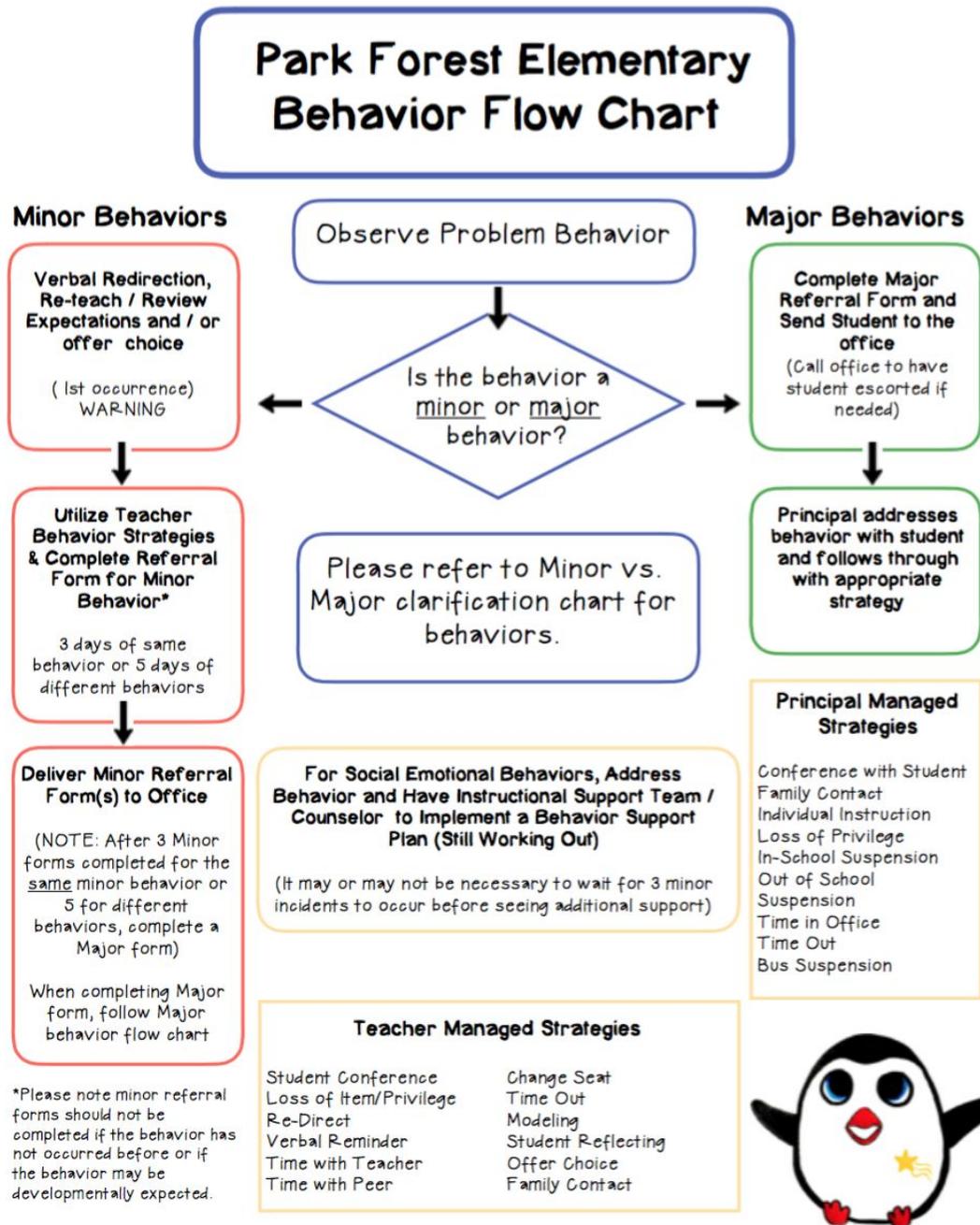
Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is **not permitted** in the State College Area School District.

Vandalism

Students are expected to respect the property of others and to take responsibility for damage they do to the property of others. Parents/guardians are expected to pay for damage done to school property by their children.

Sample PBIS Behavior Framework



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 in writing.

Gift Buying

The State College Area School District discourages the practice of professional staff members receiving gifts from students.

Lost and Found

Each school maintains a lost and found area for items that students have misplaced. Articles of clothing should be labeled with the student's name. Unclaimed articles are donated to those in need over the summer months.

School Pictures

Student photographs are taken in the fall and spring according to a schedule set by each school. Purchase of pictures is optional.

Parent Teacher Organization

Each school has an active Parent Teacher Organization that works with the staff to strengthen 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.

Annual Notice of Rights Under The Family Education Rights & Privacy Act

SCASD Policy 216: Student Records

[Q&A related to FERPA](#)

Records are maintained for each student as an aid to the educational process and for the convenience of former students. Parents/guardians or students may review records through the offices of the school principal or Student Services Department. There is a procedure for correction, addition, or challenge of the record. Written permission from the parent/guardian or the student (if over 18 years of age) is needed for release of records outside the District. There are exceptions: if the student transfers to another district; if the school district receives a subpoena; if the student seeks admission to a post-secondary school; and if directory information is sought in the case of an emergency or police matter.

Directory information may be released unless a parent/guardian has given "a written notice" refusing disclosure. Directory information includes the following: the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, date of graduation, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height as a member of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, and other similar information.

When parents/guardians are divorced, both adults have access to the medical, dental, or school records of their children, the residence address of those children and of the other parent/guardian, and any other information that the court deems necessary, unless there is a written court order denying such access.

If parents/guardians believe the District is not in compliance with the law, they are encouraged to contact the Director of Student Services at (814) 231-1054. They may also file a complaint with the federal office enforcing the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA Office, Department of Education, Room 4511, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202).

Mode of Communication

The content of this notice has been written in straight-forward, simple language. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the Student Services office at (814)231-1054. This office will arrange for an interpreter for parents with limited English proficiency. If a parent is deaf or blind or has no written language, the school district will arrange for communication of this notice in the mode normally used by the parent (e.g., sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

Homeless Information

School Districts are required to support education of homeless youth under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Homeless children and youth definition: Section 725(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 designed 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.

Appropriate Use of Technology

Students are permitted to use your district account **only for school purposes** during appropriate times and as allowed by the classroom teacher or staff member.

Email accounts are not secure. School officials can access email and/or files stored in user accounts if there is a reason to suspect misuse. E-mail account searches are conducted if misuse is suspected. Students are **not permitted** to do the following with their school district account: share passwords to their school district email and file server accounts; use other student or teacher accounts; send inappropriate emails; access inappropriate content; use Google Chat; or tamper with computer systems, software, or hardware.

Students are responsible for anything sent on their district e-mail accounts, whether at home or at school. They should inform their teacher or a staff member if they receive an inappropriate email or message.

Please read the SCASD’s full acceptable use policy [here](#).

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING and STUDENT SERVICES

K-5 Curriculum

For information about elementary curriculum, visit the [SCASD Elementary Curriculum Webpage](#) and [Elementary Program Brochure](#).

Classroom Learning Environment

Our elementary classrooms are designed to create a positive learning community in which children work to support their learning and the learning of their peers. Teachers integrate class meetings, morning greeting/closing circles, responsive classroom techniques, and strategies that support conflict resolution to foster a positive learning community and successful communication strategies.

Each school has created a Positive School Wide Behavior Support Plan to teach, practice, and reinforce expected behaviors. Students are recognized for meeting the expectations and parents are informed about their child's behavior through ongoing communication and recognition opportunities.

SCASD Gifted Support Services

The District provides challenging learning experiences for all students that build on their individual strengths and optimize their abilities. Gifted and Learning Enrichment services, in concert with SCASD's core program, ensure that the district supports the development of advanced learners to achieve their potential as students and individuals.

Gifted Support

The District engages in a number of formal processes to identify potential candidates for gifted education services. Currently, all students in grades 2 and 4 are universally screened each school year. A cognitive screener along with benchmark assessments in reading and math are used as indicators to identify students who may be in need of specially designed instruction.

In addition to our Universal Screening Process, students in any grade level may be referred for a Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GMDE) by teachers and/or parents. A Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (GMDT) determines the appropriateness of placement in Gifted Support. If Gifted Support services are recommended, the parents and student will be invited to participate in a program planning meeting where a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) will be developed.

For more information about SCASD Gifted Support, please contact your child's building principal or visit our website at [Gifted Support](#).

SCASD Gifted Support Services Gifted Public Notice

Annual Public Notice of Gifted Education Services and Programs and Notification of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

State College Area School District
240 Villa Crest Drive
State College, PA 16801

It is the responsibility of the Pennsylvania Department of Education to ensure that gifted children residing in the Commonwealth who are in need of specially designed instruction, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a federal law called the individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA '97).

The IDEA '97 requires each state educational agency to publish a notice to parents, in newspapers or other media, before any major identification, location, or evaluation activity. The IDEA '97 requires this notice to contain certain information. Another federal law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which protects confidentiality, requires educational agencies to notify parents annually of their Confidentiality rights. The State College Area School District (SCASD) fulfills the above duties with this annual notice.

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 suspected of being eligible for gifted education. The District provides a variety of opportunities for the screening and evaluation of students thought to be gifted. Students in grades 2 and 4 are annually screened in cognitive abilities, literacy and math. Additional screening activities take place by a review of 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 child's Building Principal or the Director of Gifted and Learning Enrichment.

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. "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 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 in 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 the District conduct a GMDE. Requests for a GMDE should be made in writing to a child's building Principal or the Director of Gifted and Learning Enrichment.

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 exceptional. 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 the District acting as the LEA. If the student demonstrates a need for specially designed instruction, the GIEP 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, objectives, and the individualized programs and

services which the student will receive based on the student's areas of strength. GIEPs are reviewed on an annual basis. The GIEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of services, the level of intervention, and the location of intervention. Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with specialized instruction

Guidelines for Internet and Other Electronic Online Services at the Elementary Level

The District strongly believes in the educational value of the Internet and other online electronic services, and recognizes their potential to support our curriculum and student learning. Our goal in providing these services is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Students and staff will have access to college, university and school libraries, information and news from a variety of sources and research institutions, and curriculum related software.

On the SCASD web site, <http://www.boarddocs.com/pa/stco/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=A2SM2U507D73>, parents/guardians can find the District's Acceptable Use Policy that establishes the rules and responsibilities for student use of the Internet and other electronic online services. All students may access online services unless a parent/guardian has indicated otherwise. An Internet filtering system that blocks inappropriate material is in place across the district.

Instructional Grouping

The district rationale for grouping students is to facilitate the creation of an instructional environment that is conducive to the most effective teaching and learning, to maximize the productive use of instructional time, and to prompt positive self-esteem and peer relationships, as supported by current research. Our goal is to work with you as partners in your child's education. We value information that you feel is important for the teachers and specialists to consider as we group children for the following year. The type of information you may want to share includes:

- Health or medical needs,
- Family changes,
- Peer interactions, and
- Specific social, emotional, or academic needs.

Field Trips

Field trips are planned as an integral learning activity to support our curriculum. They are reserved for those occasions when the school staff determines that it is the most efficient way to develop desired concepts.

Parent/guardian permission notes are required because the children are being taken from school property.

Since safety is such an important factor, field trips cannot be made in private automobiles. Parents/guardians may be asked to assist or chaperone on field trips.

Recess

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. Specific considerations for recess include:

1. Recess shall be held in addition to scheduled physical education classes.
2. Whenever possible, recess will be held outside of enrichment and intervention activities.
3. Adequate spaces, facilities, equipment, and supplies will be provided.
4. Teachers will ensure all students have access to recess.
 - a. No student may be excluded unless a documented medical condition precludes participation.
 - b. Students with special needs will be provided with reasonable accommodations.
 - c. In the rare situation when a student's behavior presents a safety concern, a precaution may include

removal from recess. Behavioral or social intervention will be utilized so that the student can return to recess as quickly as possible.

5. When possible, recess should be scheduled before lunch.
6. Recess will be held outdoors whenever possible, except in the event of inclement weather. In such cases, indoor recess will include physical activity.
7. Structured activities may be available in addition to unstructured, free play.

Homework

Our 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.

Instructional Support Team

All elementary schools have an Instructional Support Team (IST) which includes staff members who have had special training in curriculum assessment and behavior management which help students succeed in the general education program and before there is any consideration of special education placement. The IST has an instructional support teacher who provides intervention, consultation, and monitoring of the student's progress in the general education program.

Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS)

MTSS is an early intervention strategy and carries dual meaning in Pennsylvania. It is a comprehensive, multi-tiered, standards aligned strategy to enable early identification and intervention for students at academic or behavioral risk. As such, it forms the assessment and instructional framework to organize and implement the PA Academic Teacher Standards. MTSS allows educators to proactively identify and address academic and behavioral difficulties. Monitoring student response to a series of increasingly intense interventions assists in promoting success and provides data that may guide eligibility decisions for learning disabilities. The overarching goal of MTSS is to improve student achievement using research based interventions matched to the instructional need and level of the student. MTSS provides all students with standards-aligned concepts and competencies, data-driven instruction and the additional support needed to achieve strong academic results. If there is a failure to respond to instruction and intervention, MTSS can be utilized for the identification of students with a Specific Learning Disability in the area of reading K-3.

Additional information about MTSS can be found on our website at <http://www.scasd.org/Domain/11>

Title 1

The goal of Title 1, a federally assisted program, is to provide supplemental instruction for students who need extra practice and additional help meeting grade level expectations.

The reading program serves students in grades K through five and is provided by certified reading specialists. Parents/guardians are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the program.

For more information, visit the District's Title 1 website at www.scasd.org/Domain/35

Multidisciplinary Teams

These teams are comprised of staff members, students (as appropriate), and parents/guardians who gather information to decide whether a student's program is appropriate, if special education or general education should be recommended, and what should be included in the student's program.

Special Education Supports and Services

Special Education services are provided to students with identified exceptionalities under Chapter 14 of the Pennsylvania Special Education Regulations. Special education is defined as specially designed instruction to meet the needs of a student who is exceptional including specially designed instruction that is the following: (1) conducted in the classroom, in the home, in community settings, in hospitals, in institutions and in other settings; (2) 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 school-age categorical exceptionalities: autism/pervasive developmental disorder, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, orthopedic impairment, serious emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, or speech or language impairment.

Special Education is available for any student in the district with a disability who meets the state and federal criteria of eligibility. A multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE) can be requested at any level by school teams and/or parents.

Parental requests should be in writing to the building principal. Typically, prior to an MDE being completed, the school team, with input from parents, will provide opportunities for interventions that address the specific needs of the student. 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) made up of general educators, school psychologist, school counselor, special educators, and building principal. The Instructional Support Team works with school staff to provide screening and interventions in various areas (academic, emotional, social, behavioral) and will refer to specialists for motor, vision and hearing concerns. 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. Related services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy orientation and mobility training and specialized transportation are available as deemed appropriate by the Multidisciplinary Evaluation (MDE) Team and Individual Education Plan (IEP) Team. Transition services are provided according to the Pennsylvania Special Education Regulations.

Do you have a concern about your child? Follow these easy steps:

1. Discuss your concerns with your child's teacher(s).
2. Discuss your concerns with your child's principal.
3. Discuss, with the principal, whether a referral to the IST process is appropriate.
4. Still have concerns? Call the Special Education office and talk with the Director or Assistant Director of Special Education. (814) 231-1072 or (814) 231-4172.

For more information regarding Special Education, please see our [website](#)

English Learners

The district provides an English Language Development (ELD) curriculum for students who are learning English. English Learners are identified through the Home Language Survey at the time of registration. A WIDA screening process identifies students in need of ELD support by a certified English as a Secondary Language teacher prior to placement and attendance.

The elementary ELD Program provides English Learners with an instructional language communication program that supports their learning of the English language and culture. The objectives of our ELD Program include the following:

1. To develop basic interpersonal communication skills and cognitive academic language proficiency in English.
2. To develop proficiency in the language domains of speaking, listening comprehension, reading, and writing.

3. To develop competence in intercultural interactions.
4. To provide ELs with opportunities to share their language and culture with their peers in the grade level classroom.
5. To encourage participation in the full range of instructional activities in the mainstream curriculum and extra curricular activities in the school.

A complete description of SCASD'S ELD program goals, eligibility, and resources can be found at the following link: <https://www.scasd.org/Page/196>

STUDENT EVALUATION AND RECORD KEEPING

Assessment

The district uses testing information to provide:

1. Educators in the schools with information about individual students upon which to base competent decisions about appropriate instructional interventions.
2. Information on in-school performance to teachers, students, and families for the purposes of educational and/or career planning.
3. Information to parents/guardians about their child's performance on local, state, and national assessments.
4. Information to educators in the schools on student performance in specific curricular areas for the purpose of curriculum planning, modification, and the annual determination of each student's adequate yearly academic progress.
5. Information to educators in the schools to assist in the strategic planning process.
6. Information to the Board of School Directors and the community on the level of education attainment/measured ability of students in the District and comply with various federal or state mandates.

Universal Screening and Benchmark Assessments

Students participate in screening assessments three times a year to gauge their acquisition of core skills in grades K-5. Universal screening results are used to make decisions about instruction and intervention needs of individual students through our Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS). Students in grades K-5 participate in benchmark assessments in reading and math three times a year to gauge their progress and make adjustments in classroom instruction to support student growth.

Local, nationally-normed and statewide tests are used.

Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences

Parent-student-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and will run about 25-30 minutes. Children will not attend school on conference days, but they will be included in the conferences.

We are teaching students to be involved in their education through assuming more responsibility for their own learning. Through the process of self-assessment, we believe that students will learn to set realistic and challenging goals which will establish goal-setting as a necessary lifelong skill. The education of a child is a three-way commitment which is why we believe that children, parents, and teachers are essential participants in this process.

For children in grades 1 - 5, your child's teacher will prepare children for the conferences. Teachers and children will work together on setting realistic goals for the year. Most teachers will send something home to help you think about goal-setting as well. At the three-way conference in the fall, all participants will work together to reach an agreement on what goals can reasonably be accomplished. An action plan will be developed for making progress toward meeting goals. Goals might be academic, social, behavioral, or any combination of these three areas.

Parents may request a few minutes alone with the teacher after the goals have been established. Parents opting for this should make their child's teacher aware of their desire to do so.

The ultimate goal is for children to lead the conference but it will take time and practice for this to occur. Initially, most teachers will probably play the leadership role, particularly with the younger children.

We hope that having children play a central role in the conferences will have many positive effects. We believe that children should have an active part in developing goals and a plan for reaching them. However, we recognize that occasionally a parent and teacher need to talk privately about a sensitive issue and hope that when this is appropriate, a time can be arranged that is convenient for both parent and teacher. Most kindergarten children will not attend the conferences in the fall. They will be busy getting used to being in school.

Elementary School Counselor

Our elementary schools have a number of resource people who provide the very best learning experiences for your child. One of these specialists is the counselor. Our counselors see some children individually, some in small groups, and others on a classroom basis. They also consult with teachers, parents/guardians, and the principal regarding children's academic development; personal, social, and changing family needs; study skills; and school adjustment challenges. Self-esteem, decision-making, problem-solving, career development, and evaluation of children are also provided. At some point, your child may see the counselor regarding one or more of the above issues. If you would like further information regarding the counselor's role, please call the school.

Online Progress Reports

Progress reports will be available 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.

As a school district, communication with families is a priority. We want to do everything we can to share information about your child and our programs with you. Teachers call, email, send newsletters, write notes, etc. to keep you informed about school and your child's experiences. Parents should feel free to call, email, or request a conference at anytime during the school year if you have a question, observation, or concern. Sharing how you see your child and his/her experiences with the teacher helps us better understand and support your child's needs.

STUDENT HEALTH

Health Screening Program

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 and all new students who have no record of a physical examination)
- 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, 1st grade, and new students not previously screened)

Immunization Requirements for Children Entering School for the First Time

Immunization for diphtheria, tetanus, 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.

The child's birth certificate and immunization records are necessary for registration. Questions on immunizations should be directed to your child's school nurse found at <https://www.scasd.org/domain/104> or the Registrar's office at 231-1017.

For a complete list of the required doses of each immunization please visit the Pennsylvania Department of Health website at <http://www.health.state.pa.us/>

Exemptions are granted for medical, religious, moral, or ethical reasons. (A written request for exemptions must be submitted to the school nurse.)

MEDICATION / TREATMENT: PRESCRIBED / OVER THE COUNTER / SUPPLEMENTS / HOMEOPATHIC OR MEDICINAL REMEDIES / OTHER

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.

Medication, whenever possible, should be given at home. However, in the event that there is the need for a student to require any of the above 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 at [http://www.scasd.org/healthforms: Medication – Parental Request – Physicians Order \(Word of PDF format\).](http://www.scasd.org/healthforms: Medication – Parental Request – Physicians Order (Word of PDF format).)
- **Signed consent by parent / guardian.**
- **Original labeled container,** which will be stored in the health room or nurse office.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Do not send anything unlabeled, in a Ziplock baggie, lunch box or backpack.
- Any controlled substance medication must be delivered to the health room by a parent or legal guardian.
- Parents must pick up any unused portions at the end of the school year, or it will be destroyed.

SELF MEDICATION: INHALERS / DIABETIC SUPPLIES / EPINEPHRINE

Along with a prescribed order, written parent / guardian request, available in the health room office or online at [www.scasd.org/healthforms: Medication – Self \(Word of PDF format\),](http://www.scasd.org/healthforms: Medication – Self (Word of PDF format),) **AND** the original storage container, **students of all grades in the SCASD 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 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.

Is Your Child Sick? Guidelines for when to keep your child home from school

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 him/her 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 about 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Ideally the child should remain home until s/he is 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 to have the child treated by a physician/health care provider whenever necessary.

Student Insurance

The State College Area School District does not carry medical insurance on students. The School District does provide parents with the opportunity to purchase an Accident Insurance Plan through Zurich Insurance Company, an A+ rated company. This \$500,000 Maximum Benefit coverage will respond for injuries students sustain, due to an injury from an accident, and will also respond for school sports (except football) injuries. (Coverage limitations and exclusions do apply.) If you would like to obtain more information or purchase the coverage, please log on to www.BollingerSchools.com, or contact the Business Office at 231-1021.

ELEMENTARY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Since 1998, the State College Area School District and Penn State University have been partners in the development of an Elementary Professional Development School Collaborative. The goals of the Professional Development School (PDS) are to enhance the learning of all children, to prepare more effective beginning teachers, and to provide ongoing professional development for veteran teachers and university faculty.

As part of the PDS collaborative, a student intern from Penn State may be teaching in your child's classroom. The intern will spend the entire school year teaching under the supervision of the mentor teacher and a university-based supervisor. The mentor teacher and intern will often engage in teaching together, which results in children receiving more individualized attention. As part of the process of learning to teach effectively, the intern will be videotaped periodically throughout the year. These videotapes will be used with the intern for self-improvement, as well as with other interns and veteran teachers for professional development purposes. If you do not want your child to be photographed or videotaped, you can click the "no" box on the back to school student information link.

Far more information about the Professional Development School Collaborative, please visit the PDS web site at <http://www.scasd.org/Page/22309>