

Brandywine Wallace Elementary School 2023 – 2024 Parent Handbook



Brandywine Wallace Pledge

**Today, I pledge to be the best possible me.
I will be respectful, responsible, safe and kind.
No matter what I do, I know I can become better.
I pledge to believe in me.**

A NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Brandywine Wallace Elementary School, home of the EAGLES! This year promises to be another exciting journey filled with positive educational challenges, new friendships, and high expectations for everyone at our “little school on the hill.”

The mission of the Downingtown Area School District is to educate all students, providing an individually-responsive learning environment characterized by outstanding academic and personal achievement in partnership with family, students, and community. We are proud of our tradition of excellence and continuously look to improve our craft to the benefit of our students.

Educating children is a complex responsibility requiring the support and involvement of parents, and we view our relationship with you as a partnership. We encourage your participation in the daily life of our school and will continually ask for your contributions to the quality of that life.

Please review this handbook as it is provided as a guide and reference to the procedures and routines of our school. These policies and procedures are planned to facilitate the smooth operation of our school and to protect valuable instructional time for our students.

With regards,
Dr. Wright

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR SCHOOL

Brandywine Wallace Elementary School is one of ten elementary schools in the Downingtown Area School District. Built in 1960, with an addition completed in 1981, the school was renovated in 2008. We currently have an enrollment of approximately 500 children from East Brandywine, Wallace, and Upper Uwchlan Townships. Classes include Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Prior to the completion of our school, classes were held in one-room schoolhouses including Hopewell, Lyndell, Guthriesville, Bondsville, as well as in church basements. Construction of our elementary school began in 1960, but classes did not begin until September of 1961.

HOURS and ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE

8:30 a.m.	Students Begin Arriving – Doors open and staff on duty
8:30 a.m. – 8:50 a.m.	Students Enter School and Classrooms
8:50 a.m.	Official Start of School Day
11:45 a.m.	Dismissal for A.M. Kindergarten
12:35 p.m.	Official Start for P.M. Kindergarten
3:30 p.m.	Dismissal for All Students

*Early dismissal/late openings are scheduled throughout the year for the purpose of parent-teacher conferences or curriculum meetings. These dates will be noted on the Downtown Area School District Activities Calendar.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Unless students are attending a scheduled activity such as band, chorus, etc., they should not arrive at school prior to 8:30 a.m., nor remain after school has been dismissed. School officially begins at 8:50 a.m. Students arriving after 8:50 a.m. are considered late and should report to the office and must be accompanied by the parent/guardian. Parents must furnish a signed note explaining the lateness. A pattern of lateness will be shared with the District's Attendance Officer.

Liability provisions prohibit parents "dropping-off" children before the announced 8:30 a.m. time. Student drop off is marked and located in the Lower Parking Lot. Please have your child ready to exit your car quickly so he/she can proceed to the playground if not yet 8:45 or to their classroom if it is after 8:45. Students entering after 8:45 until 8:50 will go directly to their classrooms.

Children are dismissed from the office area at all times during the school day. Parents and guardians are not allowed to go directly to classrooms or walk the hallways. All parents and visitors will remain in the office for children to be dismissed. At dismissal time, the bus lane is closed to cars from 3:00-4:00pm. It is highly encouraged for students to ride the bus, however, on occasion if you wish to pick-up at dismissal, please send a note to your child's teacher that day. If picking-up during dismissal, please arrive at the parent pick-up location between 3:30-3:50pm.

We also recognize that a need may arise to pick up your child without prior notification. It will be necessary for you to come to the office and sign your child out. Please do not call the office to notify us to place your child on the list. For safety reasons, it is necessary for us to know that you are waiting in the office before students are dismissed.

CHILD ATTENDANCE

To confirm the safe arrival of our students, an automated telephone Child Attendance messaging system is used. The telephone software generates a report at approximately 9:45 a.m. each morning. Any student who has not been indicated in the attendance system as being present prior to 9:45 a.m. will be included in the report. The system will automatically call the parents of students who are on the report. **Please Note:** A student must physically be present in order for the attendance to be noted. Calling to indicate a student will be late will not prevent the system from calling if the student has not arrived prior to 9:45. We cannot change an attendance record until a student is physically in the building. When a student arrives after the 9:45 a.m. threshold, the student's parent will still receive a voice mail indicating the student is absent, but the attendance officer will make the change in the attendance system to indicate the late arrival as "late excused or unexcused depending on the reason for lateness." It is still necessary for parents to call the attendance hotline to indicate a student will be absent.

Please remember that a written absence excuse must be received in the office within three days of the absence. We will accept an email excuse note. **Please Note:** Parents have three days to submit a written or e-mailed absence excuse.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Reporting Absences

When a student is absent from school for any reason, an excuse note must be submitted within 3 days of the absence. An excuse note may be submitted in person by submitting a note signed by your parent/guardian that includes the student's name, grade, and reason for the absence. Excuse notes may also be electronically submitted using the Attendance e-mail address for your school:

BW_Attendance@dasd.org

In the event that an absence is determined unexcused, it is permanently recorded in the student's file as illegal. By law, three illegal absences subject parents to a notice by certified mail of a potential financial penalty as determined by local courts. Our District Attendance Officer coordinates attendance matters with District Court 15-2-06 in Downingtown.

Excused absences are for clearly established mental, physical or other reasons. Acceptable reasons for excused absences are the following:

1. Illness or recovery from an accident
2. Health care
3. Serious illness or death in the immediate family
4. Impassable roads
5. Student's Court appearance
6. Family emergency
7. Observance of religious holiday
8. Religious instruction
9. Approved Vacation or Trips
10. 4-H or FFA

Unexcused Absences include, but are not limited to:

- Babysitting
- Missing the school bus
- Running errands
- Oversleeping/fatigue
- Hunting
- Fishing
- Attendance at games
- Employment
- Family or educational trips not approved in advance
- Car trouble
- Shopping

PROCEDURES FOR EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Excessive Absences:

The district's Home & School Visitor and building administrator(s) will review students' attendance records. Due to the signing of Act 138 by Governor Wolf in November 2016, the following changes have been implemented by DASD:

- 1. Parents of a student who has accumulated 3 unexcused or illegal absences will be notified by letter of the school's concern regarding the student's attendance. This letter will be a warning that a meeting will be required when a student accumulates 6 unexcused or illegal absences.**
- 2. If a student accumulates 6 unexcused or illegal absences, a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) meeting will be scheduled by school administration.**
- 3. It is imperative that an excuse note is submitted within 3 days of the student's return to school. If an excuse note is not submitted within that time frame or if an excuse is provided that is not one of the 8 reasons for an acceptable excuse, the absence(s) will remain illegal or unexcused.**

Homelessness

In 1987, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, (subsequently renamed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) to aid homeless persons. The Act defines the term "homeless children and youths" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was enacted, amending McKinney-Vento.

Categories of children who are "homeless" and entitled to the protections of the federal law are as follows:

- children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are 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;
- "migratory children" who qualify as homeless under federal law because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii) above. The term "migratory children" means children who are (or whose parent(s) or spouse(s) are) migratory agricultural workers, including migratory dairy workers or migratory fishermen, and who have moved from one school district to another in the preceding 36 months, in order to obtain (or accompany such parents or spouses in order to obtain) temporary or seasonal employment in agricultural or fishing work; and
- "Unaccompanied homeless youth" including any child who is "not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." This includes youth who have run away from home, been thrown out of their home, been abandoned by parents or guardians, or separated from their parents for any other reason.

If you believe that you fall under one of the above mentioned categories of children who are "homeless" and entitled to the protections of the federal law, contact your school counselor or the district's Home and School Visitor / Homeless Student Liaison.

EXCUSE PROCEDURES FOR TRIPS, VACATIONS & SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Absences for educational trips not sponsored by the school district and planned vacations (family trips) may be excused provided prior written notification is received from the parents/guardians and approval is granted. Since regular class attendance is a critical component of a student's educational program, the educational benefits of the trip should outweigh the negative impact of the disruption of the student's educational program.

A request for an educational/family trip is subject to the following conditions:

1. Parent/Guardian must submit a written request (**Board Policy Form 204 AG 11**) to the building principal on the district form, which will indicate the days of absence; destination of the trip; adult supervision; and educational value of the trip.

2. If more than one (1) child in a family is taking the trip, the request for all the children must be included in the trip request form and distributed to each building principal.
3. Request must be made at least three (3) days prior to the date of the trip.
4. No more than ten (10) school days each school year per student will be approved for an educational/family trip, which may be extended at the discretion of the building principal.

Requests for students to be excused for more than one (1) family trip during a school year will most likely not be honored.

The building principal will notify the parent/guardian of approval or denial of the request.

The building principal has the right to deny a request during the first ten (10) days, last ten (10) school days, and during standardized testing (PSSA, etc.).

The building principal has the right to deny a request at any time during the school year when, in the judgment of the principal, there is a pattern of excessive absence from school or the student is in poor academic standing.

Unauthorized absences will be recorded as illegal and students will not be permitted to make up work unless authorized by the principal.

Work missed due to approved educational tours or family trips may be made up, but the responsibility for the completion of that work will remain with students and/or parents/guardians.

After the return of an approved educational/family trip, the teacher will work with the student and parent/guardian to "bridge the gap" of missed instruction. For logistical reasons, teachers cannot be expected to prepare individual daily lesson plans for each student on an educational/family trip.

The student will be responsible for submitting all completed assignments to teachers upon return to school or as indicated on the assignment sheet. Students will have limited time to complete work.

Students will not be permitted to take mid-term or final examinations early or late due to educational trips or vacations.

Parents/Guardians are discouraged from making vacation plans during the school year on a regular or yearly basis. It is understood that there is occasionally the necessity of taking a family trip during the school year, but it is believed that frequent trips are an unnecessary detriment to the education of the student.

PSSA Testing: Excuses will not be granted for students in grades 3, 4, & 5 during State mandated PSSA testing as listed on the school calendar each year. Parents are also urged to encourage their employers to hold the "Take Your Child to Work Day" during the summer months so that students do not have to miss a day of school.

EARLY DISMISSAL DUE TO WEATHER

If school is closed earlier or opened later than usual due to inclement weather. You will receive a district generated phone call. Emergency closings are also listed on the website at www.dasd.org.

Downingtown Area School District Website: www.dasd.org (click on school closings)

When schools are closed for one day, they will reopen the next day unless an announcement is made by the radio stations that schools will remain closed. The same radio or television stations will be used if conditions deteriorate during the school day and school must close early. Please assume that schools are open if the radio stations make no announcements of changes.

In the event that school must close early due to threatening weather, an announcement will be made on both radio and TV stations as well as a posting on the www.dasd.org website. In addition, the District also utilizes a message system that will contact parents by phone numbers maintained in the district's Student Information System.

Please do not call the school to inquire about the possibility of an early closing, but refer to the radio station and District website. We are notified of an early closing at the same time that radio stations are notified. **Please help us keep telephone lines open to deal with potential emergencies.**

It is a good idea to work out and review with your child a contingency plan to follow in the event that school must close early. For example, you may want him/her to go to a neighbor's house and wait until you arrive. Children need to be reminded of such arrangements before they are required to follow them. (You may also want to write contingency plans and leave them with your child's teacher.)

KINDERGARTEN PROCEDURES FOR DELAYED OPENINGS

Whenever the Downingtown Area School District has an unscheduled weather related two (2) hour late opening, both sessions of kindergarten will be held according to the following abbreviated schedule:

KINDERGARTEN	A.M. Session	P.M. Session
Regular Schedule	8:50 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.	12:35 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Abbreviated Schedule	10:50 a.m. - 12:40 p.m.	1:40 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Modified Kindergarten	8:50 a.m. - 10:40 a.m.	11:40 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

On days when the **Regular Schedule** is followed:

A.M. kindergarten children must be picked up no later than 11:50 a.m.

P.M. kindergarten children may be dropped off beginning at 12:30 p.m.

On days when the **Abbreviated Schedule** is followed:

A.M. Kindergarten children must be picked up no later than 12:45 p.m.

P.M. Kindergarten children may be dropped off beginning at 1:35 p.m.

On days when the **Modified Schedule** is followed:

A.M. Kindergarten children must be picked up no later than 10:45 a.m.

P.M. Kindergarten children may be dropped off beginning at 11:35 a.m.

6-DAY CYCLE

All DASD schools operate on a 6-day cycle. We use six letter days, A through F on a full rotation system. For example, if Tuesday is an “A” day and school is closed due to weather, when the students return on Wednesday, it will be “A” day. The 6-day cycle will allow us to provide Innovation Time, better utilize our resources throughout the district, and provide a consistent scheduling format for students in all grades.

The elementary schools have moved towards a full rotation in order to establish equal programming for all students. The full rotation will enhance the utilization of shared staff and increase the effectiveness of building usage. The full rotation simply means that our core, gifted education, ELL program, chorus, band and strings staff will all follow the 6-day rotation. It will be imperative that students and parents know what letter day it is to be prepared for any of these specific classes. Remember, we are not locking in the days. If a student is to have band and the school is closed due to weather or other emergency, the child will have band on the day we return to school.

COMMUNICATIONS

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Parents need to know the best avenues to use in addressing concerns they feel are important with regard to their child’s total educational experience at school. Solutions to problems can usually be easily addressed when the channels of communication are straightforward and the communication itself is confidential.

Examples of typical concerns are as follows (but not limited to): curriculum, behavior, discipline, social/emotional, medical, recess, homework, and family situations.

Steps to be taken are listed below:

1. Concerns should be addressed initially with the classroom teacher and/or the teacher directly involved with the particular situation.
2. If not satisfied with the result, communication with the building principal would be appropriate.
3. If the problem is not resolved after a reasonable period of time, oral and written communication could be made with the Assistant Superintendent.

PHONE MESSAGES

Parents who wish to speak with teachers over the telephone should call and access that teacher’s mailbox number or leave the message with office personnel. Teachers will be notified and will return the call as soon as possible. Please do not expect teachers to be called to the phone to speak with you. During most of the school day, they have supervisory responsibilities. A general rule of thumb is that a response will be provided within 24 hours.

EMAIL MESSAGES

Parents are encouraged to send teachers emails with questions or concerns, however, be aware that an immediate response is seldom possible. Teachers check their emails during the day when possible. A general rule of thumb is that a response will be provided within 24 hours.

CONFERENCES

A conference may be initiated by either the parent or the teacher. When requesting a conference, please call the school office, or send a note directly to the teacher. In this manner, a mutually convenient time can be established for the conference.

Please do not expect a discussion with a teacher unless prior arrangements have been made.

In addition, "Parent-Teacher Conference Days" are scheduled at various times during the year. However, you may request a conference in the spring if deemed necessary.

STUDENT TELEPHONE USE

In general, pupils are not permitted to use the school telephones. However, in cases of emergency, pupils may request use of the telephone located in the main office.

INSTRUCTION and ASSESSMENT

The instructional program is consistent with those of the other elementary schools in the Downingtown Area School District and is coordinated by teachers, the principal, and the staff of the District Office. Our goals are to provide appropriate academic experiences and social nurturing to allow children to develop a sense of positive self-worth as well as academic skills in order to become critical thinkers, problem solvers and positive contributors to society. English Language Arts (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), with an emphasis on informational and literary text, is taught each day. Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies are also part of each grade's curriculum. In addition, children receive weekly instruction in the special area subjects of Art, Library, Physical Education and Health, Music, and Innovation Time.

GROUPING OF STUDENTS

Flexible grouping formats from whole class to small instructional groups are used in classroom settings. Flexible grouping of students within each classroom and across a grade level team will take place in reading and math, i.e. students will receive instruction based upon their readiness level as determined by pre-assessment data.

In both Math and Reading and Language Arts, all K-5 student's whole group instruction will be instructed in heterogeneous groups, typically within their homeroom assignment.

MATH INSTRUCTION:

- District math curriculum, aligned to PA Core Math Standards, drives instruction.
- Teachers use the core math program, Math in Focus, and additional Singapore math resources, to implement the curriculum.
- Math in Focus materials provide strategies to meet needs of diverse group of learners.
- Teachers utilize a Concrete, Pictorial, Abstract (CPA) approach and 6-part lesson structure when delivering instruction.
- The new math curriculum contains instructional modules that teachers will use to design instruction. The new PA Core Math Standards require students to master certain concepts by the end of the grade level. An emphasis on "focus standards" means teachers will have more time to instruct fewer concepts, allowing students sufficient time to master these focus standards by the end of the school year. How will students be flexibly grouped? Teachers assess students regularly to determine their level of mastery of taught concepts.

HOMEWORK

The Educational Policies of the National School Boards Association has produced some recommended average homework guidelines that are appropriate for the elementary students of the Downingtown Area School District. They are as follows:

Daily Homework Guidelines:

Kindergarten & Grade 1	Given at the discretion of the teacher
Grades 2 & 3	15-30 minutes for 4 days
Grades 4 & 5	30-60 minutes for 4 days

All homework should be an extension of clearly defined school activities and should be appropriate for the age, ability, and independence level of the students to whom it is assigned. It may be assigned to help students learn to work

independently; think, plan, and organize; extend proficiency in effective habits and skills; increase knowledge and its uses; and develop insights and stimulate creativity. It should be noted that these are only guidelines and the actual time may vary according to the nature of the assignment or even the time of year. Long-term projects and assignments (usually given in grades 3-5) will require some variation in the normal time allotments.

The role of the student is to:

- Develop a personal system for recording daily and long-term homework assignments
- Understand the assignment purpose, due date, format)
- Budget time so the assignment will be completed to his/her best ability and returned to the teacher as required
- Initiate request for help when assignment is misunderstood
- Arrange with teacher all make-up assignments
- Become familiar with this policy, philosophy and guidelines as well as the specific practices of the school.

The role of parents/guardians is to:

- Help the student set a regular homework time each day and keep that commitment.
- Give assistance and encouragement in assignment completion, but not do the assignment.
- Make suggestions toward growth and independence by explaining the values of various types of homework.
- Provide an environment conducive to study: quiet, well-lit, ample work space and necessary materials
- Examine the principles and give illustrations to reinforce the assignment
- Review homework to be informed about the child's academic progress and ability to complete the work assigned
- Contact the teacher if a child has trouble with an assignment
- Be familiar with the homework policy and guidelines.
- Know when homework is assigned and how much time is expected to be spent on the assignment.
- Provide feedback to teachers regarding homework and a child's time, difficulty and progress.

It is hoped that parents take an active interest in their child's homework habits. It is suggested, however, that the parental role be that of "consultant" and not "partner" in the homework process. At early ages, it is important that children develop an understanding that they are responsible for the quality of their homework.

If students consistently require more time to complete homework than the suggested time limits, it is important that school personnel be informed.

HOMEWORK FOR ABSENT STUDENTS

Requests for work for students who are absent cannot be honored until the student has been absent for 3 consecutive days. Please indicate whether a parent will pick up the homework in the office, or if it is to be sent home with a sibling or neighbor.

GRADING AND REPORTING – ESAR and the Online Gradebook

The Pennsylvania Department of Education mandates a standards-based educational system. Students must demonstrate proficiency in meeting the PA Core Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics, the PA Academic Standards in Science and Social Studies, and PA Academic Standards or National Standards in encore subject areas, such as Art, Music, Health & Physical Education.

ESAR and the Online Gradebook Q & A

Q: What is the ESAR? The ESAR . . .

- Is the elementary (grades K-5) report card in the Downingtown Area School District;
- Communicates to parents how a child is progressing on the PA Academic Standards and DASD grade level curriculum;

- Communicates to parents the extent of the progress their child is making with the “Traits of Successful Learners”.

Q: What does ESAR stand for?

- **E** Elementary
- **S** Standards
- **A** Achievement
- **R** Report

Q: How often will my child receive the ESAR?

- The elementary school schedule is organized into trimesters of approximately 60 days each.
- The ESAR is sent home at the end of each trimester or 3 times in the school year.
- Teachers keep a record of student progress in an electronic Gradebook, which is loaded onto the report card (ESAR) each trimester.

Q: How is progress reported on the ESAR?

1. In K-5, progress is reported using the “Achievement Indicators” listed below.

*Note: These scores appear each trimester to indicate progress toward proficiency on each Standard. The * indicates a student with an IEP whose progress is monitored by special education teacher and reported via a Progress Report.*

- **4 Advanced** The Advanced Level reflects superior academic performance. Advanced work indicates an in-depth understanding and exemplary display of the skills included in the Core and Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards.
 - **3 Proficient** The Proficient Level reflects satisfactory academic performance. Proficient work indicates a solid understanding and adequate display of the skills included in the Core and Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards.
 - **2 Basic** The Basic Level reflects marginal academic performance. Basic work indicates a partial understanding and limited display of the skills included in the Core and Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. This work is approaching satisfactory performance, but has not been reached. There is a need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level.
 - **1 Below Basic** The Below Basic Level reflects inadequate academic performance. Below Basic work indicates little understanding and minimal display of the skills included in the Core and Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. There is a major need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level.
- * Refer to Individual Goal Report

2. In grades, 3, 4, 5, students also receive letter grades, which are reported each trimester using the criteria below.

*Note: The * indicates a student with an IEP whose progress is monitored by special education teacher and reported via a Progress Report.*

ESAR Grading Criteria in Grades 3, 4, 5

1. Student work at this level reflects superior academic performance, indicating an in-depth understanding and exemplary display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. [90 – 100%]
2. Student work at this level reflects satisfactory academic performance, indicating a solid understanding and adequate display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. [80 – 89%]
3. Student work at this level reflects marginal academic performance,

indicating a partial understanding and limited display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. Student work is approaching satisfactory performance, but has not been reached. There is a need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level. [70 – 79%]

4. Student work at this level reflects inadequate academic performance, indicating little understanding and minimal display of the skills included in the Pennsylvania Academic Content Standards. There is a major need for additional instructional opportunities and/or increased student academic commitment to achieve the Proficient Level. [69% and below]

P Student in ESL Program not able to demonstrate adequate level of understanding due to language limitations

***** Refer to Individual Goal Report

Q: What is Online Gradebook?

Online Gradebook is the electronic database where teachers record student progress. Parents have access throughout the trimester to monitor their student’s performance. You should see a weekly report of your student’s progress.

Q: How do I access the Online Gradebook?

Online Gradebook requires that you know your student’s School ID#. If you do not know the ID#, please contact your school office for the information.

You will find additional ESAR information on the Downingtown Area School District website. www.dasd.org

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the Downingtown Area School District assessment program is to provide data that will be useful to administrators, staff, parents, and students in making decisions concerning individual and group educational programs. Copies of standardized test results are provided to parents, teachers and appropriate specialized staff.

Benchmark Testing / Curriculum Based Assessments

Throughout the year, students are administered benchmark tests (such as Aimsweb and Fountas & Pinnell) and curriculum based assessments in reading and math. Results from these assessments are used to plan and deliver instruction for students.

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

The PSSA is a state mandated standardized assessment which is administered to students in Grades 3, 4 and 5 for English Language Arts and Mathematics, and in Grade 4 for Science. These tests require pupil essays, written explanations as well as numeric answers to mathematics questions, and written responses to reading passages. The tests are scored by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. More information may be found at

<http://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Assessment%20and%20Accountability/PSSA/Pages/default.aspx>

Specialized Testing

The school guidance counselor or instructional support teacher may administer specialized tests to individual students to assist teachers in providing an appropriate educational plan for a student. At times, the services of the school psychologist are required to complete more formal testing. Most often the decision to refer the student to the psychologist is made as a recommendation of the Instructional Support Team, which includes the parents of the child.

To place a child in a program of special education (Gifted Support included), the child will be tested by a certified school psychologist. Prior to any testing by the psychologist, parents are given the opportunity to provide written input into the referral. Once the referral is received, the psychologist has 60 days to

complete the testing. Gifted Support referrals need to go through a screening process prior to the referral reaching the psychologist.

ENCORE SUBJECTS

Instruction is provided in music, art, physical education, and library by specially trained and certified instructors in those subject areas. All students have Art, Music, and Library one time per cycle and Physical Education two times per 6-day cycle. Additionally, each student, in grades 1 through 5, will participate in iDesign one time per cycle. Kindergarten will have an additional Physical Education class.

iDesign

iDesign will be inquiry based, student-centered, and focus on helping students “learn how to learn.” Students will have the opportunity to create, investigate and discover during iDesign emphasizing self-discovery, student voice and choice. Lessons and activities will teach and reinforce the sixteen Habits of Mind: Persisting, Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision, Managing Impulsivity, Gathering Data, Listening with Understanding and Empathy, Creating, Imagining, Innovating, Thinking Flexibly, Responding with Wonderment and Awe, Thinking about Thinking (metacognition), Taking Responsible Risks, Striving for Accuracy, Finding Humor, Questioning and Posing Problems, Thinking Interdependently, Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations, and Remaining Open to Continuous Learning. In addition, iDesign will foster the 21st century skills of Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, and Creativity that are embedded throughout the elementary curricula.

INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTION / TECHNOLOGY USAGE

Technology and digital / media literacy skills are integrated throughout the curriculum areas, in all grades. Students acquire increasingly more complex skills in the following areas: keyboarding, word processing, database, internet, digital citizenship, data management, publishing, digital media, and spreadsheet. Students use curriculum based software to enhance learning.

Parental permission is required for students’ use of the District technology and/or Internet. Records of Acceptable Use Policy agreements are kept on file. The policy of the Downingtown Area School District for this use is specific. Please log onto the district website to read Policy 815 in its entirety. Students who abuse the use of the technology and/or Internet will be denied such use. Failure to sign and/or return an Acceptable Use Policy agreement will also prevent a student from having access to district computer equipment and services.

ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS

During the course of the school year, several assembly programs sponsored by the Home & School Association will be held in the multi-purpose room. Programs covering topics such as science, math, safety, drama, and music may be presented. On an average there will be one assembly every other month. An attempt is made to arrange the schedule so that both morning and afternoon Kindergarten children can enjoy the performances.

STUDENT RECORDS / TRANSFER OF RECORDS

The official student records are maintained in the school office and are the property of the school district. Typically, these folders contain documents for which parents have copies: report cards, attendance, conference reports, and samples of children’s work. In the event that a parent wishes to review the contents of their child’s cumulative record folder, they may do so by arranging for a conference with the guidance counselor or principal.

Prior to changing schools, a transfer of records card must be completed by the school office. Please provide the school office with adequate advance notice in order that correct forms will be available. Upon notification from the

receiving school, we will immediately forward copies of all student records to the new school.

HEALTH and MEDICAL

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

At the beginning of each school year, every student will receive an Information Verification sheet which must be verified by a parent and returned to the School's Office. Addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and emergency contacts will be asked to be verified for accuracy. ***If during the year, changes occur with telephone numbers or persons to contact, please notify the school. Your cooperation is appreciated.***

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

Physical examinations are given by the school physician to children in kindergarten, first grade children who did not attend kindergarten, and to any new Pennsylvania students. Parents will be notified of examination dates. Parents may elect to have these examinations done by a family physician. A Commonwealth of Pennsylvania school examination form may be obtained from the school nurse for this purpose.

DENTAL EVALUATIONS & DENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

Dental evaluations are given by the school Dental Hygienist to students in Kindergarten and Third grade. In some classrooms, children will be given dental health instruction by the school district's dental hygienist. It is our hope to establish sound dental practice and knowledge through the Dental Health Program.

VISION, HEARING & SPEECH SCREENING AND THERAPY

Vision screening is conducted annually for students in K-5. Hearing screening is conducted annually for students in K-3. Students requiring speech, vision or hearing therapy receive special services provided by qualified professionals.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS

Medication of any kind, including prescriptions, aspirin, and over the counter products are not to be in the possession of students, but maintained and dispensed from the nurse's office. It is important that medications be in the original containers. **Parents must bring medications to the nurse's office rather than giving students that responsibility.**

NON-PRESCRIPTION and PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS must be in the **original container** and requires an accompanying note from the parent **and** the physician stating:

1. Student's full name, grade and teacher
2. Name of medication and dosage with a current date
3. Time(s) that medication is to be administered
4. Date(s) that medication is to be administered
5. Illness / condition requiring medication
6. Signature of parent/guardian **and** health care provider.

FIRST AID AND ILLNESS

Injuries occurring at home cannot be treated by school personnel. First Aid is defined as immediate temporary care given in case of accident or sudden illness. First Aid will be given by the school nurse or nurse's assistant. Children should not be in school when they are ill or when they are not well enough to participate in class. Fever and vomiting should have subsided for at least 24 hours to prevent spread of infection.

When a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she should be kept at home. Some general guidelines are:

For Fevers:

- A child running a fever of 100 degrees or higher should stay home.
- A child running a fever of 99+ degrees may have trouble keeping up with normal activities and may well become sick before the day is over.
- A child with a low-grade fever (99+ degrees) combined with other symptoms and discomfort should stay home.

- The rule of thumb is: “Fever free for 24 hours without medication”

Other reasons to keep a child home:

- Severe OR persistent coughing
- Vomiting (Student should not return to school for 24 hrs. after last episode of vomiting.)
- Very congested
- Very runny nose
- Unexplained rash
- Contagious disease/infection
- Contagious skin disorder
- Head Lice

Please alert staff if your child has been exposed to chicken pox, head lice, or any other communicable diseases. **Children with communicable diseases will be excluded from school.** Please be reminded that school health services do not include medical diagnoses. A private physician must make these.

If it should become necessary to contact you about your child, the procedure is to first attempt to contact someone at your home phone number. If there is no answer, then the work and/or cell number will be called until you are notified. **Please** remember to update your work, cell or home phone number in case of changes. Also, make sure you add an alternate person to be called in case you cannot be reached.

Head Lice Guidelines

The school nurses in the Downingtown Area School District will follow the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association of School Nurses, and the Centers for Disease Control concerning the treatment and containment of head lice by implementing the following procedures in the event that a confirmed case of head lice for a student.

Guidelines:

1. Upon report or discovery of live head lice, the School Nurse will privately check the affected child’s head for live head lice.
2. If live head lice are found, the School Nurse will call the child’s parent and request that they take their child home.
3. The School Nurse will advise on evidence-based treatment options and/or refer them for to their health care provider.
4. The affected child may return to school after treatment of live head lice, and will report to the school nurse to be approved for school attendance.
5. Children may not remain in school if a significant number of live head lice are found, but they are permitted to remain in school if nits (head lice eggs) are found.
6. If the student has siblings in the school district, the School Nurse will check the siblings for any live head lice.
7. At the elementary level, a letter will be sent home to parents in the child’s homeroom alerting them that a case of head lice was discovered and advising them to check for head lice and to treat if live lice are discovered.
8. Instructions in the letter should ask that if child is treated for head lice at home, the parent should contact the school nurse. The school nurse will then check that student’s head upon return and follow the recheck policy.
9. The School Nurse will re-check the affected child’s head a week after treatment and follow the aforementioned guidelines if live head lice are found.

LATEX ALLERGIES

Our school is a “latex safe” environment. As such, latex products, particularly latex balloons and latex gloves are not permitted in the school.

NUT ALLERGIES

For students who have serious allergies to peanuts or other nut products, we provide a “nut free” table in the cafeteria. It is the child’s responsibility to select this table for lunch. **Please do not send unshelled nuts to school**

with your child. As nuts are removed from the shell, they may release material in the air that could trigger an allergic reaction.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Special Student Accident Insurance may be purchased by parents for students attending Downingtown Area Schools. Details of this policy are sent home at the beginning of each school year.

ENTRY AND REGISTRATION FOR SCHOOL

ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN

To be eligible for entrance to Kindergarten, a child must be five years of age on or before September 1st of the year in which they are enrolled. Parents may register for the Kindergarten program during Kindergarten Registration (usually in March), at the school office. Kindergarten entry is closed after the second week of the school year. However, transfer students from certified kindergarten programs are accepted during the school year.

ADMISSION TO FIRST GRADE

To be admitted to first grade, a child must reach 6 years of age before September 1st. For admission into Kindergarten and First Grade (if the child has not been in a DASD kindergarten), parents must present:

1. Proof of Birth
2. Immunization Records
3. Verification of Residency

REGISTRATION FOR GRADES 1-5

For admission to any grade level, parents must present:

1. Birth certificate
2. Immunization record
3. Verification of residency
4. Transfer card (if coming from another school)
5. Academic records (report cards, IEP's, etc) are appreciated at the time of enrollment so that correct assignments can be made.

STUDENT SERVICES

INSTRUCTIONAL CORE TEAM

The Instructional Core Team consists of a general education classroom teacher, Literacy Specialist, School Counselor, Psychologist, the ESL teacher, school principal, and school nurse. Each elementary school offers an educational service that seeks to maximize individual student success in the general education classroom. When students experience difficulty academically, socially, and/or behaviorally, they are recommended to the *Instructional* Core Team by a classroom teacher, parent, or member of the Instructional Core Team.

The *Instructional* Core Team process involves the following steps:

1. Evaluate data that identify a student's need for academic, social, and/or behavioral support; Determine the strategies needed to assist the student;
2. Plan and implement the intervention strategies through a continuum of services;
3. Monitor the effectiveness of the intervention strategies.
4. Continue intervention plan if student experiences success as determined by the expected rate of improvement OR
Alter intervention plan if student does not experience expected rate of improvement.
5. Act as a liaison to communicate with other district and/or community services as needed.
6. Communicate progress regularly with parents.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

School Board Policy #236 provides the guidelines to be followed by District schools in their implementation of Student Assistance Programs. While secondary schools have had SAP for a number of years, state law mandates that all schools, including elementary schools, have a SAP team.

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a systematic process using effective and accountable professional techniques to mobilize school resources to remove the barriers to learning and, when the problem is beyond the scope of the school, to assist the parent/guardian and student with information so they may access services within the community.

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) shall provide assistance in:

1. Identifying issues that pose a barrier to a student's learning and/or academic achievement.
2. Determining whether or not the identified problem lies within the responsibility of the school.
3. Informing the parent/guardian of a problem affecting the student's learning and/or academic achievement.
4. Making recommendations to assist the student and the parent/guardian.
5. Providing information on community resources and options to deal with the problem.
6. Establishing links with resources to help resolve the problem.
7. Collaborating with the parent/guardian and agency when students are involved in treatment through a community agency.
8. Providing a plan for in-school support services for the student during and after treatment.

MULTI-TIER SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (MTSS)

A District initiative includes the implementation of Multi-Tier System of Support or MTSS. This is a process used for identifying those students at specified grade levels who are struggling in school and then providing differentiated instruction and intervention to address their needs. Part of the process involves screening all students three times per year to identify students who are at grade level (Benchmark or Tier 1), slightly below grade level (Strategic or Tier 2), and those well below grade level (Intensive or Tier 3), as measured by screening assessments such as Aimsweb.

Following the screening assessments, students' individual Tiers are identified and an instructional plan is implemented for them. Tier 2 and Tier 3 students will be grouped for additional teacher guided instruction designed to improve their skills. Some of these students will receive this instruction with teachers other than their homeroom teacher. They will, however, continue to receive their regular instruction with their assigned teacher.

Over the course of the intervention plan, Tier 2 and Tier 3 students are progress monitored to determine if growth is occurring as a result of the intervention. During and following the intervention program, results from the progress monitoring will be reviewed to determine the success of the intervention. Following a specific intervention period, students may move to a different tier, remain in their current tier and continue to receive the same intervention plan, or remain in their current tier and receive a different intervention program. The decision will be based solely upon the results of the progress monitoring data that has been collected over the intervention period.

Parental involvement is key to a student's individual success. Therefore, communication with the parent/guardian will be made as deemed necessary to insure student success and progress.

TITLE I

Title I is a grant funded by the Federal Government to support literacy in districts or schools that meet socio-economic criteria. Four DASD Elementary Schools are eligible for Title I funding: Beaver Creek, Bradford Heights, East Ward, and Lionville Elementary schools. With Title I funds, the district purchases materials to support early literacy skills, provides an instructional support aide, and partially supports Camp Success and full day Kindergarten for eligible students in the eligible schools. Based upon multiple literacy assessments administered by school staff members, kindergarten and first grade students are identified to participate in the Title I program. Parents will be notified of their child's eligibility and provide permission for him/her to receive Title I support. Parents may direct questions to each school's Title I coordinator.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

The school is fortunate to be staffed by a full-time elementary guidance counselor. Elementary school counselors are specialists in child growth and development. They also possess knowledge of the elementary school program, which includes the curriculum, the learning process, and the school organization. Generally, the school guidance counselor works to:

1. Prevent problems from developing
2. Help identify children with special needs
3. Provide crisis intervention when necessary
4. Coordinate or facilitate efforts of others with those of parents, teachers, and administrators
5. Help develop personalized programs, when needed, based on each child's strengths, weaknesses, and needs
6. Organizes the school's testing programs

The counselor maintains and up-dates a **professional library** whose volumes are available for use by staff, students, and parents. These selections encompass a wide diversity of topics relevant to guidance issues.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Each school has certified special education teachers to instruct students who require specially designed instruction to assist them with varying learning needs. In addition, select schools also provide specialized classes for Autistic Support, Life Skills Support, Emotional Support, and Multiple Disabilities Support. Special education services are provided in accordance with Pennsylvania Code Chapter 14. Our Guidance Counselor can provide information about available support services and qualification procedures.

GIFTED SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Downingtown Area School District offers a variety of special programs to meet the needs of students. The Gifted Support program has been developed to provide specialized learning experiences for students qualifying for such services under Pennsylvania Code Chapter 16 and DASD requirements.

ESL (ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE)

The Civil Rights Act – Language Minority Compliance Procedures, requires all school districts to identify and serve limited English proficient students. Part of this federal law requires that a Home Survey is completed and placed in the cumulative file for every student. If the parent indicates that a language other than English is spoken in the home, the child will be identified for screening by the ESL teacher. The screening will determine the need for direct instruction from the ESL teacher.

SERVICES FROM OUTSIDE AGENCIES

CHESTER COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT – Vision, speech/language and hearing assistance is provided through teachers/therapists from the Chester County Intermediate Unit.

Austill's Rehabilitation Services – Students who require services in occupational and/or physical therapy receive assistance from Austill's. Specially trained therapists provide instruction according to the needs of the child. Students with speech and expressive language, OT and/or PT concerns are referred to the Instructional Support Team. This referral can originate from the school or home.

RECORDING DEVICES

To accommodate special needs as required by State and federal law, certain students in your child's classroom might have the right to audio record, or to receive teacher- made audio recordings of discussions that occur during instructional activities. These recordings could include the voice of your child. The child making the recording or for whom the recording is made will use the recording solely to support his or her ability to access and retain educational information. The recording will be destroyed when it is no longer necessary for that purpose. Recordings shall not be maintained by or otherwise considered educational records of the District for any purpose. The use of audio recordings in the classroom will be limited to students with disabilities who are unable, as a result of their disabilities, to record information independently in written form when such information is required to aid memory or learning and when audio recording

is identified as an adaptation or accommodation on the individualized educational programs (“IEPs”) or Section 504 accommodation plans of such students. The audio recording device shall only be used when necessary to capture spoken or written information in the classroom that nondisabled peers would be expected to record in written form. The use of audio recordings shall be for the sole use of the student for the educational use stated in his or her IEP and shall not be shared with any third party. All recordings are the property of the Downingtown Area School District, and the use of such recordings for any purpose or in any manner other than as described in these guidelines is strictly prohibited. All recordings will be erased or destroyed when no longer necessary for educational purposes and shall not be maintained as, or otherwise considered, educational records of the District for any purpose.

ADAPTED PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Special classes are available for students with identified needs.

DISCIPLINE

Students are expected to behave in an orderly and respectful manner. Routine discipline matters will be handled by classroom teachers or other responsible adults (aides, monitors, custodians). Consequences for breaking established rules or procedures could include isolation, missing recess, or loss of certain privileges or special events. Serious behavior problems will always be referred to the principal and could result in suspension from school. Our school-wide rules are as follows:

1. Follow directions the first time they are given.
2. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
3. Respect school property and the property of others.
4. Walk quietly in the hallways without talking.
5. Refrain from name calling, teasing, fighting or using foul language.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

Please access the Downingtown Area School District Code of Student Conduct through www.dasd.org. The Code of Student Conduct provides District information regarding attendance, bus and playground rules, internet policies, and student discipline and can be found in Board Policy 200 Series under the Policies section of School Board ribbon on the District website.

DRESS CODE

The Downingtown Area Elementary Schools are primarily concerned with three important issues:

1. **Safety Standards** - Personal appearance styles and all items of wearing apparel and accessories must conform to minimum safety standards as to not endanger the well-being of any pupils or any person within the school environment. “Clogs” and shoes without heel support or with wheels are **not** considered safe and are therefore prohibited.
2. **Health and Cleanliness** - Clothing and dress should be conducive to promoting personal health and cleanliness. The children are permitted to wear shorts of a conservative length. "Short-shorts" and midriff tops are unacceptable. Straps on tank tops should be as wide as an adult finger.
3. **Non-interference with the Educational Program** - Apparel and accessories must be appropriate to the time and place, in that a pupil's total appearance does not result in any degrading or distracting consequences that would interfere with the educational process within the school environment. Shirts, hats, etc. with inappropriate, obscene, or suggestive language or graphics cannot be worn to or at school.
On special occasions, such as field trips or Field Day, we may request specific clothing appropriate for the event.

FOOD SERVICE and RECESS

BREAKFAST PROGRAM

We are pleased to announce that students will have the opportunity to eat breakfast at school. Students may enter the cafeteria starting at 8:30 a.m. Students will be encouraged to finish eating and get to their classrooms by 8:50 a.m.

Breakfast is free again this school year and it does not need to be pre-ordered.

LUNCH PROGRAM

DASD Food Service is excited to announce that we will be continuing our online, pre-ordering software for our Elementary lunch meals this school year! Here's an overview of what you need to know:

- Placing a pre-order for your student's Elementary lunch meal is required. It's also easy to do! Set up an account and order at this link: <https://www.payschoolscentral.com/>
- Cost for lunch meals is \$2.50.
- This pre-ordering software is only for Elementary lunches; we will not be offering a pre-order for breakfast at this time.
- Orders are due by midnight the night before service.

Link to Website with More Information:

<https://www.dasd.org/departments/food-services>

Questions Related to Food Service:

FoodServiceInformation@dasd.org

RECESS

Weather permitting, students are provided with twenty minutes of recess time each day. Recesses are supervised by at least two staff members.

Anytime it is 25 degrees or above (with wind chill included), the playground is relatively clear, and there is no precipitation, we will have outdoor recess. Children must wear coats, hats, and gloves (or mittens) to go outside during the cold weather. Girls should have their legs covered.

We will have indoor recess anytime the temperature falls below 25 degrees, actual temperature or with wind chill. This policy will be followed for all recesses, including those at lunchtime. We appreciate the cooperation of parents in sending children dressed properly for the outdoors.

DENIAL OF RECESS PRIVILEGES

Students may be excluded from recess only for disciplinary reasons. Students who are assigned recess detention are supervised by a staff member.

WELLNESS POLICY

The Downingtown Area School District School Board Policy #246, Student Wellness, addresses concerns around student obesity, nutrition, exercise, and overall wellness. The DASD Wellness Policy has established the following guidelines relative to food:

- Food MAY NOT be used as a reward.
- Food items MAY NOT be provided for birthday celebrations.
- Food MAY be used as part of the curriculum using the following nutritional guidelines:
 - Water, 100% fruit juice or milk
 - Are moderate in sodium content
 - Provide minimal to no trans fatty acids
 - Provide items that contain > 2 grams of fiber/serving
 - Do not offer any Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value
- Food MAY NOT be included in classroom parties/celebrations (including birthdays).

Please be aware that while the District Policy provides the opportunity to have food included in parties and events, some schools, through their individual School Health Councils have opted to not allow food within the classrooms, including during parties. Please check with your individual buildings for their policies.

For more detailed information and questions and answers, please refer to the Health and Wellness page on the District web- site: <https://www.dasd.org/departments/pupil-services/wellness>

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS:

Birthdays are a special time for students and we need your support. While many families enjoy special food treats at home, in accordance with the DASD Wellness Policy and our School Health Committee, no food items will be allowed at school for birthday celebrations. This practice will help support healthy alternatives for celebration, reduce interruptions in class time, and will help protect the large number of children who have a variety of food related allergies. Any food items sent in for birthday celebrations will be returned home. Alternatives to food related items include pencils, stickers or other small, school- related items. Each grade level may have their own suggestions for ways to celebrate birthdays.

Balloon deliveries or other extravagant deliveries or “surprises” are not permitted during school hours.

PARTICIPATION / ACTIVITY FEES

Students involved in a program that uses transportation or teacher services beyond the contractual day will be assessed a participation fee. Academic clubs tied to outside competitions and tutorial activities will continue to be funded by the District. Specific information will be included on the permission forms for each activity.

Payments must be made online through the Payschools accounts used also for food service. Please note that students enrolled in the free/reduced lunch plan will be eligible to have their fees waived. Fees will be assigned as follows:

- Music – Families of elementary students participating in music activities will be assessed a \$25 activity fee per student, per year which allows the student to participate in all music programs (band/chorus/orchestra). This fee is applied to the family max.
- Non-Academic clubs and Intramurals - Families of elementary students participating in non-academic

clubs and intramurals that require a fee will be assess a \$25 activity fee per student, per year, which allows the student to participate in clubs/intramurals. This fee is not applied to the family max.

- Students will be excluded from these programs if the fees are not paid.

The maximum fee per elementary child is \$50. If a family has more than one child in the district, only one \$250 fee will be assessed per family.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

A **field trip** is defined as any trip by students away from school premises.

Students on field trips are subject to the rules and regulations established in the Code of Student Conduct, including the Dress Code.

Fees for participation in field trips may be assessed by the district. Credit card payments shall be accepted in accordance with Board policy.

FIELD TRIP CHAPERONES

Parents/Guardians, other adult volunteers, and/or district employees who serve as chaperones on field trips are subject to Board policies, administrative guidelines, and rules and regulations pertaining to their conduct and responsibilities.

When serving as a chaperone for district field trips, all adults are prohibited from using tobacco products in the presence of students, consuming alcoholic beverages, and using illicit drugs during the duration of their assignment as chaperone.

For the safety of all children leaving school premises and in accordance with Board policy, the Superintendent may direct that appropriate screening processes be applied to assure that adult chaperones for field trips are free of criminal history and convictions for any offenses involving children.

As per Downingtown Area School District Policy 121 - Field Trips and 231 – Social Events, chaperones leaving school premises shall be required to provide the following:

1. An original criminal history report (Act 34) – every 5 years
2. An original child abuse history clearance (Act 151) – every 5 years
3. Proof of a Tuberculosis Exam (one time only)
4. Self-Reporting forms submitted annually

To access the necessary forms, please refer to this site: <https://www.dasd.org/about-us/community/volunteer>

Obtaining clearances does not guarantee a parent or guardian will be selected to chaperone a field trip. Field trip supervision requirements will be followed as indicated in Downingtown Area School District Administrative Guideline

#4 of Policy #121 – Field Trips. Examples of chaperones include parents or guardians of students who attend field trips and are not Downingtown Area School District employees.

Procedures:

Clearances must not be dated more than one (1) year prior to the date of submission.

Clearances will be submitted directly to the building principal for review and approval.

Clearances with any remarks from the reporting agency must be forwarded to the *Superintendent's designee* for final review:

No individual will be approved to serve as a chaperone if the criminal history or child abuse reports/clearances required by these guidelines evidence an offense which would preclude such individual from being employed in a Pennsylvania public school under Act 34 or Act 151.

MEDICATION/MEDICAL CONDITION

If a student with a specified medical requirement is participating in a field trip, arrangements shall be made in advance to transport, dispense and/or administer approved medication. All medications and supplies must be sent from home. Send only a single dose of medication for the trip in the original container, and give it to the teacher for your child to self-administer.

TRANSPORTATION

School bus service is provided through the contractors in accordance with the transportation policies of the DASD. Policy and Administrative Guidelines #810 provide details regarding walking zones, procedures for requesting a transportation change, alternate bus assignments due to child care and bus stop and bus riding rules.

Students are assigned to a bus and bus stop location as part of the registration process. Confirmation of bus number and stop is mailed to parents in late August. Long term requests for changes in bus stop or bus route must be directed, in writing, to the Supervisor of Transportation, in the DASD, 540 Trestle Place. These forms may be obtained in the school office.

Due to the capacity of each assigned bus, we cannot give open permission for students to ride a bus to or from school other than the one to which they are assigned. Emergencies are the only exception and need to be approved by the Principal in advance.

KINDERGARTEN TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is provided for Kindergarten students one way. Children in the A.M. session will be transported to school and children in the P.M. session will be transported home with Grade 1-5 students.

BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. Children should arrive at the assigned bus stop 5 minutes before scheduled pick-up times. Parents are responsible for their child's conduct at the bus stop both before and after school.
2. Children should exhibit orderly and appropriate behavior while at the bus stop and on the bus.
3. Children should respect the property adjacent to the bus stop, respect the safety and property of other students, and follow all directions and guidance provided by the bus driver. The bus driver has the same authority as a classroom teacher.
4. Children may ride only their assigned bus and board and depart only from their assigned bus stop, unless the Principal has approved a change.
5. Children should enter the bus and take their seats without disturbing others.
6. Children should remain in their seats while the bus in motion.
7. Children should speak in a normal tone of voice while on the bus. No shouting is permitted.
8. Children should not throw items on the bus or from the bus.
9. Smoking, eating, drinking, or chewing gum on the bus is prohibited.
10. Children should keep the bus clean and orderly.
11. No items can be placed in the driver's compartment, doorway, or aisle of the bus, or under seats. These areas must be kept clear to exit in case of emergencies.
12. Animals are NOT permitted on the bus.
13. Large musical instruments or school projects are not permitted on the bus unless they can be held on the student's lap.
14. Objects that endanger other students are strictly prohibited. Such objects include, but are not limited to firearms, knives, metal stars, ice skates, glass objects, etc. Possession of dangerous objects may result in immediate suspension of bus privileges and other discipline.
15. Seatbelts must be worn at all times on those buses or school vehicles fitted with seatbelts.

16. Missing the bus and not attending school is NOT a legal absence or reason for being tardy.

Students not obeying the rules may lose the privilege to use bus transportation.

WALKERS

With the exception of District designated walkers, students will not be allowed to walk unless their parents escort them. Parents walking their children to/from school need to follow the same arrival and dismissal procedures as students being transported by their parents.

BIKE RIDING

Students may not ride bikes to or from school.

HOME and SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

The Home and School Association is similar to other parent/teacher organizations such as PTO or PTA, however, all families of students are eligible for membership without payment of dues. We welcome your participation in any way that fits into your schedule. The purpose is to enhance all students' school experience.

The Home and School Association provides homeroom parents for classrooms, sponsors beautification programs, conducts non-profit "fun" activities for children, and also generates fundraisers to financially support student activities such as field trips, assembly programs, scholarships, family fun activities, special grade level activities, field day awards and donations of books and equipment to the school.

Our meetings are held on the second Tuesday via Zoom starting at 7:00 pm during most months of the school year. You will receive information regarding communications directly from the HSA. Dates and times of our meetings are posted on the school's website. Please join us.

VOLUNTEERS and VISITORS

THE DOWNINGTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT WELCOMES ALL VOLUNTEERS AND VISITORS TO OUR SCHOOL WHO HAVE BEEN INVITED BY THE PRINCIPAL OR BY THE PRINCIPAL'S DESIGNEE.

VOLUNTEER POLICY

The School Board recently approved a new policy (Policy 916) regarding required background checks for all school volunteers. This applies to anyone who offers more than one day of volunteer time. The goal of this policy is to ensure that all who come into contact with our students have successfully obtained the required safety clearances.

The new volunteer policy will apply to parents and all other members of the DASD community who volunteer in our schools or serve as field trip chaperones. The new policy states:

- 1) Background checks are now required for all volunteers. (Previously only chaperones needed to obtain these clearances)
- 2) Volunteers are now required to obtain background checks every five years. If you obtained both the child abuse and criminal history clearances within the past two years, you would have another three or four years of eligibility remaining before having to re-submit for new clearances.
- 3) Volunteers must now present proof of a tuberculosis exam. The cost of the examination will be the responsibility of the volunteer unless a financial hardship can be established. Examination costs for senior citizens serving as volunteers shall be at the expense of the district. The district also strongly

recommends our volunteers obtaining a pertussis vaccine.

- 4) All volunteers must sign a Volunteer Disclosure Form each year. The cost for acquiring the two clearance reports is now free.

Many school districts nationwide are instituting similar policies as our entire educational system focuses on safety. We recognize that our volunteers make valuable contributions to our educational, athletic and extracurricular programs. Please see Board Policy #916 for the new policy and guidelines.

VOLUNTEERS

The presence of volunteers in the classroom creates issues of sensitivity and confidentiality for all volunteers. To uphold the credibility of this valuable program, it is imperative that volunteers:

- Do not discuss the performance and behavior of individual children either inside or outside the school.
- Avoid discussing teachers and/or teaching methods.
- Discuss any concerns with the Volunteer Coordinator or Principal.
- Act in a professional manner.

We ask that all volunteers:

1. Sign in and out every time they enter and leave the building via the building Raptor system. (This is for safety in case of fire, as well as knowing who is in the building at all times, for safety purposes).
2. Fill out an emergency information card.
3. Wear a designated ID while in the building and turn it in when leaving.
4. Call the school office as soon as possible if unable to volunteer on assigned day.
5. Be consistent and reliable with time.
6. Avoid visiting or wandering through instructional areas that could distract children and teachers.
7. Do not bring younger children to school when volunteering.
8. Classroom volunteer time is at the teacher's discretion.
9. Wear appropriate, tasteful attire that will not interfere with the educational focus.
10. Never interrupt teachers or instruction in the classroom.
11. Keep the Faculty Room reserved for staff members, please.
12. Contact classroom teachers to receive instruction on the use of any classroom equipment and see the Volunteer Coordinator (or building aide) for instruction with other school equipment. Please give staff members priority when operating the copy machine or other office equipment.
13. Check with assigned teacher for specific instructions for the day.
14. Become familiar with school policy as outlined in this handbook.
15. Expect respect and appropriate behavior from students. Please report any problems to the teacher in charge.
16. Be an example to children by observing all school rules in a professional manner.
17. Avoid disruptive talking in the hallways.
18. Communicate with the teacher if uncomfortable with a specific task. We want your experience to be positive and rewarding.
19. Have fun working in our school.

VISITORS

Visitors, including parents, must secure permission and make arrangements with the principal or teacher prior to any visit in an area of the building or school grounds. Visitors, including parents, are also required to check in with our Raptor system and wear a visitor badge, which is maintained in the office, before reporting to an area of the building or school grounds.

For reasons of liability, elementary aged and younger children are not permitted to visit unless accompanied by their parents, and only with the approval of the teacher(s) involved, as well as the principal.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

All staff members are informed of the master emergency plan designed for all possible emergencies.

Emergency procedures fall into three categories: on-site evacuations, off-site evacuations and “take shelter” drills. Every school in the Downingtown Area School District has a detailed action plan for dealing with a variety of emergencies. The plan is reviewed annually with the staff. A key feature of the emergency plan includes periodic drills for each type of emergency response. The school schedules regular fire drills to comply with the Pennsylvania School Laws. In accordance with the law, the school will conduct not fewer than an average of one fire drill each month.

During the school year, drills are regularly conducted, making every effort to conduct the drill on the best day for temperature and weather conditions. Similarly, drills are conducted to practice the appropriate procedures for a severe weather emergency and safe school drills. Please note that during emergency procedure drills, access to the building may be temporarily denied until conditions are determined to be safe.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

The Downingtown Area School District uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for managing insects, rodents and weeds. Our goal is to protect every student from pesticide exposure by using an IPM approach to pest management. Our IPM approach focuses on making the school building and grounds an unfavorable habitat for these pests by removing food and water sources and eliminating their hiding and breeding places. We accomplish this through routine cleaning and maintenance. We routinely monitor the school buildings and grounds to detect any pests that are present. The pest monitoring team consists of our building maintenance and office. Pest sightings are reported to our IPM coordinator who evaluates the “pest problem” and determines the appropriate pest management techniques to address the problem. The techniques can include increased sanitation, modifying storage practices, sealing entry points, physically removing the pest, etc.

From time to time, it may be necessary to use chemicals to manage a pest problem. Chemicals will only be used when necessary. When chemicals are used, the school will try to use the least toxic products when possible. Applications will be made only when unauthorized persons do not have access to the area(s) being treated. Notices will be posted 72 hours prior to application and for 48 hours following the application. A schedule of pest control applications is posted on the front entry door of the school. If you desire a list of pesticides to be used and their EPA registration numbers, please submit your request in writing. Parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school will be notified of specific herbicide applications made on school grounds, including athletic fields and recreational areas. If a chemical application must be made to control an emergency pest problem, notice will be given. Exemptions to this notification include disinfectants and antimicrobial products; self-containerized baits placed in areas not accessible to students, and gel-type baits placed in cracks, crevices or voids; and swimming pool maintenance chemicals.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

CHANGE OF ADDRESS / TELEPHONE

Any change of address or telephone number should be reported to the school office as soon as possible after the change.

BRINGING TOYS TO SCHOOL

Students must have the permission of the teacher to bring toys from home. In general, the practice of bringing things from home is discouraged unless needed for instruction. In addition to detracting from the learning process, toys get in the way at lunch time and can be lost or damaged during recess or bus rides. The school assumes no liability for lost, stolen, or damaged items from home.

BRINGING ELECTRONIC DEVICES TO SCHOOL

Students must have the permission of the principal to bring electronic devices such as electronic book readers (i.e. a Kindle, a Nook, etc.). If these items are allowed for use during reading, they must be used for reading. Accessing games, music, or social media sites on these devices will not be permitted and will result in them not being allowed in school for the remainder of the year. Cell phones are to remain in book bags during school hours and must be turned off. If a cell phone goes off during the school day, it will be sent to the office and will need to be retrieved by the parent. The school assumes no liability for lost, stolen, or damaged electronic devices sent from home.

CARE OF TEXTBOOKS

Students are encouraged to properly care for books. They are reminded that the books they are using this year must be used by students in the future. It is the responsibility of each student to pay for books that are lost or damaged.

LOST AND FOUND

Parents are requested to label children's outerwear for a quick return of lost articles. Lost articles found in or around the school are taken to the "Lost and Found" box which is located in the cafeteria hallway. Students should periodically check this area for missing articles.

PRIVATE PARTY INVITATIONS

Private party invitations are **NOT** to be handed out in school or on the school bus unless the **ENTIRE** class is invited. Many children have their feelings hurt and get upset when they find out they are not invited to a private party, particularly when it becomes the main focus of conversation during lunch and recess times. In turn, this can develop into inappropriate behavior and lack of academic progress in the classroom.

Central Administration

Central Administrators may be reached through the Administration Office located at 540 Trestle Place, Downingtown, PA 19335 or by calling 610-269-8460.

Dr. Robert O'Donnell	Superintendent
Dr. Robert Reed	Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Louis Chance	Assistant Superintendent
David Matyas	Business Manager
Justin Brown	Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
Caroline Duda	Director of Human Resources
Dale Lauver	Director of Facilities
Dr. Gary Mattei	Director of Technology
Jennifer Shealy	Director of Public Relations
Ann Berrios	Assistant Director of Academics
Kelly Byrne	Coordinator of Assessment & Accountability
Shelly Groff	Supervisor of Transportation
Cierra Martinez	Home and School Visitor
Ashley King	Food Service Director

DOWNINGTOWN AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Board of School Directors meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. School Board meetings are open to the public. More info can be found here:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/down/Board.nsf/Public>

SCHOOL BOARD DIRECTOR REPRESENTING OUR SCHOOL: Lisa Strobridge

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Downingtown Area School District shall not discriminate in their educational programs, activities or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ancestry or any other legally protected classification. This policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. Information relative to special accommodation, grievance procedure, and the designated responsible official for compliance with Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 may be obtained by contacting the Director of Human Resources, Downingtown Area School District, 540 Trestle Place, Downingtown, PA 19335, phone number 610-269-8460.

CHAPTER 15 ANNUAL NOTICE



DOWNINGTOWN AREA SCHOOL

540 Trestle Place, Downingtown, PA 19335, phone 610.269.8460, fax 855.329

ROBERT J. O'DONNELL, Ed.

Annual Notice to Parents

SUBJECT: Implementation of Chapter 15

22 Pa. Code Chapter 15

In compliance with state and federal law, the Downingtown Area School District does not discriminate against protected handicapped students. Also in compliance with state and federal law, the Downingtown Area School District will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

For further information on the evaluation procedures and provisions of services to protected handicapped students, contact the building principal of your student's attendance area.

Notification of Rights Under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over eighteen years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. Please review Board Policy 216-AG-3 on our website regarding the sharing of student directory information. If you would like to opt-out your child, you must notify the school district in writing by September 20, 2019. Please email or mail all requests to opt-out directly to your child's school.