

STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

MIDDLE LEVEL

2019-2020 FACULTY & STAFF HANDBOOK

MOUNT NITTANY MIDDLE SCHOOL
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WELCOME TO MOUNT NITTANY AND

PARK FOREST MIDDLE SCHOOLS!

STATE COLLEGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT WEB PAGE:

www.scasd.org

MOUNT NITTANY MIDDLE SCHOOL WEB PAGE:

www.scasd.org/Domain/704

PARK FOREST MIDDLE SCHOOL WEB PAGE:

www.scasd.org/Domain/831



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, grievance procedures and services, or activities and facilities that are accessible to and usable by disabled persons, contact the Compliance Officer, State College Area School District, 240 Villa Crest Drive, State College, PA 16801.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Activities Accounts.....9

Bus Duty Procedures.....	8
Cafeteria Procedures.....	8
Copyright Regulations.....	12
Decision-Making at the Middle Schools.....	4
Faculty and Staff Absences.....	4
Faculty and Staff Expectations.....	4
Faculty and Staff Meetings.....	5
Field Trips.....	10
Fundraising.....	9
General Supervision.....	7
Grading.....	6
Guest Speakers.....	13
Invasion of Privacy.....	12
Leaving the Building During the School Day.....	6
Mailboxes/Email/Telephones/Voicemail.....	5
Print Shop Request Forms.....	12
Professional Learning Communities and Team Meetings.....	6
Purchasing Card Use.....	9
Responsibility for Student Behavior.....	7
Showing of Movies.....	13
Study Hall Procedures.....	8
Taking Students Outside During the School Day.....	8
Teacher Service Committees.....	6

DECISION-MAKING AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOLS

As in any organization, there are many levels and kinds of decisions made at the middle schools. These range from simple to the highly complex and may be made by various stakeholders.

Each individual in the school has the authority to make decisions that affect him or herself. They also have a responsibility to consider the effect their decisions have on others and to make those decisions keeping in mind the standards of the district and school and educational best practices.

The administration believes that, where appropriate, decisions are made most effectively with input from parents, faculty, staff, and students. Some decisions, however, must be made unilaterally depending upon the specific situation.

The administration will rely on team leaders and teachers for broad-based advice, participation, and support for decisions. This requires clear and complete communication between administration, teams, and staff members. Every staff member shares the responsibility for this communication.

FACULTY AND STAFF EXPECTATIONS

In addition to adhering to the Pennsylvania Code of Ethics for Educators and following all district policies and expectations, all faculty and staff members should adhere to their building's specific expected behaviors as outlined in the Staff Expected Behaviors Matrix.

FACULTY AND STAFF ABSENCES

All absences due to illness or anticipated absences must be submitted in Absence Management (AESOP) prior to the start of the school day.

You must request a personal day at least one (1) week (7 days) in advance for approval. Please make sure you have enough personal days to cover any request. All absences known ahead of time (even those when a guest teacher is not required), must be submitted in AESOP. This includes medical appointments, illness in family, field trips, personal leave, and all professional leave time, etc.

Plans for Guest Teachers

1. If you have Bus Duty or Lunch Duty, include directions in your plans for supervision of these areas. If you have a Morning Duty, please communicate that to the guest teacher in advance.
2. You must have your schedule, lesson plans, seating charts and/or class lists, evacuation drill, and emergency evacuation information available for the guest teacher's use.
3. Emergency guest teacher plans must be turned in to the Main Office by the date requested. If you change your emergency guest teacher plans change during the school year, please update your files in the Main Office with new emergency plans.

In order to have productive learning continue in a teacher's absence, no guest teacher should be put in the position of conducting class without a lesson plan.

It is not recommended that teachers leave lesson plans for guest teachers that require the use of the Chromebooks since they may not be familiar with the appropriate procedures in regard to the supervision, care, and safety of the equipment. However, if such a plan is required due to unplanned circumstances, teachers are required to leave detailed instructions to guest teachers about the necessary procedures that need to be followed in regard to the equipment and supervision of the students.

If a teacher would like to offer feedback on the performance of a guest teacher, please see administration or leave feedback in AESOP.

MAILBOXES/EMAIL/TELEPHONES/VOICEMAIL

Mailboxes

Teachers should plan to check their mailboxes each morning before homeroom and as frequently as possible during the day.

Email

It is expected that staff read their email *at least* once daily. Faculty and staff members are not permitted to exploit email for personal use or for solicitation and should follow the district's Acceptable Use Policy. Faculty and staff should also not share passwords nor allow others access to their accounts and should refrain from using email during in-service and meeting times.

Telephones and Voicemail

All faculty phone numbers are published on the school website. It is expected that faculty and staff check their voicemails daily in order to respond to messages in a timely manner. Voicemail messages can be forwarded to email accounts for convenience. Faculty and staff can also control when outside phone calls ring inside their classrooms. All personal long distance calls should be made using a personal cellular phone. **Classroom phones should only be answered by a teacher or staff member.**

FACULTY AND STAFF MEETINGS

Faculty meetings will be scheduled once a month on the **second Tuesday of the month**. Meetings will normally occur before school beginning at 7:20 AM. Staff members have a professional responsibility to attend these meetings. However, in the rare case when a teacher cannot attend, the teacher should inform the building principal of that fact prior to the meeting.

TEACHER SERVICE COMMITTEES

Teachers are expected to attend all meetings for their Teacher Service Committee. These committees will meet the **first Thursday of the month** six (6) times throughout the school year. Meetings will normally occur before school beginning at 7:20 AM. Staff members have a professional responsibility to attend all of these meetings. Please inform the committee chair or administrator if an emergency comes up and you are not able to attend a meeting in advance.

LEAVING THE BUILDING DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Any faculty or staff member needing to leave the building during the day must sign out in the Main Office before doing so. Please also inform your team members of your destination and sign back in upon your return.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND TEAM MEETINGS

Teachers are expected to attend all professional learning community (PLC) and team meetings and to perform the duties associated with their roles and responsibilities assigned to them at the start of the year within their team. Team meetings are expected to meet *at least* twice during the cycle (student meeting and logistics/curriculum meeting). Extra compensation is given to the leader of each building team. Please remember to complete the roles and responsibilities and extra pay percentage at the start of the year and return them to the Main Office. Guest teacher attendance at student day meetings may not be appropriate due to confidentiality.

GRADING

According to Board Policy, all staff in the State College Area secondary schools shall use the following grading scale:

<u>Grading Scale</u>		<u>IF + OR - IS CHOSEN:</u>	
90 - 100	A	90-91 = A-	98-100 = A+
80 - 89	B	80-81 = B-	88- 89 = B+
70 - 79	C	70-71 = C-	78- 79 = C+
60 - 69	D	60-61 = D-	68- 69 = D+
Below 60	E		

Grades for students must meet two (2) criteria. First, they must reflect, as accurately as possible, the achievement and learning of each student; and second, the teacher must be able to justify that grade through documentation.

Incomplete (I) Grades

Incompletes shall be assigned sparingly with the prior consent of an administrator and optional consultation with a counselor.

Final Exams

Final exams may not be used for any course except for Advanced Algebra 1 and Advanced Geometry.

Promotion and/or Failing of Students

Students will be promoted if they pass three (3) or more of their core subjects. The four core subjects are English, math, science, and social studies. Exceptions to repeating a year might be:

1. Students who may have repeated a grade previously;

2. Students who would receive little or no benefit from repeating the grade due to a limited capacity to learn;
3. Students who successfully complete an approved “summer school” program.

In all instances of decisions to promote/retain students, the building principal makes the final decision.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Our goal is to have an open and caring atmosphere throughout the school where respect for all who study and work here is evident. Faculty and staff should teach and reteach (as needed) expected behaviors in all areas of the school to students. All reminders should be done in a restorative and supportive manner. The Student Code of Conduct should be referenced for all concerns.

Faculty and staff will be expected to perform the following:

1. Appear on time for supervisory duties.
2. Be sure to circulate among students so that they are aware of your presence.
3. Expect students to arrive in homeroom and to class on time.
4. Only allow students to leave their classroom or designated area with an appropriate pass.
5. Dismiss students from class at the proper time.
6. Stand in the hallways and/or in assigned locations near your room entrance between classes to observe student movement through the hallways and corridors.

GENERAL SUPERVISION

To ensure the safety of our students, it is very important that there is adequate supervision in the classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, and outside the building. **This is an obligation that cannot be taken too lightly.** To provide this safe and secure environment, homeroom teachers should be in their homerooms at 8:30 AM since students will be permitted to report to their homerooms at this time. Students arriving before 8:30 AM will remain in designated areas.

At the end of the school day students are dismissed in one wave. Bus loading is a crucial time when adequate supervision is extremely important.

TAKING STUDENTS OUTSIDE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Inform the Main Office if you are taking a class outside during the school day. The office will provide you with a two way radio in the event communication needs to take place.

STUDY HALL PROCEDURES

To ensure that study halls are a useful part of the school day, it is important that students use them as they are intended. The following guidelines are expected to be enforced consistently

by all study hall monitors:

1. Students should be expected to arrive on time with assignments to complete or materials to read.
2. Students are permitted to use their Chromebooks at the discretion of the study hall monitor.
3. Students should remain quiet. At the teacher's discretion, it is permissible for small groups of students to work together on assignments.
4. Students may need to use the restroom. If so, they should use the restroom closest to the cafeteria. No more than one (1) student should be out of study hall at one time. Study hall monitors will give students a pass and have the student sign out.
5. Students may go to the library during study halls if it is open. Please follow the procedures outlined by the school's librarian for more details.
6. The names of students who are not accounted for and are not absent for the period or the day should be reported to the Main Office.
7. Study hall monitors are expected to see that the room/cafeteria is returned to its original condition. Paper should be picked up and chairs should be pushed in.

CAFETERIA PROCEDURES

To ensure that lunch is an orderly and safe part of the school day, it is important that students demonstrate expected behaviors for this space. The faculty and staff on duty should report quickly to the cafeteria to provide adequate supervision. In addition, if students are permitted outside, at least two faculty or staff members need to go outside with them to supervise the recess area.

BUS DUTY PROCEDURES

Faculty and staff may be assigned to morning bus duty from 8:20-8:40 AM. Afternoon Bus Duty is from 3:40 PM until the last bus has departed. **PFMS Note:** If you are scheduled for the Pool Lot, please report to that area on time and remain there until the last student has departed. If a student is waiting and the last bus has left the Main Lot, have the waiting student report to the Main Office to make a phone call home or to wait safely in the office for their ride.

ACTIVITIES ACCOUNTS

Instructions for any teacher who sponsors a student activity when using the SCASD Activities Account:

1. All purchases must be billed.
2. All bills must be paid for by check, made out to a vendor.
3. All activity vouchers to pay bills must be completed by the sponsor or student treasurer and must be signed by the sponsor and the student treasurer. All vouchers must be accompanied by an invoice for a check to be cut. Checks will be processed by the Accounting Department only **once per week**. Please keep this in mind when requesting a check for field trip entrance fees. It will take approximately ten (10) days for completion. The sponsor must keep records and the balance in his/her book must agree with the balance issued by the building secretary in the Main Office.

4. An "Activities Fund Cash Settlement Sheet" must be completed and signed by the advisor for each deposit. You must list all checks (with account number in memo field) on this sheet and a total of the deposit. Roll coins in bank roll wrappers and arrange bills in separate denominations, with the face of the bill up and in the same direction. ALL money must be turned in to the Main Office each day. No money should be stored in classrooms or desks overnight.
5. After the principal's secretary verifies the deposit, you will receive a copy of the cash deposit and a copy of the Activity Fund Cash Settlement Sheet.

PURCHASING CARD USE

Whenever possible, for purchases over \$500, we prefer that you use a requisition (PO) instead of LPO or VISA purchasing card. When requesting use of the purchasing cards, the building administrator/budget head will require the authorized user to complete a "Request for Purchasing Card" (pink purchasing card request). Accounts Payable requires a rationale for all purchases. Please be sure you have the funds in your account to cover the purchase. You should check with the intended vendor for their procedures before making purchases. Some vendors require a District ID at the time of purchase. The purchasing card must be returned the next day with the receipt for the purchase. **Please be sure that tax is not charged! If tax is accidentally charged, the purchase must be returned so that the tax can be credited or the staff member can pay the tax with personal money.**

FUNDRAISING

1. All fundraising events must be approved by the administration. A form is available in the office and entitled "Fundraising Project Request." This form must be completed and given to the assistant principal **at least one week** prior to the start date.
2. All fundraising events must have a purpose. This should be clearly stated on the request form.
3. All fundraising events must have a goal. There should be a dollar amount that is the goal of the project.
4. All fundraising events must have a predetermined start and end date. If the goal is not met at the end of that time period, administrative approval may be given to continue the project.
5. All fundraising organizations must complete a "Fundraising Financial Report," due within ten (10) days after the end of the project.
6. Please choose fundraising products appropriate for school.
7. Fundraising is designed to aid student organizations lacking a budget. Therefore teams are discouraged from fundraising, as team money is available. *Teams may apply to raise funds for special projects with the above guidelines applying.*
8. Funds generated by fundraising projects are to be used during the school year that the project was completed. Fundraisers should not be used to create a surplus for the following school year.

FIELD TRIPS (DISTRICT PLANNED STUDENT TRAVEL)

Field trips should be planned so that interference with the total school program will be kept to a minimum. Field trips and excursions must be scheduled and approved by the assistant

principal **at least two (2) weeks in advance**. District Planned Student Travel forms are available through Trip Tracker. Please complete a request online for the assistant principal to approve. No more than one (1) field trip per semester (fall, spring) should be requested by a team, department, or grade level.

Field trips are an extension of the instructional program and should support the educational goals of the school. As such, students may not be denied access except when they pose a safety or health risk. Low grades, failure to complete assignments, unpreparedness for class, etc., should not be used to prevent students from taking part in a field trip anymore than they would for a test or other curricular offering.

When students will be leaving the building, a permission slip must be signed by each student's parent/guardian. It is the teacher's responsibility to see that no student goes on a trip without a signed note from the parent. The teacher should keep these on file for **at least two (2) weeks after completion** of the trip. The names of students who will be out of other teachers' classes must be published and distributed to all staff members **at least one (1) week** ahead of time. Students who are out of school on school-sponsored trips are not to be marked absent. It is suggested that there be at least one (1) adult chaperone for every 12 students.

All teachers and staff accompanying students on the field trip need to ensure that, if a guest teacher or sub paraprofessional is required to cover a class, duty, etc., that the budget funding these costs is identified in the approval process. A request for absence form for a guest teacher for all chaperones must accompany the District Planned Student Travel form when submitted to the assistant principal.

All transportation, which is to be paid from the general fund of the district, must be scheduled through the Transportation Office (231-1034). This includes Student Activities Accounts. Commitments made for transportation without prior approval from Transportation may expect no reimbursement from the school district funds.

Field trips requesting school district buses must be scheduled between the hours of 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. NOTE: School district buses can usually be used for field trips at a less expensive rate than contracted buses. Please indicate budget item number on your field trip request. The transportation supervisor will not schedule field trips that are not covered in the budget.

Responsibility of teacher in charge of trip:

1. Give transportation office accurate information regarding trip.
2. Plan rest stops and stops at various points of interest.
3. Remember that the conduct of the group rests with you.
4. Inform Transportation Office of any anticipated problems.
5. Assume responsibility for maintaining proposed schedule within reason.
6. Notify the Cafeteria Manager at least two (2) weeks in advance of any events that will take students away over the lunch periods.
7. When collecting money for field trips, please be sure all money is turned in to the Main Office each day. No money should be stored in classrooms or desks overnight.

Field Trip Checklist

Staff members should refer to the following checklist, and a copy of the completed checklist should be given to the Main Office prior to the trip. This checklist should also be submitted to the Main Office at the conclusion of the trip.

Planning the field trip:

- Determine purpose for trip
- Identify one (1) staff member who is in charge of the field trip
- Determine what role each sponsoring staff member will play
- Determine location and date of trip
- Obtain administrative approval
- Make bus arrangements (231-1033/1034)
- Determine cost for buses (includes cost of buses and admission fees)
- Determine per pupil cost of trip
- Determine number of chaperones
- Identify chaperones (request cell phones)
- Identify appropriate movies to be shown (must meet district guidelines)
- Alert office, teachers, nurse, and Cafeteria staff about the trip at least two (2) weeks out
- Prepare letter to parents and students explaining the trip
- Assign students and chaperones to buses

Parent letter details:

- Purpose of the trip
- Date of the trip
- Cost of the trip
- Meal arrangements
- Spending money needs
- Drop off time and location
- Pick up time and location
- Need for emergency numbers, medical information, and excursion permits
- Meet with chaperones in advance of trip if at all possible

Departure day/leaving school:

- Provide office copies of who is going, destination of field trip, bus company being used, itinerary, list of chaperones, bus assignments, and cell phone numbers
- Prepare and communicate contingency plan to group in case of separation
- Provide chaperones with list of students, emergency numbers, and daily plan
- Assign chaperones to different sections of each bus
- Make sure cell phones are charged and power is turned on
- Staff member in charge should have master list of students and contact information
- Take roll before leaving school
- Provide office with attendance information

Arrival at destination:

- Take roll before students leave the bus
- Repeat pick up time and location to all students and chaperones
- Ensure students and chaperones know phone numbers of chaperones

Departing destination or after a stop:

- Take roll (including chaperones) at each stop

- Notify school office of delayed departure

Missing student/staff or other problem:

- Determine who is missing
- Report to predetermined location as per contingency plan
- Keep other students together
- Notify school administration and, if appropriate, local police

PRINT SHOP REQUEST FORMS

All Print Shop Request Forms must be approved and signed by the principal. Please submit all print shop requests to the Main Office. Keep in mind the cost of added features when making such requests. Teachers may email the print shop directly when needed.

COPYRIGHT REGULATIONS

Teachers and staff are reminded to access the copyright rules and procedures on the district website at www.scasd.org/copyright if requesting items or for clarification of copyright practices and policies.

INVASION OF PRIVACY

The State College Area School District believes in the necessity of being sensitive to the invasion of privacy of students and their families.

Within the instructional program there are certain assignments, which should be avoided. Such assignments may include: (1) tests of personality; (2) assignment of an autobiography; (3) assignment of designing a family tree; and (4) use of socio-psycho drama to elicit reactions regarding the student's parents or their private affairs.

The students' personal thoughts, beliefs, emotions, sensations and habits may be volunteered but not requested in areas such as religion, politics, social and financial situation of the family, or behavior within the family.

GUEST SPEAKERS

If a teacher is planning on using a guest speaker for their class, department, or team, they should inform the principal and the assistant principal *by e-mail at least one (1) week* prior to the speaker's appearance for approval.

SHOWING OF MOVIES

Movies should only be shown for curricular use. Teachers are encouraged to refrain from showing entire movies in class to maximize instructional time. Any movie above a "G" rating requires parental permission forms to be distributed and signed. Please refer to the web

address www.movlic.com to make sure the movie name is listed on this site and is allowable to show in the school.