

Evans City Elementary

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2020 – 2021



345 R. West Main Street

Evans City, PA 16033

Mrs. Lauri Pendred, Principal

Mr. Andrew Teti, Assistant Principal

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to Evans City Elementary School! We have never been more excited about the start of school and we are eager to return to in person instruction after remote learning! We know that it is going to be a great year of learning as we all work together to make learning fun and interactive in a new way. Thank you for helping us make Evans City Elementary School a wonderful community by showing kindness, being responsible, and by being safe. Each of us will grow as learners this year by applying some new skills learned remotely while also filling the gaps created by not being able to learn in our school.

We hope that this Student Handbook will answer most of the questions that arise throughout the school year. However, due to COVID-19 and the potential for changes to guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or Pennsylvania Department of Health (PADOH), information in the handbook is subject to change. For the most up-to-date school information, please check the District website regularly at www.svsd.net. If you have any additional questions or need clarification, please feel free to reach out to the classroom teacher or our office.

Sincerely,

Your Evans City Elementary School Team

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SENECA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

James Nickel – President
Eric O. DiTullio – Vice President

Susan Harrison
Timothy Hester
Leslie Bredl
Mike Jacobs
Frederick Peterson, Jr.
Jeff Widdowson
Kathy H. Whittle

Seneca Valley School District Mission Statement

In collaboration with family and community, the mission of the Seneca Valley School District is to provide a nurturing and safe environment with academically challenging opportunities, emphasizing digital citizenship, innovation, and global awareness in order to prepare our students to be productive and contributing citizens.

Seneca Valley Non-Discrimination Policy

The Seneca Valley School District will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability or any other legally protected classification in the employment or in the administration of any of its educational programs and activities. Announcements of this policy is in accordance with the state and federal laws including Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. To inquire about, obtain a copy of or to file a complaint relating to this policy, contact the Administrative Assistance for Human Resources, Seneca Valley School District, 124 Seneca School Road, Harmony, PA 16037 or call (724) 452-6040, ext. 1646.

Seneca Valley Portal

The SV Portal provides secure central access to all personalized resources available to SV parents/guardians and students. Available at this site for 24/7 viewing and/or updates are grades, contact/emergency information, health information, classroom calendar, sports forms and more.

To access the portal information, please utilize the **SV Portal wallet cards** that were mailed to you (multiple children within one family can be viewed with one card – individual cards are not needed for each child). **If you are in need of a replacement wallet card, please contact the Central Office Front Desk at (724) 452-6040, ext. 1675,** and one will be provided for you via U.S. Mail. Passwords and usernames cannot be supplied verbally over the phone. We apologize for the inconvenience; however this procedure is necessary due to the sensitivity of the information involved.

The parent portal can be found on the district homepage at www.svsd.net (icon tab can be found in top right hand corner) or by going to <https://portal.svsd.net/>

****Please be sure all information is current. This includes emergency contact information, email address, and phone numbers. This information is used for notification of school delays, cancellations, school email communications and health office contact with families regarding any individual student medical issues.**

Arrival and Dismissal

The school opens at 8:40 a.m. as the first bus arrives. Students should **NOT** be dropped off at school prior to that time, as supervision is not available. Students being dropped off by parents should utilize the middle school entrance. Use Pattison St. to Shafer Alley. Turn right on Stokey St. and enter the front parking lot on your left.

School hours are:

- 8:40 a.m. -School opens to students
- 8:40-9:05 a.m. -Breakfast offered in the cafeteria
- 8:55 a.m. -Classes begin

***Note: A student arriving after 8:55 a.m. is considered tardy and will need to stop in office for late slip.**

- 11:30 a.m. -AM Kindergarten dismissal
- 12:43 p.m. -PM Kindergarten arrival
- 12:50 p.m. -PM Kindergarten classes begin
- 3:25 p.m. -Dismissal (walkers & special pick-ups)

***No students will be called for dismissal between 3:15-3:25 p.m.**

Dismissal 3:25

Any student that needs to be dismissed early for appointments must bring a note with parent's/guardian's signature and be dismissed prior to 3:10 p.m. **Photo I.D. is required to release a student to an authorized adult.** Please sign the early dismissal sign out sheet in the office.

Any student that is being picked up by car must also bring in a signed note and give it to their teacher upon arrival. When picking up your child at the end of the day, **parents will be admitted into the office at 3:15** to sign their child out on the designated form by **3:20**. Parents can meet their child(ren) and immediately leave the elementary lobby before bus dismissal begins. **Parents and students will need to leave the building no later than 3:25 in order to leave the campus ahead of bus traffic and avoid being blocked in by buses.** *If your child is to be picked up every day, one note at the beginning of the year stating necessary information regarding dismissal will be accepted.

***During the 2020-2021 school year, arrival/dismissal procedures may be altered as upcoming return to school district plans are communicated.**

Attendance

Absences

School attendance and prompt arrival to school are the responsibilities of the students and their parents/guardians. In order to learn the expected skills, regular school attendance is required. A child cannot learn these skills when frequent absences occur. Students are expected to attend 180 days of school during the course of a school year.

The Seneca Valley School District recognizes two types of absences: **excused absences** and **unexcused absences**. Excused absences, according to state law, are those that entail missing school for the following reasons:

- Religious holiday
- Medical related absences
- Sudden illness or other emergency situation
- Pre-planned educational trips
- Death in immediate family
- Inclement weather or impassable roads

In order for an absence to be considered excused, a written note must be submitted through the Seneca Valley Portal under attendance. If this is not possible, a hard copy note should be sent to the office. The student's parent or guardian is required to submit a written statement that specifically states the reason for the absence. The date of the absence(s), child's full name, and detailed reason for the absence must be listed on the written statement. The written statement should be sent to the school with the child and given to the child's teacher upon his/her return to school. By District Policy, five (5) or more consecutive days of absence requires a doctor's excuse. Any absence without this written statement will be considered unexcused.

An absence is considered to be unexcused if a child misses school for any reason other than what is listed under excused absences or if a written statement regarding the excused absence is not submitted.

Being absent from school does not excuse a student from any work or assignments which were assigned during his/her absence. It is the student's responsibility to see each his/her teacher(s) to request make-up work. Please contact your child's teacher(s) for classroom specific absent assignment policies.

In the event that a child is absent from school on the day of a school sponsored event (field trip, assembly, after school activity/club/meeting) regardless of whether that absence is excused or unexcused, he or she is not permitted to attend that event.

Once a student reaches the fourth absence/tardy, parents will be contacted by the school district to notify that any subsequent absences without a valid excuse will be marked as unexcused. Additional parent contact will take place once a student reaches eight (8) absences. Students who are absent/tardy for three (3) unexcused absences will receive a letter of concern from the school district. Six (6) unexcused absences/tardies will result in a second letter and a parent meeting at the school. An attendance improvement plan will be put into place at this time. Once a student

accrues ten (10) absences, parents will receive a letter with information regarding the policy. Any student who reaches twenty (20) absences must provide medical excuses for any subsequent absences beyond twenty.

[For more detailed information about Seneca Valley's Attendance Policies, please see School Board policy 204.](#)

Automated Attendance Notification Program

Please be aware that this school uses an automated attendance system. It will notify parents/guardians of a student's absence at the telephone number they predetermined. If this number is changed, your parents must update the information in the Seneca Valley Portal. Due to the system's inability to randomly update information, when students are tardy, parents may receive an absence call. Please be assured the office will update the information for official attendance purposes. In addition, the response time for calling parents will vary depending on the total number of district students absent. If parents feel their child is present at school and is not tardy, or who feel this is an error, they should call the school immediately!

Homework Request for Absent Students

In most cases, arrangements do not need to be made for a single day of absence. All students can comfortably make up one day of work upon their return to school. To make arrangements for the pick-up of work resulting from multiple days of illness, please call the school by 11:00 AM. The homework will be available in the school office between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM.

Pre-Planned Educational Trips

The Seneca Valley School District recognizes that some families choose to make travel plans that coincide with the school year. If parents feel that the trip is of significant educational value to their child/children, they may submit an Educational Trip form for approval. This form can be found on our district website following this link <http://www.svsd.net/Page/9586>. These forms are also available in the school office. This form is to be completed by the parent or guardian and returned to school **at least two weeks prior to travel**. The form is subject to approval by the school principal with academic performance a consideration. If approved, the absences incurred by your child will be excused.

Trips will not be approved for students in third or fourth grade if the trip is scheduled during district-wide standardized testing.

Any trip taken without prior approval will be declared unexcused. Submission of the form does not guarantee approval. Parents/students are responsible for making arrangements with teachers for missed. Please contact your child's teacher(s) for classroom specific absent assignment policies.

Tardiness

A student is counted tardy if he/she is not in the homeroom when the tardy bell rings at 8:55 AM. His/her name, along with date of tardiness, will be recorded in the office. **An excuse from the parent/guardian is required when a student is tardy. Excuses must fall into the same categories as absences from school.**

Withdrawal from School

If you are moving to another area or attending another school, and must withdraw from school, please report to the office to complete a withdrawal record form. The student will be given a copy of his/her immunization card to be taken to the new school. Please take this information with you when enrolling at the new location. Parents must sign a withdrawal record form for transfer of all school records.

Weather/Emergency School Closing or Delays:

If it becomes necessary to cancel school due to inclement weather or other abnormal conditions, the decision will be made no later than 5:30 a.m. Automated calls will be made through the School Messenger system **(please make sure information is up to date in the SV Portal)**. Announcements will be also made by radio station: **KDKA 1020AM** and television channels **ABC, NBC, CBS** and **SVTV**. School status information can also be found on the Seneca Valley website.

In the event of a delayed opening, Kindergarten students will follow this schedule:

A.M. Arrival -10:40 A.M. and Dismissal - 12:43 P.M.

P.M. Arrival - 1:30 P.M. and Dismissal - 3:25 P.M.

Weather/Emergency Related Early Dismissals

Occasionally, a situation arises that result in sending the students home early. Whenever this occurs, an announcement about an early dismissal will be made on the same radio and television stations listed in the paragraph under Emergency School Closing/Delay. Also, the School Messenger system will be used to contact you via phone and an alert will post to the Seneca Valley website.

Please refrain from calling the school office for information about school closings, delayed openings, or early dismissals. It is very important to keep telephone lines open in case an emergency situation arises that would necessitate our calling for assistance.

[For more detailed information about Seneca Valley's Attendance Policies, please see School Board policy 204.](#)

Behavior

Evans City Elementary School will utilize positive behavior support strategies to build learning communities for our students that are safe, engaging and fun. Positive language is important in guiding academic progress as well as acceptable classroom behavior.

Behavior Expectations

Seneca Valley utilizes the following rules as a guideline for all student behavior:

Be Safe

Students will make choices to protect self and others.

Be Kind

Students will show kindness in their voice, words, and actions.

Be Responsible

Students will think before they act and take ownership for their choices.

Places	Safe	Kind	Responsible
Hall/Ramp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk on the right hand side. • Keep hands and feet to yourself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use inside voices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go straight to your destination.
Restrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself. • Use toilet, sink, and supplies appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect other's privacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell an adult about any problems.
Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself. • Sit in your area. • Wait patiently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take turns. • Assist your neighbor. • Use appropriate voice and kind words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go directly to your seat. • Line up quietly. • Keep your area clean.
Bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself. • Stay in seat/face forward. • Keep aisles clear. • Use a quiet voice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a kind voice and kind words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the bus driver. • Leave the bus area clean.
Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use equipment properly. • Play safely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to adults on duty. • Include others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line up when directed. • If someone is being hurt, tell an adult. • Clean up after yourself.
Assemblies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands and feet to yourself. • Sit appropriately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a good listener. • Respond when appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen, enjoy, and learn.

Bullying

The Seneca Valley School District is committed to providing all students and employees with a safe and civil educational environment, free from threat, harassment or bullying. Any student that feels as though they have been bullied shall report the incident immediately to their teacher, guidance counselor or principal.

As per Board policy, bullying is defined as an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts, directed at another student or students; which occurs in or relates to a school setting; that is severe, persistent or pervasive; and that has the effect of doing any of the following:

- **Substantially interfering with a student's education**
- **Creating a threatening environment**
- **Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school**

Roughhousing is among friends, the power between them is equal, and it is not meant to harm. Real fighting should not happen among friends and the power between them is usually equal, and it is meant to harm. Bullying is not among friends, the power between them is imbalanced, and it is meant to harm.

[For more detailed information about Seneca Valley's Anti-Bullying Policies, please see School Board policy #249.](#)

Bus and Bus Stop Citizenship

Proper behavior is expected both on the bus and at bus stops. The bus driver has the authority to enforce discipline on the school bus. All classroom rules apply to the school bus. The bus driver can submit behavior incident reports to the office. School administration will investigate and determine any necessary actions. Parents can make reports through the Sprigeo link on our website. All reports will be investigated. Sprigeo link <http://www.svsd.net/Page/13519>

The Seneca Valley School District uses the acronym PEACE to help students remember appropriate bus behavior:

- P:** Please stay seated
- E:** Everyone speak softly
- A:** Always listen to the driver
- C:** Control yourself
- E:** Earn Recognition

Discipline

Students have a great responsibility in being good citizens of their school with the support of all school staff. Their responsibilities include being a contributing member of the school/classroom

community, regular school attendance, and conscientious effort in classroom work, and conformance to school rules. Discipline for misconduct will be assigned by the teachers, building assistants and/or principal on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the behavior management plan. This may include classroom consequences, completion of a reflection sheet, or lunch and/or office detentions. More serious infractions may result in a form of suspension listed below.

- **In-School Suspension or Office Detention**

- Students may be given an in-school suspension for disciplinary reasons. Students who receive in-school suspension are removed from their regular classrooms and are expected to reflect on their behavior and complete assigned work in an alternative learning environment.

- **Out-of-School Suspension**

- Students can be suspended outside of school for disciplinary measures. Students who receive the consequence of out-of-school suspension are not permitted in school or on school property and are expected to reflect on their behavior and complete assigned work

[For more detailed information about the District's Discipline Policies, please refer to Board Policy #218.](#)

Dress and General Appearance

The Seneca Valley School District recognizes that each student's choice in dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. However, it is important to ensure that a student's choice does not adversely affect the educational program of the schools nor the health and safety of others. Therefore, your child is prohibited from wearing the following items to or at school:

- Any item including but not limited to clothing, apparel, or jewelry that advocates or promotes sexual activity, violence, death, suicide or the use of alcohol or drugs, or demeans, degrades, or intimidates another because of race, sex, religious persuasion, national origin, disability or gang membership by words, signs, pictures, or any other combinations thereof.
- Apparel that reveals or exposes the midriff or lower back or sides of the upper body or torso and/or undergarments.
- Any clothing that is excessively tight including Spandex, is made of transparent or see-through material, or is ripped or torn.
- Any article of clothing through which underwear or any type of undergarment may be seen.
- Halter tops, "spaghetti strap" tank tops, tank tops with open sides, muscle/tank shirts, or any clothing that reveals one's back or cleavage.
- Spikes, dog chains/chokers, ball bearing chains, wallet chains, or other jewelry that increase the risk for accidents.
- Sunglasses or outerwear* including jackets or coats (inside school facilities).

**Teachers reserve the right to permit students to wear jackets/coats in the event of extreme temperatures in the building.*

Please note:

- Students are permitted to wear shorts to school that are not excessively short (mid-thigh or longer is acceptable).
- Skirts and/or dresses must meet the individual's fingertips when arms are placed at sides.
- All pants or slacks must be worn in such a way that they remain at or above hip-level.
- Footwear must be worn at all times. Sneakers that have one or more wheels embedded in each sole, are not permitted on any Seneca School facility at any time. This includes evening activities that occur in our schools.
- Activity-specific dress such as cheerleading uniforms or other athletic uniforms are only permitted on days designated as school spirit days by the building principal.

This policy describes the District's minimum dress code and grooming requirements. Additional or more stringent requirements may be present at the building level.

[For more detailed information about the District's dress code, please refer to Board Policy #221.](#)

Drugs

The Seneca Valley School District forbids the possession, use, misuse, or distribution of alcohol/drugs (controlled substances), "look alikes" or drug related materials by students on school district property, on school buses, or during any school district activity. Failure to adhere to the rules in the School Board's Drug and Alcohol Policy could result in suspension or expulsion from school.

For more detailed information about the District's [Substance Use and Abuses Policy](#), please refer to [Board Policy #227](#) or the [Drug and Alcohol Awareness Policy](#), please refer to [Board Policy 227.1](#).

Harassment Policy

It is the policy of the Seneca Valley School District that all students should enjoy a learning environment free from discrimination including racial and ethnic intimidation, and sexual harassment.

There is an established policy strictly prohibiting all forms of racial, sexual, and ethnic intimidation in any work area, district-sponsored activity or any other place under the control of the Seneca Valley School District by or toward any administrative or professional staff member, full or part time employee, contracted services employee, job applicant, visitor, student, aide or volunteer of the Seneca Valley School District.

All persons associated with the Seneca Valley School District including, but not necessarily limited to, the board, the administration, the staff and the students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from intimidation. Any person who

engages in intimidation while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of this policy. The consequence for this type of misconduct is an out-of-school suspension. Copies of the various policies are available in the school office.

[For more detailed information about the district's harassment policy, please refer to Board Policy #248.](#)

Solicitation

Students may not sell items for profit to other students during the school day. Trading of items is also prohibited during school hours. There will be no solicitation of funds for outside charitable agencies among students other than school initiated. All school fund raising is done through the PTO or through the school events.

Tobacco Usage

Tobacco products are prohibited on school grounds at all times by all persons.

[For detailed information about the District's tobacco policy, please refer to Board policy #222.](#)

Weapons Policy

Weapons and replicas of weapons are forbidden on all school premises and at school-sponsored events and activities. The definition of weapon includes but is not limited to any device, instrument, material or substance, animate or inanimate, capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. Laser pointers are considered weapons and are also forbidden on school property. Failure to adhere to the rules in the School Board's Weapon Policy could result in suspension or expulsion from school. **Warning:** A pocketknife is classified as a weapon and is forbidden on school property. Also, pocket chains are forbidden as wearing apparel. In addition, all forms of laser lights/pointers are forbidden on school property.

[For more detailed information about the District's weapon's policy, please refer to Board Policy #218.1](#)

Technology and Internet Use

The Seneca Valley School District supports the use of the Internet, e-mail, the Seneca Valley School District network and technology to support the district's curriculum and facilitate learning. The district establishes the use of the Internet, e-mail, district network and technology use as a privilege, not a right; inappropriate, unauthorized and illegal use will result in the cancellation of those privileges and appropriate disciplinary action.

Technology in the Classroom

All students in grades K-4 will be provided with a two-in-one (touch-screen laptop) device while at school. Students will be educated on appropriate use of technology in addition to utilizing technology as educational tool. Teachers utilize the online platform, Common Sense Media (<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>), to educate students on how to best utilize technology in their educational careers and how to appropriately use technology outside of school.

Student Lenova Laptop Rules and Regulations: The Lenova devices are a privilege provided for the students to enhance the academic curriculum. Students are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. Inappropriate language, bullying/cyberbullying, and other disrespectful or intimidating behaviors are unacceptable. Games that are not specifically used in the curriculum are not allowed on the system. Individual files are not considered to be personal property. These files may be accessed at any time by teachers, administrators or the system manager. Students are not permitted access to other students' files. Tampering with files, copying of copyrighted software, downloading or installing games, password tampering, accessing unauthorized directories or removing equipment or software will be considered theft. Tampering with any hardware or equipment or violating policies and/or guidelines governing the use of networks, internet or software programs are also considered offenses and will be dealt with per Seneca Valley Policy # 218. Violators may also be prosecuted under applicable local, state or federal civil or criminal law.

For more detailed information about the District's [Responsible use of Personal Technology Resources Policy](#), please refer to [Board Policy #237](#) and for information on [Acceptable use of Internet Policy](#); please refer to [Board Policy #815](#)

[Building Operations](#)

Assemblies

Evans City Elementary School is recognized by visitors as a respectful audience. Assemblies may be scheduled throughout the school year. During assemblies, guests are invited to the school; therefore, we display our best behavior. Be seated quickly, talk quietly and when a person approaches the front center of the multipurpose room or gymnasium to introduce the guest, be quiet immediately. Common courtesy must be extended to the performer(s).

Classroom Parties

Evans City typically plans classroom parties for the fall and Valentine's Day. During fall parties, students are not permitted to bring look alike weapons associated with their costumes. We also discourage gory or violent images that may scare other children. In most cases, classroom teachers will arrange for parents to plan the parties. The state of Pennsylvania legally requires all schools to meet nutritional guidelines. Foods that are considered unhealthy or that contain specific

allergens are not permitted at school parties. For more information on the foods that are permitted for classroom parties, please refer to the District's Wellness policy, Board Policy #246.

***During the 2020-2021 school year, party planning procedures may be altered.** Teachers may contact parents to help plan the party; although parent attendance will be determined closer to the party date.

General Party Procedures:

- Parents admitted into the school at 1:45. Parties will begin at 2:00 and end at 3:00. All visitors are expected to leave no later than 3:15.
- A party coordinator will be in charge of organizing each of the parties.
- **There is a four (4) parent maximum per room per party including the party coordinator.**
- A classroom party/celebration form must be completed by the party coordinator and turned into the classroom teacher no later than one week prior to the party.
- All party volunteers will need to have their license scanned prior to the scheduled party day (this will help unnecessary delays in getting all volunteers to the classrooms on party days).
- On party days all volunteers should park in the upper parking lot behind the football field and enter the building through the elementary office. Visitor badges will be available in the lobby on the day of the party and will be organized by grade level and classroom.
- A sign-out sheet will be provided in each classroom. You may sign out only your child in the classroom you are volunteering in. If you are picking up a sibling in another classroom, you will need to send in a note with that child and report to the office at the end of the party.
- All volunteers must exit the building promptly when the announcement from the office is made.

Custody/Court Orders

The Seneca Valley School District understands that some families and students may have court or custody orders that impact students. **If this pertains to you, your child's school MUST have a copy of the current court or custody order on hand.** Please submit these documents as soon as possible. Schools are legally required to follow all court ordered instructions but cannot do so if we are not aware of them. Please bring all pertinent paperwork to the school office and provide contact information for parents/guardians who have educational rights.

Lost and Found

Lost articles of clothing, rings, watches, books, jewelry, money, gym bags, lunch boxes, glasses, etc., may be turned into and claimed from the office.

Media: Pictures or Interviews with Students

As part of an on-going process to generate positive public relations pertaining to our schools, the Seneca Valley School District occasionally invites the media inside our classrooms to learn about our outstanding academic programs and events. We will also publicize events and activities via our website. Parents/Guardians who do not wish to have their child's name, photograph or other personal information to appear in any media or district publications, including but not limited to, the Internet, newspapers, magazines, etc., must submit written documentation to the appropriate building principal. This letter should be received no later than the first two (2) weeks of school.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents are urged to attend a conference with their child's teacher during the scheduled conferences in November. The Parent-Teacher conferences afford the opportunity for parents to discuss with the teacher information that may not become apparent to the teacher until much later in the year. Parents are also encouraged to arrange conferences with their child's teacher more often should the need present itself.

Parent/Teacher Organizations – PTO

Active membership in the PTO is encouraged. Regular notices are sent home to describe special events and solicit parent participation. Please see the link to their website for detailed information and check the district's calendar for meetings, dates and times.

Personal Belongings

Students are responsible for all items brought to school. Nothing should be brought to school that disrupts the educational process. Bringing expensive items on our buses or into our classrooms is discouraged. Due to the cost of electronic devices, the school cannot provide reimbursement for lost or stolen property.

Homework Guidelines and Procedures

Homework assignments should complement classroom instruction. Assignments should develop responsibility, good study habits, and organizational skills. All new material is covered in class and then used in home study assignments. Parent's questions concerning methods used or values of assignments should be directed to the child's teacher.

Students returning from an illness will have an equal number of days to make up homework as to the number of days they were absent with an excuse.

Homework is:

- Targeted and purposeful.
- Practice, reinforcement, and extension of classroom content.
- Differentiated based on age, developmental capacity, and academic needs.
-

Homework should:

- Not require extra resources or excessive adult support in order for the student to be successful, but can provide opportunities for peer and adult involvement.
- Have flexible schedules to support a family's busy schedule, as well as not requiring student to work over extended breaks.

Types of Homework

Practice: Homework that is designed for students to reach a level of self-sufficiency in performing a learned skill previously introduced through previous instruction.

Preparation: Homework that is designed for students to access prior knowledge and experiences about a topic to be learned or expanded upon.

Elaboration/Extension/Enrichment: Homework that is designed to require students to conduct research, compare items, support a position, or develop a graphic organizer of information.

Reading: Homework that is designed for students to spend time reading to increase fluency and comprehension while preparing for discussions or key writing assignments.

Study: Homework that is designed to require students to review material in notes and assignments to commit key information, ideas and concepts to long-term memory and to enhance understanding of a subject.

Creativity/Authenticity: Homework that is designed for student to integrate and apply many skills and concepts learned in various disciplines.

[For more detailed information about the District's Homework policy, please refer to Board Policy #130.](#)

Safety Drills

Students must be attentive to adult direction during any drills. An unannounced fire drill will be conducted in each month of the school year. There will also be routine evacuation, lockdown and weather drills throughout the school year. Students should move quietly under the direction of the teacher or staff member.

Teacher/Paraprofessional Qualifications

Based on federal legislation, parents/guardians have a right to know the professional qualifications of their child's teacher(s). Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teachers and requires the district to provide you this information should you ask for it. Parents have the right to inquire:

- Whether the State of Pennsylvania has certified the teacher for the grades/subjects he/she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency permit or other provisional status through which state licensing criteria have been waived.
- What was the teacher's college major and whether the teacher has any advanced degrees.
- Whether any Title I instructional aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

Please contact Assistant Superintendent Dr. Sean McCarty in writing if you would like to receive more detailed information about your child's teacher or paraprofessionals at:

124 Seneca School Road
Harmony, PA 16037
(724) 452-6040

District-wide Food Services

Cafeteria Programs

The Seneca Valley School District Food Service Department uses a Point of Sale (POS) system called Schoolhouse POS. The elementary POS will utilize a homeroom roster system; therefore students will not be issued ID cards or PIN's. The secondary schools use the 'swipe' system where students use their ID cards. The POS system will automate the purchase of all cafeteria items, monitor student allergies, create a student history and maintain student balances.

The Seneca Valley School District is pleased to provide a cafeteria payment service over the internet. Seneca Valley accepts payments for school meals through www.mySchoolBucks.com online payment service. Parents can apply any amount of money to their child's account. Parents can also send a check to the school. Please send a separate check for each student. Make checks payable to Seneca Valley Cafeteria. After depositing money in their account, they can purchase any item available in the cafeteria. Parents can limit their purchases to breakfast and/or lunch only. Parents do not have to apply money to their child's account.

The cashier will enter student purchases as they go through the line each day. If they have money on their account, their balance will show on the display and their present purchase will be deducted. A note will be sent home with the elementary students when their account is down to three lunches. A detailed report of your child's account is available from the cafeteria manager at your request. Parents are encouraged to monitor student purchases of a la carte items.

[Free and reduced lunch applications](#) may be picked up in the school office, printed from the Seneca Valley School District website or applied for online by going to the COMPASS website www.compass.state.pa.us. COMPASS allows Pennsylvanian's to apply for social service programs online. **If applicable for Free/Reduced meals, an application must be completed each year and on file prior to meals being purchased.**

Parents are encouraged to monitor what their children are purchasing in the cafeteria. Parents can limit the purchase of a la carte items such as chips, fruit snacks, extra drinks, etc.

Breakfast Program

A breakfast program is available at all schools within the Seneca Valley School District. Cost for breakfast is **\$1.95**. *Breakfast is offered from 8:40 – 9:05 in the Evans City Large Cafeteria.*

Lunch Program

All students are required to eat lunch in the cafeteria. Students may bring their packed lunch in the cafeteria. Cost for an elementary student is **\$2.75**. Students who pack their lunches may purchase milk for **\$.75**. Any drinks brought from home may not be in glass containers. In addition, no carbonated beverages are to be brought to the cafeteria.

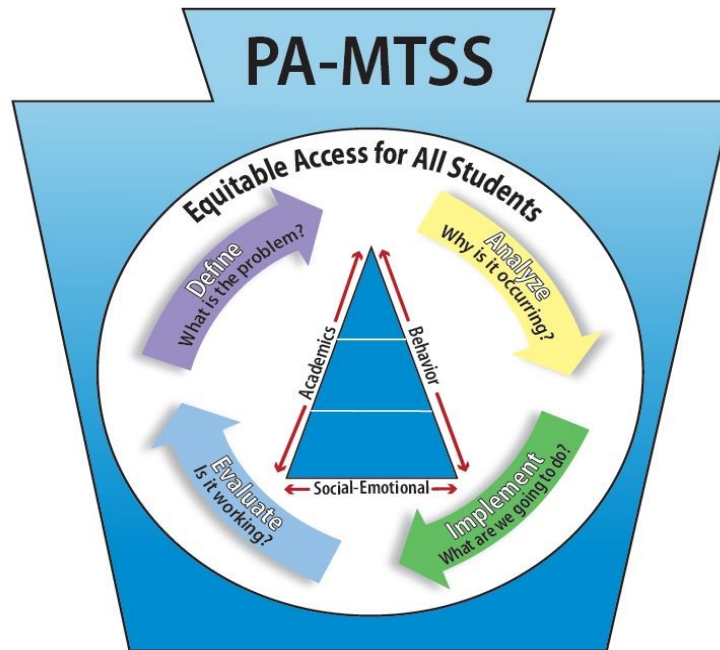
Due to the Covid19 Pandemic, we will not be able to allow parents into the building for birthday lunches at this time.

For more detailed information about the District's [Meal Accounts Policies](#), please refer to Board [Policy #809](#) or the district [Food Services Policy #808](#).

[Educational Programs](#)

Academic Achievement

Students in grades K- 4 receive instruction from their homeroom teacher in English Language Arts which includes Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Special Area teachers



Seneca Valley is committed to supplementing our instructional programs by providing additional intervention or extension activities for students with Reading. The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework is being used to ensure that every child in school receives the appropriate level of instruction to meet or exceed proficiency in grade-level learning goals. As such, school staff ensure time is available to provide students with immediate instructional support when needed.

Our teachers use valid and reliable assessments that are closely aligned to instruction, as well as teacher input to help them choose the programming, materials and instruction to best meet the needs of our students. Grade level interventionists supplement and support instruction that all students receive in the classroom. In addition, our interventionists work closely with classroom teachers to enhance student learning.

After careful consideration, your child may have the opportunity to benefit from available supports provided by an interventionist. If so, your child will receive small group instruction that targets specific reading skills. The level of support is flexible and based on student need. This is NOT a special education program, but one designed to benefit all students who need additional and skill-based instruction to master early literacy skills. In addition, there will be careful monitoring of student progress and communication with parents/guardians.

Intervention groups will occur during WIN (What I Need) time or another time within the school day when direct instruction is not occurring. WIN time is a designated 30-minute time frame within each school day in which students participate in intervention or extension activity groups. These skill-based small groups may include 5-12 students. Intervention or extension groups may take place in a child's homeroom, another grade level teacher's classroom, or an interventionist's classroom.

Report of Student Progress

Report cards are issued three (3) times yearly. These periods cover approximately sixty (60) school days. Parents/Guardians will receive an electronic notification from the school district when the report card is posted in the Seneca Valley Portal.

Continual access to student progress is available through the Seneca Valley Portal at <https://portal.svsd.net/parents/>. If a parent/guardian does not have electronic access, a request can be made by the parent/guardian at the building level to provide a hard copy of the updated student progress.

A new system for reporting student progress in kindergarten was introduced during the 2018-2019 school year. We are pleased to report there was an overwhelmingly positive response from parents in its initial implementation in SV kindergarten classrooms. As such, all report cards are being restructured to better communicate to parents what students should know and be able to do by the end of each school year. Since grading is the primary means of sharing feedback about a student’s level of learning, this new grading system will benefit students, teachers, and parents/guardians.

Timeline for implementation

2020-2021	Grades K-2
2021-2022	Grades 3-4

Q. What is the rationale for revising the report card?

A. The purpose was to improve communication and provide additional feedback for parents, students, and teachers. Standards-based grading includes more information about student learning and reports how the student is progressing toward grade level goals. The district’s new reporting method reflects PA Core standards, current research and effective instructional strategies.

Q. What was the process for updating the report card?

A. The district began this process during the 2017-2018 school year by forming a committee of teachers and administrators to review research around grading systems. The committee identified the most important learning targets aligned to the PA Core Standards and our district curriculum. Administrators, teachers and parents met periodically to provide feedback to the committee. The district technology department was also involved and incorporated the new format into our online portal system.

Q. What are Essential Standards?

A. Essential standards are the most important learning targets of the PA Core Standards and district curriculum. Essential standards represent what all students are expected to know and be able to do at the conclusion of the school year. These select standards contain important concepts that will be used in multiple disciplines and content areas.

Q. How does standards-based grading differ from traditional grading?

A. Standards-based grading measures student understanding in more detail. This system focuses on student achievement and growth by collecting and analyzing evidence to assess the student’s learning against a standard. Standards-based grading measures student understanding over time and separates academic performance from work habits and behaviors.

Q. What is a proficiency scale and how will they be used in reporting progress?

- A. Proficiency scales articulate learning progressions for each essential standard. Learning progressions are beneficial because they describe how student understanding of a topic develops over time.

The proficiency scales along with a consistent grading language for all subjects in all grades represent a student's progression in the learning continuum (Beginning, Progressing, Meets Standard, Exceeds Standard). Therefore, student progress on each standard is specific and based on learning.

Q. How will this new report card support student growth and understanding?

- A. The clear communication of the new reporting system gives students, parents and educators useful feedback that can be used to improve performance and increase knowledge and skills. We are confident the revised report card will better inform students and parents/guardians of their child's strengths and opportunities for growth.

Q. How will we know if the new report is effective?

- A. We are committed to providing accurate and specific feedback for every student. To achieve the overall goal of improved communication, we will continue to collect feedback and make necessary changes.

For more information, please visit www.svsd.net/K4ReportCards

Specials

Each student in grades first through fourth will have a daily special. The specials are listed and explained below.

Art

Art education provides a means for children to express their ideas, feelings, and emotions; helping children to appreciate the beauty in the world around them and developing confidence in their own abilities.

Creativity, Innovation, and Research Center- CIRC

All students in kindergarten through fourth grade will participate in CIRC. The purpose of CIRC is to support a blended learning program of computer technology and library. In this blended program, students will have time to explore the ever-changing world of technology with use of computers, devices, and printers, all the while utilizing and sharpening their research skills with investigative opportunities in the library. With this blended program, students will have real world learning projects that tap into their creative and inventive side. Students will have the opportunity to check out library books. Please note that students will be charged for lost or damaged books. If a book is thought to be lost, a parent needs to send in a letter explaining the situation. If the book is not found by the end of the year, a letter will be sent home regarding payment.

Spanish

Students will be exposed to the Spanish language and culture in lessons that will incorporate listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the target language. The curriculum aligns to grade level content and provides opportunities for students to communicate in Spanish.

Music

It is the function of the music teacher in the elementary schools to develop those potentialities for growth in the enjoyment of and participation in music that are inherent in every child.

Physical Education

Students in grades first through fourth will participate in Physical Education. Classes are co-ed and will include team, individual and challenge activities. Students are expected to come to class prepared and ready to participate. Dress for gym day is comfortable fitting play clothes and sneakers. If a student is unable to participate for medical reasons, a note from the parent, guardian or doctor can be given to the Physical Education teacher in class. The teacher will provide an alternative activity for the student that meets the doctor's recommendation. A follow-up note from the parent, guardian or doctor will be needed for the student to return to activity once the medical excuse has expired.

Instrumental Music

Instrumental music begins in fourth grade for students interested in playing an instrument. Both band and strings instruments are offered. Students entering school in the fall, who have never played a musical instrument, may start with the beginner group, provided they have had a musical try-out and have rented their instrument. Children will be asked to practice their instruments, so please encourage practice while considering your child's study needs and involvement in other extra-curricular activities.

Support Services

School Counseling Services

A School Counselor is a person who provides all students with experiences to help in their educational and personal/social development. The School Counselor does his/her job by:

1. Seeing children individually and in groups. These groups will range from class-sized groups to small groups of approximately 5-10 students.
2. Consulting with parents and school staff concerning individual children's issues.
3. Facilitating group activities that lead towards self-development
4. Assisting in making referrals for other services that a child might need.
5. Being a member of the Y.E.S.S. team.

Ways to see the counselor:

- Self-referral
- Teacher referral

- Parent referral
- Administrative referral
- Student Services referral

Groups that meet with the school counselor:

- Buddy program (new students)
- Friendship
- Grief
- Changing families
- Smooth sailing (problem solving)
- Others as needed and responsive to the school population

You may contact the school counselor at 724-538-3680 ext. 7035

Gifted Education (PURPOSE)

Students in this program are identified as having outstanding intellectual ability, the development of which requires special services/activities not ordinarily provided in the regular program. Individual student plans are developed yearly. For more information regarding our PURPOSE program for gifted students, please consult with your child's teacher so that the YESS process can be initiated.

School wide Title 1 Program

Interventionists provide appropriate data driven interventions following the MTSS framework for reading or math. More information can be found at <https://www.svsd.net/Page/25795>

Special Education

Effective education requires that children be exposed to an educational program that is in keeping with their instructional level. Our program in Special Education is geared to meet the needs of the child requiring an instructional program that is special for him/her only which requires an Individualized Education Program (I.E.P.).

Speech and Language Therapist

A Speech and Language Program is available to students based upon the recommendations of the Speech/Language Therapist. Students are identified through a screening procedure, parent and teacher referrals, and a diagnostic evaluation. Written parental permission is required before a formal evaluation may be done.

Youth Educational Support Services (Y.E.S.S.)

The Elementary Student Assistance Process (E.S.A.P) was developed to ensure that each child would be given an opportunity to experience academic success. Seneca Valley School District's ESAP process is titled Youth Education Support Services (Y.E.S.S.). The Y.E.S.S. Team provides elementary student assistance to students who are at risk academically, behaviorally, or emotionally and involves gathering data, setting goals, developing a plan of action, implementing the plan, and monitoring student progress. In the event that more evaluation is needed, the Youth

Education Support Services (Y.E.S.S.) Process serves as the Seneca Valley School District's pre-referral process for special education.

The Elementary Y.E.S.S. Team is comprised of the building administrator, referring teacher, parents/guardians, instruction and intervention specialist, school counselor, reading specialist, and the school psychologist. Other school staff may attend as appropriate. The Y.E.S.S. Team members are trained in skills used to assess a student's instructional level, involve parents their child's education, collaborate to solve problems, and develop instructional strategies that facilitate student achievement. Parents or teachers may refer students to the Y.E.S.S. Team by contacting the building administrator (K-6), instruction and intervention specialist (K-4), or school counselor (5-6).

Health and Wellness

Abuse (Physical, Emotional, Neglect, etc.):

All employees of the Seneca Valley School District are identified as Mandated Reporters of child abuse. This means that if abuse of any kind is suspected of occurring to a child in our care, it must be reported to the appropriate authority. Reports of abuse can be made by the student involved or anyone who suspects that abuse is occurring. Staff members who become aware of, or suspect an abusive situation are required to report the suspected abuse to Childline (1-800-932-0313).

Communicable Diseases:

Parents frequently have questions concerning students attending school with communicable diseases. The following criteria have been established by the Pennsylvania Department of Health for exclusion of students demonstrating symptoms suggestive of specific communicable diseases and infectious conditions. The exclusion periods are as follows:

- **Acute Contagious Conjunctivitis (pink eye):** After medically prescribed treatment.
- **Respiratory Streptococcal Infections (strep throat):** 24 hours after initiation of treatment.
- **Pediculosis (Lice):** May return to school after the first treatment. There should be no live lice and a reduction in the number of nits. The student will be reexamined for infestation by the School Nurse seven (7) days post treatment. Please see additional information regarding the Seneca Valley lice procedure on the district Health Services page <https://www.svsd.net/Page/12781>
- **Chicken Pox:** Six (6) days from the outbreak of the last crop of blisters with all pox marks dried.
- **Impetigo, Scabies, Ringworm:** Until judged noninfectious by the physician.

Parents can assist in the control of communicable disease by recognizing symptoms and seeking medical care as indicated.

- **COVID-19:** Follow Pennsylvania Department of Health guidance for return to school.

Comprehensive Allergy Management Plan

The Seneca Valley School District has established a Comprehensive Allergy Management Plan to support students who suffer from severe allergies. The plan provides a procedural guide for the management of allergies in our schools and includes educational information, specific guidelines for all stakeholders, and supplemental resources to support administrators, teachers, parents, and students. The plan establishes clear procedures for food products that can be brought into the classroom for daily snacks and/or special events. Food for these activities is to be controlled by the classroom teacher. The plan also establishes that classroom birthday celebrations may not include food. However, the plan provides a list of possible activities for celebrating a student's birthday. Please contact your classroom teacher, school nurse, or building principal with questions.

Health Room

School health services are provided through the cooperative efforts of the school, the school physician, school dentist, school nurse, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health. These services are provided for the purpose of taking care of emergencies, preventing the spread of communicable diseases, discovering and correcting physical defects, and giving pupils and their parents guidance they need in solving their own health problems. The health room is an important part of our school. The nurse is not to treat injuries which occurred outside of school hours, or diagnose rashes, etc. These are the responsibility of the parents. **Please notify us of any change in emergency contact, your phone number or work number and update your emergency contacts in the SV Parent Portal.**

Homebound Instruction

If a student is seriously ill or unable to attend school for an extended period of time, the doctor may complete the necessary form so that the student can receive homebound instruction. The proper forms can be obtained by contacting Dr. Sean McCarty at (724) 452-6040.

Immunization Policy:

Any child entering school in the District for the first time must have a valid exemption or documented immunization.

1. Proof of immunization, rather than a parent's recall, is required. Immunization must be completed before the child may enter the school.
2. Any child excluded from school shall be re-entered only after satisfactory proof of action is presented to the school.
3. There must be a physician's certificate or statement that the student is medically contraindicated to receive a specified vaccine or a parent's/guardian's written statement that immunization is against their religious beliefs.

4. Children entering school, Kindergarten through fourth grade, must meet the following immunization requirements:

- Four (4) doses of tetanus and diphtheria vaccine, the fourth dose must be given after the 4th birthday.
- Four (4) doses of polio vaccine, the fourth dose must be given after the 4th birthday and at least 6 months after the 3rd dose
- Two (2) doses of measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine.
- Three (3) doses of hepatitis B vaccine.
- Two (2) doses of varicella vaccine or evidence of disease or blood titer.

Students needing immunized can do so at a local health care provider or the Butler County Immunization Clinic.

Butler County - Immunization Clinics

Butler County State Health Center
Monarch Building
100 Burgh Avenue, Suite 201
Butler, PA 16001

Clinics are on the 3rd Thursday of every month. Please call for an appointment: **724-287-1769**

Medications:

The Seneca Valley School District recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for the health of their children. The district, therefore, strongly recommends that medication be given at home. Towards this end, parents should confer with the child's physician to arrange medication time intervals which avoid school hours whenever possible. If, however, medication absolutely must be given during school hours, the following guidelines and procedures must be followed:

Prescriptions:

1. The student's physician must complete the District's approved prescription medication form for medication.
2. The student's parents or guardian must sign the District's consent form for prescription medications.
3. Any medication to be given during school hours must be brought to school in the original pharmaceutically dispensed and properly labeled container, preferably by the parent.

If medications must be sent in with a student, the student must report directly to the nurse's office from home to deliver the medication. Parents must notify the nurse that the medication is being sent with the student, and, if necessary, how many pills have been sent.

Non-Prescription or Over-the-Counter Medications:

1. Students are not permitted to carry non-prescription medications to or from school.
2. There has been a slight change in our medication policy. In order to better serve our students, our school nurses may now administer over-the-counter pain medications, acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol) and ibuprofen (e.g. Motrin, Advil) to students who have their parent's written permission. The school physician has written orders for these two medications to be given as needed to students to treat mild pain and discomfort - such as minor headaches, orthodontic pain, or menstrual cramps. Students **WILL NOT** be given pain medication to reduce a fever. Dosage for these medications will be determined by the student's weight, and dosages that exceed the recommended dose will **NOT** be given without a special order from the student's personal physician.

Note: All medications, prescription, non-prescription, and over-the-counter, must be picked up by parents/guardians at the end of the school year, if not, they will be discarded.

Transportation

Audio and Video Monitoring

The School Board has adopted a policy that authorizes audio and/or visual recording on school buses or school vehicles for disciplinary or security purposes. The audio/video recordings on school vehicles would be exempt from disclosure under the Public Right to Know Law because such recordings constitute an educational record protected from disclosure by FERPA. Principals, their designees, bus garage managers, and transportation department personnel are the only people allowed to view the recordings. Law enforcement may also view the recordings if school officials deem necessary. Each school bus or school vehicle with audio and/or visual recording devices, will post a notification in clear sight so driver and passengers understand their actions and communication may be recorded. The audio and or video recording will not be operating if the vehicle is used for other purposes not school related.

<http://www.svsd.net/cms/lib5/PA01001234/Centricity/Domain/117/policies/800/810-1.pdf>

Bus Transportation

Parent(s) or guardian(s) may request a student be reassigned to a different loading zone and/or route. Any request must be for a consistent and regular schedule. A regular schedule consists of specific days and is consistent each week of the school year. Requests for temporary changes to a student's bus assignment and route will be considered only in the following situations: a death in family, the hospitalization of an immediate family member, or when a temporary guardian is

needed due to a parent(s)/guardian(s) being absent from home. All requests will be reviewed by the Transportation Director. Requests should be submitted in writing through the Transportation Department’s website at www.svsd.net. Processing requests may take three to five business days to complete.

Per [School Board Policy 810](#) no transportation is provided for work, music lessons, dance classes, gymnastics, or to visit a friend. Examples of requests that will be approved are family emergencies, or when a parent is called out of town for business purposes. Requests for alternative transportation can be made by accessing “Transportation Requests” on the Transportation Department website. Unless a request arises from an emergency situation, requests for changes in transportation assignments must be made in advance and will not be granted on the date of the request. **During the school day, contact the Transportation Department at 724-452-6040 ext. 1700. For bus emergencies after 4 p.m. ONLY contact: ABC Transit at 725-473-4500, Valley Lines at 724-473-4411.**

<u>ABC Transit Buses</u>	<u>Valley Lines Buses</u>
Bus Numbers 2-60	Bus Numbers 70-99

*Any changes in bus numbers will be communicated during the school-year.

Changes in Student's Bus Stop

The District will not add additional buses or loading zones (bus stops) or alter established routes to accommodate an individual transportation request. Any change is dependent upon the availability of space on the alternative bus. Except as otherwise provided below, any change in assignment would require that the child be picked up and discharged at the same loading zone on a regular schedule.

The deadline to provide the Transportation Department of an alternative stop for the 2020-2021 school year is **August 7, 2020**. No requests for alternative stops will be taken during the first few weeks of school. Parents missing the deadline will be responsible for transportation. The district will begin taking requests again on September 14, 2020. Please visit the Transportation page to make any requests. <https://www.svsd.net/Page/11092>

Custody Agreements/Daycare Requests

Parents sharing equal custody of a child or parents needing daycare before and/or after school may need an alternative stop location. However, only one alternative stop location can be requested. An alternative stop is only set up in case of a custody agreement or daycare. Parents and/or guardians need to alert the Transportation Department of an alternate address if needed. The days for an alternative stop need to be consistent each week. No alternating Fridays will be accepted. All alternative stops will be deleted at the end of the school year and parents will need to submit a request for an alternative stop before the beginning of the following school year.