

Delta Program Handbook

State College Area School District

2018 – 2019

Mission: *The Delta Program is a community-oriented, democratic school fostering choice, voice, and diversity of thought to develop engaged citizens and inspired leaders.*

Delta Handbook

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History of The Delta Program

The Delta Program officially opened as a secondary program in the fall of 1974, but it began much earlier. The idea for an alternative school was an outgrowth of dialogue among district staff for several years, and by November 1972, the school board encouraged the administration to begin a serious study of the alternative school concept. In 1973, district staff members, students, parents, and interested community members participated in a task force to study the feasibility of implementing a model alternative school in the district. The committee reported to the school board that they had discovered considerable community support for a new option in the district that would include the following components:

- the community as classroom
- decision making involvement by staff, students, and parents in educational planning
- flexible curriculum
- teachers as advisors
- community service
- self-governance

The School Board responded favorably to the committee recommendation to begin an alternative secondary program for the 1974-75 school year. The board established The Alternative Program under its own governing structure, separate from the junior and senior high schools, but in cooperation with them. The first classes for grades nine through twelve began at the The Alternative Program located in the College Heights School in the fall of 1974. The program enrolled more than 120 students in its first year. In August 1976, the State College Area Board of School Directors granted permission for The Alternative Program to be operated on a continuing basis. In 1981, The Alternative Program moved to its location in the Fairmount Avenue Building. The following year, 1982, The AP expanded its program to include grades 7 and 8. The Alternative Program officially changed its name to The Delta Program in 1993. Since its inception, The Alternative/Delta Program has evolved in response to the community it serves.

Delta Expectations

Every member of Delta has:

- **the right to** free expression within the bounds of other Delta guidelines, and with the understanding that each person will take into account the sensibilities and personal dignity of others.
- **the right to** expect that she/he will be treated with courtesy, respect, and kindness. Feelings, thoughts and opinions will be communicated directly to each other. When conflicts arise, they will be resolved peacefully, privately, and with consideration for others in the school community. Violence is never acceptable in the Delta community.
- **the responsibility to** act in ways which support the learning and growth of others. Staff members have a special responsibility to be nurturing to students.
- **the right to** expect that everyone will attend class, everyone will be on time, everyone will be prepared, and everyone will be attentive.
- **the responsibility to** act in an appropriate manner in the community at large, remembering that individual actions reflect on Delta.
- **the right to** expect that individual and community property will not be altered, damaged, or stolen by people in the program.
- **the right to** expect that each person will be aware of and responsible for his/her own property and the property of others.
- **the right to** expect that consequences will be applied to those who violate these expectations.

These expectations were developed and agreed upon by students and staff at the Delta Program All School Meeting in March 1985.

The Delta Expectations are currently under discussion. Possible additions for the 2018-2019 school year include restorative practice and facility respect and cleanliness.

Delta Consequences

The following process was developed to provide the Delta community with guidelines for dealing with situations when community members fail to meet the expectations of the program. The State College Area School District has established policies and procedures to which we adhere. In some cases the policies and procedures of the school district overlap with the expectations and consequences of The Delta Program. In these situations, we use the school district procedures and Delta consequences together to deal with violations. While the spirit of this agreement will be followed by staff as well as students, these are student specific consequences.

In most circumstances, students, a parent/guardian and staff members will begin to deal with a failure to meet expectations at Level 1. In instances where violence or theft is involved, resolution of the matter will begin at Level 3.

LEVEL 1

The people involved will deal directly with each other when appropriate and they all agree. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the people involved, and they agree, a mediator (usually a staff person) will meet with the involved students and/or staff and their advisors.

As much support as possible will be provided to help correct the problem via advisors, other staff, students, a parent/guardian, support staff, or other programs.

If repeated violations of expectations occur or there is little or no improvement, Level 2 measures will be invoked.

LEVEL 2

When appropriate, a meeting of the students involved and their advisors will be held to resolve the matter. At the meeting, a decision will be made which may include:

- peer or professional counseling
- closed campus or other loss of privileges
- written or formal notice of contract violation
- restitution
- restorative practice
- other consequences as appropriate

If the problem persists, Level 3 measures will be invoked.

LEVEL 3

For a level three offense, an Advising Team Meeting will be held with the Director. Placement in another secondary program will be considered, along with other support and consequences. In most situations, the violator will leave Delta.

*Originally approved by All School Meeting, December, 1985.
Updated and amended by Advisory Council, June 2000.*

Principles of Curriculum & Staffing

The Implementation Committee responsible for planning the transition to a seventh through twelfth grade program in 1982 developed a set of principles based on the results of interviews and surveys of students, parents/guardians, and staff. Some of the principles had particular application to the expansion of the program, but many reemphasize the unwritten principles that were considered important throughout the existence of The Delta Program.

As guiding principles, The Delta Program will:

1. design and offer activities that foster a sense of responsibility to the Delta community and the larger community;
2. design programs which make use of student interests to teach skills and develop a positive self-concept;
3. select staff members who show strong evidence of good communication, interpersonal skills, and a commitment to the development of individualized approaches to instruction;
4. regularly offer, for students and staff, activities designed to enhance social and interpersonal skills;
5. design and offer activities that provide inter-age grouping as an integral part of the program;
6. develop procedure by which the various options for structuring a student's program will be clearly stated and communicated to all parents/guardians and students, particularly those new to the program;
7. provide activities that enhance career awareness and career decision making;
8. establish and maintain an attractive physical environment within the school;
9. offer a variety of different types of classroom learning experiences;
10. offer a variety of different types of community learning experiences;
11. provide a variety of social activities that take into account diverse interests and maturity levels.

Assumptions About Learning

Certain basic assumptions establish our approach to learning. They may be summarized as follows:

- human beings have a natural potential for learning;
- when free to do so, human beings will act in ways that are life-enhancing to themselves and others;
- much significant learning is acquired through doing;
- significant learning occurs when the subject matter is perceived by the learner as having relevance;
- learning that directly involves the self concept of the learner occurs most often in an atmosphere of acceptance, trust, and respect;
- learning occurs most readily when the learner participates responsibly in the process;
- self initiated learning that involves the whole learner is the most lasting and pervasive;
- not all learners learn the same thing in the same way at the same time;
- people affected by decisions should have a voice in making them;
- students, parents/ guardians, and staff working cooperatively can best develop an appropriate educational program for each individual learner;
- flexibility - an openness to change - is crucial to the growth and evolution of The Delta Program;
- the resources of the community far exceed those of the school and should be used appropriately as often as possible;
- the artificial barriers that often exist between school and community, adolescent and adult, parent and teacher, and teacher and learner, inhibit learning and should be removed whenever possible.

Goals of The Delta Program

The design and operation of the Delta Program is based on thirteen goals that have evolved since the program began in 1974.

1. **The Delta Program will** provide and encourage opportunities for students to establish their own goals and to accept individual responsibility for their learning program.
2. **The Delta Program will** provide a guidance program using professional counselors, teachers, and members of the community to help students with their educational programs, individual goals, and personal matters.
3. **The Delta Program will** provide all students with equal opportunities to learn *what* they need to learn, *when* they need to learn it, and in an environment that is conducive to learning. Services that cannot be provided at Delta will be made available at State College Area High School.
4. **The Delta Program will** involve students in the determination of school policies, procedures, and governance.
5. **The Delta Program will** provide for the participation of each student in career education.
6. **The Delta Program will** involve every student in some form of community service.
7. **The Delta Program will** be based in one of the school district facilities, but it will consider the whole community as a learning laboratory by making use of both public and private facilities.
8. **The Delta Program will** offer a range of courses from which students may elect a program designed to meet their own needs, interests, abilities, and learning styles.
9. **The Delta Program will** meet the curriculum requirements established by the Department of Education.

Delta Vision

Our *vision of a Delta Program community member* is one who is:

- *confident, adventurous and productive:*
 - developing a healthy life style
 - developing a sense of empowerment

- *sensitive to others and skillful at establishing and maintaining relationships:*
 - practicing appropriate group / community involvement skills
 - developing multicultural awareness
 - being openminded to individual differences
 - welcoming to new Delta community members

- *aware and curious, a seeker of knowledge:*
 - becoming a capable reader, writer, listener, speaker
 - becoming technologically and quantitatively literate
 - developing appropriate research skills
 - preparing for future educational pursuits and / or career
 - willing to share knowledge in the community and classroom

- *self-directed, skilled at decision-making:*
 - developing critical thinking skills
 - developing creative problem-solving skills
 - willing to take educational risks

- *aware of the aesthetic dimensions of life:*
 - responding aesthetically to the world
 - making critical judgments about the fine arts

- *committed to making the world a better place by initiating positive change:*
 - developing a historical perspective
 - being involved in social action and community service
 - participating in governance
 - knowing and practicing nonviolent conflict resolution

Accidents

Any student who is injured should report promptly to a teacher, the school nurse, or to the Delta office. Claims for accidents will be made on a special form obtained from the office. Such a form should be filled out completely and returned to the Delta office as soon as possible. Students who participate in interscholastic and intramural sports are automatically covered by accident insurance that the district carries.

Address Changes

Students should notify the Delta office promptly of any change in address, telephone number and email address. A change of bus number may not be made until the address change is processed.

Attendance

Attendance at classes and meetings is important to Delta, and it is one of our basic expectations. Failure to attend classes and other learning commitments is a frequent reason for students being unsuccessful. Information about student attendance is available through Home Access Center. There are legal attendance requirements, established by The PA Department of Education, that must be met.

To allow us to keep accurate attendance records, and to help students develop responsible attendance patterns, there is a procedure that corresponds to the consequence levels for this expectation.

1. We ask parents/guardians to call when their child will be absent from school. The Delta office (231-1000) opens at 8:00 a.m.
2. If an absence is arranged in advance, call ahead. Try to schedule medical, dental, or other appointments when your child doesn't have classes or meetings scheduled.
3. The state requires a note signed by a parent/guardian to verify an excused absence. The note should contain the student's name, date of, and reason for absence, and be signed by the parent/guardian. To allow us to keep accurate records, notes must be turned in within three days upon the student's return to school. After that, we will record the absence as "unexcused." The only acceptable reasons for an excused absence are the student's illness, a death in the family, observance of a religious holiday, or other exceptional reasons as determined by the Director. Any other reason is considered "unexcused." Students may be excused for other reasons if they check with each of the teachers whose classes they will miss to get permission to make up the missed class and work (if possible). We have forms for these pre-arranged absences in the office. Requests for extended absence, such as for family trips, should be made well in advance, using the form described above. The district asks for two weeks notice and allows ten days absence for family trips during the school year. Any trip beyond ten days will need the Assistant Superintendent's approval.

4. When a student returns after an absence, it is the student's responsibility to arrange with the teacher to make up the class work missed. Each teacher will discuss class make-up policies early in the course.
5. When students have parent permission to leave school and miss classes during the school day, or when students enter school during the day and have missed classes, they must bring in a note from a parent to verify the absence and to meet the legal requirement. Students leaving school during the day and missing classes must sign out in the office of the building they are leaving (Delta or State High).
6. When students return to school after any absence or lateness, they should report to the office to get an "excused pass" to present to the teachers of the classes that were missed. If the student has no note from home, the pass will be marked "unexcused." The following day, the student should bring in the note to receive an "excused" pass.
7. If absences become a problem for a student in a class, the teacher will notify the student's advisor, who will discuss the problem with the student, and with the parent/guardian.
8. If the problem persists, an Advising Team Meeting will be held to discuss the appropriateness of The Delta Program for that student.
9. After three days of illegal absence, state attendance laws are followed and parents/guardians are sent an official notice of first offense. If the student accumulates any more days of illegal absence, a second offense notice is sent and filed with the district magistrate. A "day" of illegal absence is defined as one cumulative day of the student's schedule.
10. By state law, any student who does not have contact with the school for ten consecutive days must be withdrawn.
11. Parents/guardians may access their child's attendance report on-line through Home Access Center. Parents/guardians may call the office at any time to check their child's attendance.
12. Pennsylvania allows parents/guardians to excuse 10 days of absences. After a student accumulates 10 absences, either excused or unexcused, Pennsylvania requires a doctor's note to excuse the absence.
13. We currently use a daily attendance notification system, which sends an email to a student's parent/guardian for any class where the student has been marked unexcused.
14. If an event causes a conflict between a Delta and a high school class, the student must inform the high school teacher as soon as possible. The high school teacher may require the student's attendance in class.
15. The Delta and State High schedules do not perfectly align on days when there is a 2-hour delay. If the delay occurs on an even calendar date (ex., December 14), students should attend their Delta classes in full and communicate with their high school teachers about leaving early or arriving late. If the delay occurs on an odd calendar date (ex., December 15), students should attend their high school classes in full and communicate with their Delta teachers about leaving early or arriving late.

Consequences for Unexcused Absences

Individual Class: Unexcused Absence (At each level of infraction, parents/guardians will be notified.)

1. One class: one day closed campus.
2. Unexcused absence same class 2nd time: one week of closed campus and meeting with the director to discuss placement.
3. Unexcused absence same class 3rd time: ATM, removal from class will be discussed and a Notice of Contract Violation will be implemented.
4. Violation of contract: ATM with Director to discuss placement.

Cumulative Unexcused Days of School Missed (At each level of infraction, parents/guardians will be notified.)

1. First cumulative day unexcused: Closed campus for a week.
2. Second cumulative day unexcused: Closed campus for another week, ATM, and a Notice of Contract Violation will be implemented.
3. Violation of Contract: ATM with director to discuss placement.

Cumulative Unexcused Tardies (At each level of infraction, parents/guardians will be notified.)

1. Three cumulative unexcused tardies: Closed campus for a day.
2. Each additional unexcused tardy: One day of closed campus.
3. Six cumulative unexcused tardies: ATM & Notice of Contract Violation will be implemented.
4. Violation of contract: ATM with Director to discuss placement.

We believe that attendance should be a shared responsibility of each member of the advising team. Thank you for your attention to these procedures and for your cooperation in making the attendance process more manageable.

Calendar

The Delta Program has the same general calendar as the rest of the school district, although occasionally we modify our days. Calendars for the school district as well as the Delta Program calendar are on the school district website. We may make changes in our schedule when unforeseen circumstances or special opportunities arise (one of the advantages of being flexible). We will notify students and parents/guardians of any changes as far in advance as possible.

Cell Phones & Technology

Cell phones and other devices are allowed to be used in the hallways and common areas at The Delta Program as long as the volume is low and students are not disrupting the learning of others by talking too loudly, being rude or disrespectful, etc. All cell phones and devices must be put away when students are in class or meetings. A phone is available in the Delta office for students to make brief local calls. (This policy was initiated by students and was agreed upon by the entire Delta community during spring semester, 2008.) Students who violate this policy may have their phones or devices confiscated. The device might be given to the Director, who will use discretion in determining its return. When in the other SCASD buildings, Delta students should follow their policies.

College Entrance & NCAA

Delta students have been successfully accepted into a broad range of colleges, universities, and other post secondary options. The Pennsylvania State University evaluates transcripts Delta students with the same standards used for traditional high school students. This is true for other colleges and universities with similar admissions procedures. Delta Program students applying to college have sometimes experienced the advantage of standing out among a homogeneous group of high achieving students because of their unique learning experiences. Students should actively begin the college choice process in 11th grade. It is strongly advised that students interested in applying to PSU take the SAT in the spring of 11th grade. Detailed instructions concerning this process provided by the counselor.

Some courses might not coordinate with NCAA transcript requirements. Students must investigate this impact with the counselor before registering for courses in 9th grade, or as soon as possible.

Commitment

The Delta Program is an educational community of students, parents/guardians, and staff that depends on the commitment of each member.

Student Commitment

The student body is composed of young people who reflect the variety of students in the State College Area School District. The program has successfully served diverse students since 1974. Students making the decision to enroll in The Delta Program must realize this decision requires a commitment. The Delta Program philosophy holds that students are responsible for their own learning. Therefore, a student's first priority should be forming and attaining personal learning goals. In addition, a student must agree to meet the expectations of the program. Commitment to the program means that a student will help, through program service and personal integrity, to further the goals of The Delta Program.

Parent Commitment

By enrolling their child in The Delta Program, parents/guardians agree to participate as members of the Advising Team. This opportunity to help plan and guide their child's educational program is the minimum commitment expected of parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are also needed to help the program meet its goals. The quality and variety of educational experiences presented to students is enhanced by parental participation in school governance. Parents/guardians are members of Advisory Council and various other committees. The Delta Program thrives when parents/guardians take active roles as volunteers, teachers, committee members, and resource people.

Staff Commitment

By teaching at the Delta Program, staff members are committing to nurturing the life and well-being of the program, to helping parents/guardians and students meet their commitments, and fulfilling their responsibilities. Staff responsibilities include:

- developing curriculum
- teaching courses

- attending regularly scheduled staff meetings
- recruiting
- advising students
- facilitating Advising Team Meetings
- facilitating clump meetings
- participating in subject area and district committees
- serving on special committees within The Delta Program

Communication

Each staff member and student has a mailbox at Delta. Students should check their mailboxes at least three times a day: when they arrive; mid-day; and before they leave. Parents/guardians are discouraged from contacting their child during scheduled classes or meetings. Parents/guardians may leave messages with the office staff. These will be placed in mailboxes. Only in emergency situations, students and staff will be given messages during class.

Community Service

Service raises awareness of needs within the community and encourages students to explore opportunities available to help. For these reasons, each Delta student must complete thirty documented hours of service for three or more different organizations per school year. Service documented in the summer prior to the given school year will be counted towards that year.

At Delta, we define community service as follows:

- a) a donated service that promotes the good of the community
- b) a donated service with, through, or for a non-profit group or organization
- c) a donated service that involves some sort of commitment or rewarding experience

*If service does not fit the above criteria, students should see the Community Service Coordinator. If needed, a committee will be formed to make eligibility decisions.

It is the responsibility of students to seek out and complete the community service requirement. Students must also complete and submit the corresponding documentation forms. Throughout the school year, information about available community service opportunities is provided on the Delta Community Service webpage and on bulletin boards around the school.

SCASD requires a documented 20 hours of community service prior to graduation. Community service documented at Delta will go towards the satisfaction of this requirement.

Computer Policy

Students need to be prepared and informed about consequences resulting from inappropriate activity on the Internet, district network, or individual machines.

Inappropriate Actions:

- Accessing and/or making public personal files belonging to teachers, students, staff, or district.
- Intentionally disrupting computer services/ accessibility to services so that others are prevented from completing assignments and projects.
- Accessing lewd, pornographic, or other inappropriate web sites.
- Destroying/moving to conceal, corrupt, or manipulate data belonging to the school district, teachers, staff, or other students.

Consequences:

- Removal of computer privileges for a period of one to two weeks.
- Removal of access for remainder of the semester or school year.
- Expulsion if the offense is serious, expensive to restore, damaging to personal privacy, etc.

Counseling Services

Counseling services are an integral part of the total educational process. Delta has a full-time counselor who is responsible for providing all counseling services for Delta students. The services provided by the counselor are designed to help each student develop the knowledge, skills, and self-reliance needed to make good decisions and to make personal and social adjustments. This includes a full range of personal, college, and career counseling services. Referrals to professional community resources are made when appropriate. Mediation is available to help students with personal problems, decision-making, and coping skills. The Student Assistance Program is available. Please refer to the section in this handbook entitled "Student Assistance Program" for further information.

Dismissal from The Delta Program

Occasionally, in spite of the best efforts of the Advising Team and staff, a student does not fulfill Delta's expectations and is asked to leave the program. When this happens, the student must be away from Delta for two semesters. If the student wants to reapply to Delta at the end of this time, a new application form must be completed. A re-entry committee, consisting of the Director, the student's previous advisor, and two other staff members of the student's choice, will meet with the student to consider the application. The student should be prepared to discuss with the committee the circumstances surrounding the separation and actions taken to address those concerns. Additional factors that the committee will consider include, but are not limited to, academic performance, discipline record, attendance record, and any other information pertinent to the student's case. The committee's decision will be communicated to the student within one week of the meeting. If the student disagrees with the committee's decision, an appeal can be made to the Director.

Dress & Grooming

Appropriate dress at Delta should reflect the expectation that everyone has "the responsibility to act in ways which support the learning and growth of others." This means that dress should be appropriate for a learning and working environment. Dress and grooming should not be distracting to the learning process and should reflect the safe, healthful, and positive atmosphere of Delta.

Standards:

- No offensive slogans or pictures on clothing
- Pennsylvania school code requires that shoes be worn in all school buildings.
- No holes in clothing in the butt or groin area.
- Students must be covered from armpits to navel and pants, shorts, and skirts should be worn on the hips.
- Shirt necklines must be a respectful cut.

Teacher discretion will be used in applying these standards. When someone is dressed inappropriately, the Delta consequences process will be followed. In keeping with The Delta Program philosophy, students have the right to seek mediation if they believe they are being treated unfairly. (These guidelines were developed and agreed upon by Advisory Council and the ASM process in 2003.)

Dropping a Course

The decision to drop a course* will be made by the Advising Team and the mechanics of the process will be managed by the counselor. A class may be dropped up to the mid-date of the course with no consequence and without it appearing on the student's permanent record or transcript. If a class is dropped between the mid-date and the end of the course, a W (withdrew) followed by the current grade will appear on the student's permanent record or transcript. The drop dates for classes will vary depending on whether the class is year-long, semester-long, or nine-weeks-long.

* **Note** - "course" is used to refer to any learning experience in the student's learning program (*i.e.* Delta classes, high school classes, independent contracts, university courses, etc.)

Drug & Alcohol Policy

In 1989 the Board of School Directors of the State College Area School District adopted a policy with the goal of eliminating the improper use of drugs and behavior-altering substances in our schools and on school property. The policy provides for instructional programs as an integral part of the school curricula and district services providing short-term counseling and referrals to outside agencies through the school counselors, the Student Assistance Program, school nurses and school psychologists. Pennsylvania law and school district policy ensure students' rights to privacy and confidentiality in dealings with drug and alcohol situations.

The district set the following standard of conduct for students: 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, or at any school-related function or school sponsored activity. When students do not meet the standard of conduct in any drug involvement case, established procedures are followed. The actions and consequences taken are specifically indicated for each level of violation.

Earning Credits

1. **Delta Program Courses** - The Delta Program offers classes in English, social studies, science, math, art, health, and physical education.
2. **High School Courses** - Many students at The Delta Program choose to take a course at the high school. Students may schedule a maximum of 4 credits per year at the high school. Students provide their own transportation to the high school. Students may register for high school classes during the spring registration period or during the year with The Delta Program counselor.
3. **University Courses** – A unique cases committee will determine if a student can earn credit for participating in a university course. Students who want to enroll in classes at PSU as non-degree high school students must complete an application form that can be obtained from the counselor. The counselor will send the application with a copy of the student's transcript, a letter of recommendation, and PSAT, SAT, or ACT scores to PSU. The university will review the application and decide if a student will be accepted. The student is responsible for tuition costs. Students may also enroll in district approved courses through other universities.
4. **Independent Contract** - An independent contract is an opportunity for a student to learn with some of the many talented, skilled, and informed people in our community, and to experience a new and often exciting way of learning. A student committing to an independent contract is expected to assume more responsibility for learning than is typically expected when enrolled in a course. Independent contracts begin with a discussion at Advising Team Meetings; they are intended to help students design and carry out planned learning experiences. Then, students must schedule a meeting with our Independent Contract coordinator to complete the required documentation. All paperwork must be on file before a student can begin earning credit. A failing grade will be entered if the student does not complete the contract or drop the contract by the date designated on the form. Detailed information about this process is available on the Independent Contract website. Students may not complete an independent contract to meet graduation credit requirements during the second semester of their senior year.
5. **Virtual Courses** – Delta students can enroll in SCASD virtual classes: Driver's Education, health, and physical education. Detailed information about this process is available on the State College Virtual School website.
6. **Extended Field Trip Classes** - Delta students have the opportunity to participate in classes that include overnight trips. Participation in such classes is encouraged because they provide on-site, in-depth learning experiences which cannot be replicated in the classroom. Students must assume additional responsibility and engage in special planning.

Emergency Closing & School Delays

When it is necessary to close or delay due to inclement weather or any other emergency, SCASD will notify parents by phone through ALERTNOW, our emergency phone system. Announcements will also be made on local radio and television stations.

Extra Curricular Activities

Delta students are eligible to participate in extra-curricular activities at State College Area High School. Students interested in an activity may obtain information from the State High website. Delta students are encouraged to organize extra-curricular activities at The Delta Program.

Governance & Decision Making

The Delta Program is a part of the State College Area School District, and must comply with the school code. Under the present form of governance, the Director has the final responsibility for making all decisions not covered by School Board policy or the school code. On the surface, this appears to be the conventional means of operating an educational program. However, an integral part of The Delta Program philosophy is the belief that the program is a cooperative effort among students, parents/guardians, and staff. This philosophy is the heart of the Delta Program. Since its inception, The Delta Program has included students, parents/guardians, and staff in the decision making process for the following reasons:

- a conviction that individuals should have a voice in all the important areas of their lives.
- a recognition that participation in the making of important decisions (realizing that very real consequences to themselves and to others follow from these decisions) can be an invaluable learning experience for students.
- a belief that students and parents/guardians can make important contributions that generally result in better decisions that more genuinely reflect the sense of the Delta community.
- a knowledge that participation in decision making leads to better understanding and increased loyalty and support.

On March 14, 1990, Delta accepted the following Decision Making description:

- **Advisory Council:** Advisory Council is the advisory body to the director for school policy and major decisions, e.g. expectations, schedule, calendar, and facilities. Advisory Council may take topics to ASM and/or clumps for feedback regarding topics.
- **All School Meeting:** ASM will make decisions on day-to-day operation of Delta. ASM should be used for input to Advisory Council and staff in their decision making process. ASM should meet regularly as needed. ASM may ask for Advisory Council or staff to reconsider a decision.
- **Staff:** Staff shall be responsible for all curricular decisions. Staff may take topic to ASM, Advisory Council, and/or clumps for input regarding topics.
- **Committees:** Committees may be created by any of the above decisionmaking bodies. They give input to the body that created the committee. Committees may make decisions if given the power to do so from the creating body.
- **Director:** All personnel decisions and district policy decisions are a major responsibility of the Director. Ultimately, the Director is responsible for input and support of all decisions.
 - Director may make decision on where a topic may be decided.

Opportunity for active involvement in the growth and maintenance of The Delta Program is built into the structure of the program. All members are encouraged to take active roles in the following components of The Delta Program:

Advisory Council

Advisory Council is comprised of representative members of the Delta community: 14 students, 3 parents/guardians, 3 teachers, and the Director, who is a non-voting member. The council meets monthly and completes tasks including:

- advising the Director on concerns and procedures
- assessing the needs of the program
- making recommendations on scheduling, budgets, curriculum, school environment, etc.

All School Meeting (ASM)

All School Meetings are large group forums where students and staff discuss current issues and concerns and make decisions on day-to-day operations of Delta. Any Delta community member may submit an issue to the meeting for discussion. All members attending have a voice regarding recommendations sent by ASM to Advisory Council.

Clump Meetings

A “*clump*” is a group of students who share a staff advisor. Each student in The Delta Program is a member of a clump. Clumps meet weekly to discuss issues and concerns, and to plan shared activities. Each clump has a representative on Advisory Council. Issues that arise at staff meeting, ASM, or Advisory Council may be continued in discussion at clump and vice-versa. Attending and participating in clump is a requirement for all Delta students.

Advising Team Meetings (ATM)

At the heart of each student’s program is the Advising Team, composed of the student, parents/guardians, and the staff advisor. Teams also may include support staff, or others chosen by the student who can contribute to the planning and support of the student’s learning program. The general purpose of the Advising Team is to attend to the growth and learning of the student. While the focus of the Advising Team may be the student’s academic progress, team meetings provide an opportunity for the family to discuss the student’s general goals, motivation, and specific personal situations. Students, parents/guardians, and staff often find that Advising Team Meetings are one of the key components of The Delta Program. Advising Teams meet before each semester and at the end of the year. A special Advising Team Meeting may convene at the request of any team member if the student is experiencing difficulty. Specific responsibilities of the team include:

- formulate of learning goals
- supports development of an appropriate learning program
- evaluate progress
- consider post high school education
- plan service hours
- discuss daily and weekly schedule
- choose evaluation options
- support student’s learning program

Staff Selection

Students, staff, and parents/guardians have the opportunity to be actively involved in the selection of professional staff by serving on hiring committees.

Staff Meetings

Staff members meet on a regular basis to conduct school business and discuss concerns. Most decisions are reached through a consensus process. Students and parents may request to be included on the staff meeting agenda and attend that portion of the meeting.

The Appeal Process

The professional staff at times makes decisions that affects the Delta community. If a community member disagrees with a staff decision, there are several means of appeal, depending on the issue. In most cases, the student's advisor is the first resource when a student or family member has questions or concerns about a decision involving an issue. In some cases, appeals are made to The Delta Program Director. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, an individual or group can then appeal to the Assistant Superintendent or the Superintendent of Schools.

Grading & Grading Choices

Access to student grades is available at all times through Home Access Center. Advising teams may select any of the following methods of final evaluation for each learning experience:

1. Letter Grade (A,B,C,D,E)
2. Pass/Fail (P/F)
3. Written Evaluation - a longer narrative with no letter grade

A student can change the method of final evaluation through the ATM process. The deadline for changing the grading option will coincide with the date to drop a class without penalty.

Graduation Requirements

Delta students must meet the same requirement and earn the same number of credits for graduation as all other students in the State College Area School District. During meetings with the counselor and ATMs, the student's progress towards completing graduation requirements will be reviewed. However, it is the student's and parent's/guardian's responsibility to be aware of the student's graduation status.

GRADUATING CLASS OF 2019

To graduate from the State College Area School District, students must successfully complete the academic credits distributed across the following areas:

SUBJECT AREA	CREDITS REQUIRED
English	4.00
Social Studies	4.00
Science	3.00
Mathematics	3.00
Physical Education	1.80
Health Education	1.00
Driver Safety Education	.20
Electives	5.50
Graduation Project	P
Community Service	P (20 hours)
TOTAL CREDITS EARNED	22.50

FUTURE GRADUATING CLASSES

To graduate from the State College Area School District, students must successfully complete the academic credits distributed across the following areas:

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	8.25
Graduation Project*	P
Community Service	P (20 hours)
TOTAL CREDITS EARNED	25.00

* While SCASD has eliminated the Graduation Project requirement, The Delta Program will continue requiring an individual graduation project. See website for more information.

Health Services

A school nurse or health paraprofessional are available for most of the school day. When students becomes ill during the school day, they should report to the Nurse's office. Parent permission must be obtained before the student can sign out with the nurse. If a student is sent home from school by the nurse or health paraprofessional, a written parental excuse must still be brought in upon return. If a student does not bring in a written note, the absence will be marked as unexcused or unlawful.

Individualized Education Plans

The Delta Program provides special education and gifted services and staff to meet the needs of students through their Individualized Education Plans. More information about district services is available at the Pupil Services website. Parents/guardians may contact the school to request a screening or evaluation for special education or gifted services.

Library Information

In keeping with the philosophy and structure of the Delta Program, there is no comprehensive library within the school building. Delta students are urged to maintain valid Schlow Library card. Delta students may use the high school libraries when they are there for classes or with permission of Delta and the high school. More information is available on the State College Area High School Library website.

Lockers

There are lockers available for student use on the first and second floors at Delta. Students may select lockers at the beginning of the school year. They are then responsible for that locker and its contents. It is recommended that Delta students lock their lockers. Because of community use of Fairmount Building in the evenings and on weekends, security of items in lockers cannot be guaranteed. Courts have ruled that school lockers are the property of the school and may be searched by school authorities. The student may be given permission to be present during the search.

Lost & Found

Found items are kept in a designated space. A student may claim a lost item by identifying it at any time. If a student loses an item, the loss may be reported to the office. A student's personal belongings should not be left overnight in an unsecured location (hallways, bookshelves, etc.). Periodically following announcements, items remaining in the lost & found will be donated.

Lunch

Students have several options for lunch during the school day. They may purchase lunch from the district's food service, pack a lunch (refridgerators and microwaves are available for student use), go home for lunch, or go out to lunch. It is the student's responsibility to be on time for scheduled classes and activities. Students should discuss with teachers expectations regarding eating during class.

Make-Up Work

Students with an excused absence have the right and responsibility to make-up work, assignments, or tests for a class. Teachers will set a reasonable time limit on completion of make-up work. Students are expected to contact all teachers on or before the day they return from an absence to obtain missed assignments, notes, materials, etc. **Any work that is missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up for credit.**

Media Coverage

The State College Area School District realizes that under certain circumstances it is requested that students be photographed or interviewed for educational, publicity, or research purposes.

Students' photographs that will appear in newspapers and programs as part of a school district function can be used without securing parental permission, unless the parents/guardians have requested that school officials omit their children from photographs. News media personnel are required to receive permission of the building principal before interviewing students or taking pictures. News media are any radio, television station, magazine, newspaper, or internet source.

Parental permission must be obtained in advance by the building principal before commercial agencies or educational institutions can photograph students or use students' names for publications, term papers, theses, or videotaping.

Open Campus

Our philosophy and structure make it necessary for us to operate an open campus model -- students may leave the school during the school day (from the time they leave home for school in the morning until 3:30 p.m.) to engage in learning activities, go to an off campus learning site, relax, get something to eat, go home, etc. By enrolling a student at Delta, parents understand that during open campus time, students might not be on school property. Students are expected to use this privilege responsibly (*e.g.* be on time for and attend all classes and meetings in their learning program, act responsibly as representatives of the Delta Program in the community, observe all school district and Delta policies). Students who are irresponsible in their use of open campus will suffer consequences (*e.g.* closed campus, suspension from school, being transferred from Delta) imposed by their Advising Teams, the staff, or the Director

Students should NOT use their open campus time to be on other school property or in other school buildings, unless they are under the supervision of a teacher, have a class to attend at the time, or have permission from Delta and the school being visited. Delta students are not permitted to eat lunch at the high school without permission. When Delta students are on other school property upon arriving at school or leaving school on the bus, they should remain in the bus loading area only (or in the lobby during inclement weather) and should not loiter. When students are in other school buildings for any reason, they must abide by the rules of that building.

Parent Teacher Student Organization

A Delta Parent Teacher Student Organization form during the 2016-2017 school year. Monthly meetings are open to all Delta community members. For more information, see the Delta website.

Scheduling Process

A new scheduling system was implemented for the fall of 2018. Students will register for courses with the counselor two times throughout the year: November for spring scheduling and June for fall of the next school year. All students and families will be given the course schedule and descriptions prior to scheduling. We encourage families to have conversations about course registration prior to the start of scheduling meetings. Students will meet with the school counselor, in order of current earned credits, to schedule first choice classes in each subject. Each student may select .5 credits in each subject area (with the exception of Health and PE) as their "first choice." Students may request additional courses beyond .5 credits as "second choices." If there are spaces available, second choice requests in each subject will be added after all students have scheduled their first choices. If there are more second choice requests than available spaces in a class, a random selection will take place to fill the open spots.

State High course requests will be made in February for the entire following year, but will not actually be scheduled and finalized until the June scheduling meeting. Because of the importance of being present in the Delta community, students will not be permitted to schedule more than 3 credits at State High unless approved by administration.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The State College Area School District has policies prohibiting the sexual harassment of students and employees in the school district. The policies state in part: The State College Area School District will not tolerate any behavior by administrators, faculty, staff or students, which constitutes sexual harassment of a student. In addition, it is the responsibility of all administrators and supervisory personnel, faculty, staff, and students to report any conduct that is perceived to be sexual harassment. This policy is in compliance with provisions of Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibiting sex discrimination. Sexual harassment lowers morale and is damaging to the work environment; it is also illegal. This policy is in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regulations published as 29 CFR Sec. 1604, and guidelines adopted by the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. The policy sets guidelines for procedures for dealing with situations involving possible sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome sexual requests, or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature when the conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with one's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or learning environment.

Smoking & Vaping Policy

law and State College Area School District policy prohibit smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, or similar devices on school district property, in vehicles owned or leased by the school district, or by students participating in an activity sponsored or supervised by the school. School district policy provides consequences in the "Tobacco Policy Consequence Chart" found in the State College Area High School handbook.

In addition to the school district and legal consequences, violators will also face consequences through Delta's advising process.

- First Offense: Parent notification and a consequence determined by the advisor.
- Second Offense: An Advising Team Meeting with closed campus as a minimum consequence.
- Third Offense: An Advising Team Meeting with the Director to discuss finding a more appropriate structure under which the student should continue their secondary education.

More specifically, the smoking policy pertains to Delta students in the following way: no one is permitted to use tobacco or other smoking devices anytime, anywhere during the school day, whether the student is on school property or using the open campus privilege. The school day is from the time a student leaves home for school in the morning until 4:00 p.m. Students cannot use tobacco or other smoking devices any time on school property, in school vehicles, or while participating in any school function including orientation, experiential days, field trips, etc.

We realize this may require sacrifice and effort on the part of some tobacco users, especially those addicted to nicotine. We intend to provide support for those seeking help in overcoming their dependence on tobacco through advising and counseling components of the school and through referral to appropriate help agencies. However, it must be understood that Delta community members will be expected to comply with the law/policy. Anyone not willing to do this should reconsider the decision to attend Delta.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

A Student Assistance Program (SAP) is designed to help school personnel identify issues including alcohol, drugs, mental health, and behavioral concerns, that pose a barrier to a student's learning and school success. SAP uses a systematic process, along with specially trained school personnel, to intervene and refer students to appropriate in-school and/or community services. Parent involvement is an important part of the process. SAP is an intervention program, not a treatment program.

Who can refer? Any concerned student or adult. Students can also refer themselves.

When to refer? If you are worried about a student (including yourself) who:

- uses drugs or alcohol
- seems seriously worried
- cannot sleep
- threatens to run away
- threatens to hurt self or others
- abuses steroids
- has eating problems
- is always angry or crying
- needs help with any problems

How to refer? Complete a referral form, found in the office or online, and turn it in a SAP member's mailbox. You can also report concerns to your advisor, counselor, or to a member of the SAP Team. The person who makes the referral will not be identified. Parents/guardians can contact Delta's counselor to make a referral.

What happens when you make a referral? The SAP team will follow statewide procedures and recommend help as needed.

Textbooks & School Property

Textbooks, calculators, and other school property may be loaned to a student for a specific length of time. Students are responsible for these items, and if they are not returned at the end of the time loaned, students must compensate the school for replacement costs.

Transportation

Transportation to and from Delta is provided for students by the school district. Students should ride their neighborhood buses to the High School building in the morning, where they will transfer to a shuttle bus that will transport them to the Fairmount Avenue Building. At the end of the day, the process is reversed. The shuttle bus leaves Delta at approximately 3:40 p.m. and returns students to the High School, where they board their neighborhood buses for the ride home. Late buses are available at the High School for students who are involved in after school activities. If a student rides a bicycle, skateboard, or rollerblades to school, the bicycle, board, or skates should be secured in an appropriate place while the student is in school.

Students who drive may do so, as long as they are respectful of the laws, responsibilities, and courtesies of driving. Irresponsible driving will result in loss of the privilege of driving to school. Parking near the school is a great problem and students should weigh the disadvantages of having to park at a distance from the school. The district rents a lot on Nittany Avenue for use by employees; it is NOT available for student parking. Transportation is provided at the beginning and end of the school day, for class field trips, clump activities, and individual enrichment activities. Students must provide their own transportation (or walk) as needed for other learning activities, or to get home or get to school during the school day.

Visitors & Volunteers

Security and safety of our students and staff is a prime concern at Delta. For this reason it is necessary to know who is present in the school and the reason for their presence.

Frequently prospective Delta students from SCASD would like to visit for a day while school in session to help them decide whether or not they want to apply to attend Delta in the future. Arrangements for these visits must be made through the Delta counselor. Delta students are asked to serve as hosts to the visiting students for the day. School district policy prohibits non-SCASD resident students from visiting schools, unless the visit is part of a planned school program. Non-resident students may visit Delta for *one day* if plans are made with the Director at least three days prior to the visit for the following reasons:

- 1) they are prospective Delta students
- 2) they are to be guest speakers or performers in a learning activity
- 3) they are Delta alumni and want to share their post-Delta experiences
- 4) they are part of a “networking” visit with another school

Visits beyond one day may be considered for exceptional reasons. Arrangements can be made for adults to visit the Delta Program by contacting the Director. Anyone in the school who has not been given prior permission to visit will be considered to be trespassing and will be told to leave. All visitors to the school should report to the office to signout, wear a visitor nametag, and be accompanied by a staff member at all times before signing out and leaving the building. Regular volunteers must follow district volunteer policy that can be found on the SCASD website.

Weapons Policy

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

Weapon – shall include any object, device or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury including, but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; pneumatic guns, including, but not limited to, pellet, BB, airsoft and paintball guns; knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles, numchucks; throwing stars; and explosive, incendiary or poisonous gas; any combustible or flammable liquid; fireworks; mace and other propellants; stunguns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon; or any other item which is used to threaten, strike terror, or cause bodily harm or death even though it is normally considered to not present a danger to others.

Possessing – a student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student’s locker, in the student’s vehicle; under the student’s control while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.

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

The State College Area School District shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law. The Superintendent may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

In the case of a student with disabilities, the Superintendent shall take all necessary steps to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and follow Board policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall report the discovery of any weapon prohibited by this policy to the student's parents/guardians and to local law enforcement officials.