

WILKINSBURG SCHOOL DISTRICT

Every child, every day, every minute matters!



**Kelly Primary & Turner
Intermediate**

2026-2027

Student Handbook

Wilkinsburg School District

Administration Building

718 Wallace Avenue
Wilkinsburg, PA 15221
412-871-2129 (Main Office)
412-371-4058 (Fax)

Kelly Primary School

400 Kelly Avenue
Wilkinsburg, PA 15221
412-371-9504 (Main Office)
412-871-2217 (Fax)

Turner Intermediate School

1833 Laketon Road
Wilkinsburg, PA 15221
412-731-5883 (Main Office)
412-871-2157 (Fax)

Wilkinsburg School District **Instructional Administrative Team**

2026-2027

Dr. Jocelyn Artinger.....Superintendent
Mrs. Kerry McClellan.....Director of Special Education and Student Services
Ms. Rachel Gardocky.....Principal, Kelly Primary
Ms. Cara McKenna.....Principal, Turner Intermediate
Ms. Jeanette Mosso.....Assistant Principal, Kelly Primary
Mrs. Krystal Smith.....Assistant Principal, Turner Intermediate

Board of Directors

2026-2027

It is the mission of the Wilkinsburg School District to provide high-quality, enriching instructional experiences in a safe, healthy, and caring learning environment.

The school district is governed by nine, individually elected board members, as well as by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

Ms. Amanda Barber.....	President
Mrs. Ashley Comans.....	Vice-President
Mr. Patrick Cooper.....	Board Member
Mr. Alex Guminski.....	Board Member
Ms. Felicia Davis	Board Member
Ms. Sharmaine Gamble.....	Board Member
Mr. Timothy Isaac.....	Board Member
Mr. Jaison Johnson.....	Board Member
Ms. LaTonya Washington.....	Board Member

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Wilkinsburg School District's Mission, Vision, and Beliefs	5
Anti-Bullying.....	6
Arrival/Dismissal.....	7
Attendance.....	7
Bell Schedule.....	10
Books and Equipment.....	10
Bus Regulations.....	10
Cafeteria.....	11
Calendar.....	11
Change of Address and Telephone Numbers.....	12
Discipline/School Rules.....	12
Dress Code.....	16
Electronic Devices.....	17
Emergency Procedures.....	17
English Second Language.....	18
Field Trips.....	18
Health Services.....	18
Homeless Students.....	20
McKinney-Vento Act.....	20
Kindergarten/Pre-K.....	20
Local Daycare Options.....	21
Lost and Found.....	21
Home/School Communication.....	21
PBIS.....	21
Photographs/ Videos Of Students.....	22
Policies.....	22
Retention Process.....	22
Safe2Say Something.....	23
Special Education.....	23
Standards-Based Grading (SBG).....	26
Standardized Assessments.....	27
Student Records.....	27
Student Support Services.....	28
Crisis Prevention Intervention.....	28
Health Services.....	28
Telephones.....	29
Valuables.....	29
Visitors.....	29
Weather Related Delays and Cancellations.....	29

Mission, Vision, and Beliefs:

District Mission:

The mission of the Wilkinsburg School District is to provide high-quality, enriching instructional experiences in a safe, healthy, and caring learning environment.

District Vision Statement:

Our vision is to create the conditions for students, faculty, and staff to unlock their highest possible potential.

District Instructional Vision Statement:

In every Wilkinsburg classroom, students have access to high-quality, grade-level, standards-aligned instruction every day. Students engage in rigorous thinking, grapple with complex ideas and authentic problems, both individually and collectively, while rooted in a strong foundation of essential skills. These learning experiences stretch both their thinking and possibilities while affirming them in safe, supportive environments where they are known, valued, and challenged. Students develop the knowledge, confidence, and agency to shape their futures and contribute to a changing world.

District Beliefs:

At Wilkinsburg School District, we believe...

- ★ All students deserve access to high-quality instructional experiences in arts, academics, and extracurriculars.
- ★ All students can achieve and do well.
- ★ Student relationships with faculty and staff are the foundation for our success.
- ★ We meet all students where they are and provide the tools and resources to support them on their path to excellence.
- ★ District faculty and staff act in service to the children, families, and community.

Anti-Bullying

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at a student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with a student's education.
2. Creating a threatening environment.
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in this handbook and Board policy, includes cyberbullying.

Bullying can occur in person, via electronic communications (e.g., text messages, emails or telephonic) or via the internet, including social media. This may include a wide variety of behaviors, with deliberate intent to hurt, embarrass, or humiliate the other person. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. Bullying can be verbal and may include teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting and threatening to cause harm. Bullying can be social or relational and involve harming someone's reputation or relationships and can include leaving someone out on purpose, telling others not to be friendly with someone, spreading rumors about or embarrassing someone. Bullying can be physical and involve hurting a person's body or possessions and includes hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's belongings and making mean or rude hand gestures.

"Cyber-Bullying" includes any form of verbal or psychological bullying that may occur on the internet, including through social media or other electronic or digital communication, including texting and email. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: disparaging statements or opinions about physical characteristics, sexuality, sexual activity or mental or physical health or condition or a threat to inflict harm. It also includes harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, or employee of the District by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings including any social networking accounts, for example, blogs. All forms of cyber-bullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions relate to the school setting and are disruptive of the education process of the District, offenders shall be the subject of appropriate discipline, which may include legal and/or police proceedings

Students who believe they or others have been bullied should promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee.

Please see [Board Policy 249 on Bullying/Cyberbullying](#) for more details.

Arrival/Dismissal

The school day officially begins at 8:40 AM. Students are permitted to arrive between **8:20- 8:35 AM**. Students may not arrive before 8:20 AM because the district does not provide supervision for children until that time.

Students arriving after **8:45 AM** will be considered tardy and must check in at the office to receive a late slip. Morning procedures are crucial to every child's educational success; therefore, students must arrive before the official start of school to get organized and prepare for the day.

For the safety and well-being of all students, it is essential that parents and guardians arrive promptly for dismissal at **3:20 PM**. Regular and timely pick-up helps ensure a smooth end to the school day and minimizes student anxiety. Students who are not picked up on time may be brought to the main office. Repeated late pick-ups may require a meeting with school administration. We appreciate your partnership in making dismissal safe and efficient for everyone.

If your child is a bus rider, the student must ride the bus assigned to them by the Wilkinsburg School District. For temporary changes to bus transportation, Parents/Guardians must submit a written request to the school office at the start of the school day so that the changes can be made.

Attendance

Regular school attendance is essential for academic growth and success. The Wilkinsburg School District is committed to ensuring every student has the opportunity to engage in meaningful learning each day. The following procedures outline the district's expectations, procedures, and support systems related to school attendance, in accordance with Pennsylvania state laws.

Attendance Expectations:

- School Hours: Doors open at 8:20 AM. Students are considered tardy after 8:45 AM.
- Daily Attendance: All students are expected to attend school regularly and on time.
- Excused vs. Unexcused Absences: Absences are classified based on documentation and state guidelines.
- Documentation Requirement: A written excuse must be submitted within three (3) school days of the student's return to school. Failure to submit within this timeframe will result in the absence being marked unexcused.

Excused Absences:

Valid reasons for an excused absence include:

- Illness or severe injury (with parent or doctor note)
- Medical or dental appointments
- Death in the immediate family
- Court-ordered appearances
- Religious observances
- Quarantine
- Family emergencies (with administrative approval)
- Approved educational trips or school-sponsored activities

Note: After ten (10) cumulative excused absences verified by a parent note, a doctor's note will be required for any additional absences.

Unexcused Absences:

Absences not covered by the reasons listed above, or those lacking appropriate documentation, will be considered unexcused. Examples include:

- Truancy
- Family vacation not approved in advance
- Missing the bus
- Oversleeping

Truancy:

A student is considered truant after three (3) unexcused absences.

Actions taken include:

1. Parent contact by the classroom teacher and documents in Infinite Campus contact log.
2. Notification to the school attendance officer
3. A formal letter sent home
4. The homeroom teacher continues to update the attendance officer with unexcused absences and/or tardy concerts.

Habitual Truancy:

A student is considered habitually truant after six (6) unexcused absences.

Steps include:

1. A second letter mailed home
2. Contact from the attendance officer
3. Weekly monitoring of student attendance
4. Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP)

After ten (10) unexcused absences:

- A SAIP meeting will be held with the parent/guardian and school team (teacher(s), principal/designee, counselor/social worker, attendance officer)
- A plan will be developed to address attendance barriers and set goals for improvement
- If a parent/guardian does not attend, the plan will still be developed.

Legal Intervention:

Failure to follow through with the SAIP will result in:

- An official citation filed with the local magistrate
- A review hearing approximately 30 days later
- If the plan is followed, the citation may be withdrawn.
- Continued absences may lead to referral to Truancy Court.

Support & Interventions:

We recognize that challenges can impact a student's ability to attend school regularly. The Wilkinsburg School District is committed to supporting students and families in overcoming barriers to attendance.

Available Support: Attendance officers, school counselors, social workers, and community resource connections

Make-Up Work: Students must complete missed work within a timeframe equal to the length of the absence, but no longer than two weeks. The exact timeline is at the teacher's discretion.

A student is considered in attendance if:

- They are receiving approved instruction (e.g., homebound, alternate placements)
- They are participating in an approved school-sponsored or educational activity

Educational Trips

Students may be excused for educational trips under the following conditions:

- A written Educational Trip Request Form must be submitted at least two (2) weeks in advance.
- The trip must serve an educational purpose as determined by the Superintendent or designee.
- The trip may not exceed ten (10) days per school year.
- Trips are not approved during:
 - The last two weeks of the school year
 - Standardized or state testing periods
- Trips will not be approved for:

- Students with more than 15 absences
- Students failing two or more subjects
- Students are responsible for making up all missed work at the teacher's convenience and discretion.

Early Dismissals

Requests for early dismissals must be:

- Accompanied by a written note or confirmed through direct communication with the parent/guardian
- Approved by the office
- Students will only be released to a custodial parent/guardian or an adult pre-designated in school records
- The Wilkinsburg School District appreciates your partnership in promoting regular and timely attendance. Consistent attendance builds strong academic habits and increases each student's opportunity for success. If you have concerns or need support related to attendance, please contact your child's school.
- Attempted before 3 pm to ensure a safe dismissal process is followed

Bell Schedule

8:20 a.m. Breakfast

8:45 a.m. Academics begin

3:20 p.m. School Ends

Books and Equipment

Each student is responsible for the proper care and return of all books and equipment (*including school district-issued technology devices*) received from the school. Payment must be made for lost or damaged books, technology devices, and/or equipment. Students may borrow a wide variety of books from the school's library.

Bus Regulations

All Pre-K through 6th-grade students are expected to be: RESPECTFUL, RESPONSIBLE, and SAFE while riding the school bus. Consequences for the school bus/bus stop misconduct will apply to ALL routes. Decisions regarding a student's ability to ride the bus in connection with co-curricular and extra-curricular activities (i.e. field trips), will be at the sole discretion of the school district and the building Principal. Families will be notified of any incidents, suspensions, or loss of bus privileges. Progressive bus discipline could look as follows:

- 1st offense-written warning
- 2nd offense-1-day bus suspension
- 3rd offense-5-day bus suspension
- 4th offense-Bus suspension for the remainder of the school year.

Cafeteria

Breakfast and lunch are served daily. During the meal periods, students should enjoy the social atmosphere while eating a nutritious meal. All students are to remain in the cafeteria for the designated meal times.

The following procedures are to be observed during breakfast and lunch:

1. Students are to remain seated during the entire breakfast/lunch period unless given permission otherwise. Restrooms are provided for use, with permission.
2. Students who wish to leave the cafeteria during lunch must present written permission obtained prior to the lunch period.
3. Students are expected to keep cafeteria lines orderly; no line cutting of any kind is permitted (cutting in front of others already in line, holding a space(s) for others, etc.)
4. Students should follow the posted Voice level posters. Voice levels are as follows:
 - a. Waiting in line -- Voice level 1
 - b. Inside cafeteria -- Voice level 1
5. Food and beverages are permitted only in the cafeteria. Students are not permitted to carry bottles or containers of food or beverages outside the cafeteria at any time during the school day unless a medical need dictates it and arrangements have been made through the school nurse. Any food removed from the cafeteria will be confiscated and will be returned to the student at the end of the day.
6. After eating, students are to carry their trays and debris to the designated area/trash cans and dispose of them properly.
7. Throwing food or other objects during lunch is not permitted.

Lunch Program

Our lunch program is based on the guidelines set forth by the National School Lunch Program, the Department of Education, and the U.S. Department of Health to ensure food safety and a nutritious, well-balanced meal for your child each day. Our school lunch provider is Nutrition Inc.

Lunch menus will be provided monthly and can be found on the district's website.

Calendar

Please see the included link to view the district calendar for the year:

[Wilkinsburg 2026-2027 School Calendar](#)

Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held twice each school year, in the Fall and Spring, on the following dates: November 6, 2026, and January 25, 2027. Parent-Teacher Conferences will begin at 11:30 AM and will be scheduled by the classroom teacher. These conferences give families the opportunity to discuss their child(ren)'s growth and needs with their teachers.
- Parents are encouraged to contact teachers to arrange conferences throughout the school year as needed. This can be done through contacting the teacher directly by voicemail or email, or by calling the Main Office.

Change of Address and Telephone Numbers

Families are asked to notify the office immediately of any changes to their home address. This will also require a reestablishment of residency in the District. Any change of contact information, including home, work, or mobile phone numbers of parents/guardians and emergency contacts, and personal and business email addresses, should be updated through the school office.

Discipline/School Rules

Courtesy and safety are the underlying goals of the rules and regulations governing student behavior in elementary school. Positive reinforcement of desired behavior is provided by the staff through teaching, discussion, and role modeling. Students are expected to demonstrate good citizenship both at school and while traveling from home to school and back. If students disregard expectations, disciplinary action may include a verbal reprimand, the withdrawal of privileges, or notification to families. Out-of-school suspension may occur depending on the seriousness of the offense and district policies. Board policy related to student discipline can be reviewed [here](#).

Student Conduct and Behavior Guidelines

The Wilkinsburg School District is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We believe that positive relationships, clear expectations, and restorative practices help students develop the skills needed to become responsible, respectful, and productive members of our school community.

Students are expected to demonstrate respect for themselves, others, and school property. When inappropriate behavior occurs, school staff will work with students to understand the impact of their actions, repair harm whenever possible, and develop strategies for making better choices. While every situation is unique, disciplinary responses are intended to be progressive, developmentally appropriate, and focused on teaching positive behavior.

Depending on the nature and severity of the behavior, interventions and disciplinary responses may include:

1. Teacher and student discussion to address the behavior and identify strategies for improvement.
2. Teacher communication with the parent/guardian.
3. Restorative conversation, problem-solving conference, or meeting involving the student, parent/guardian, teacher, counselor, or other support staff.
4. Development of a behavior support plan or referral to appropriate student support services.
5. Conference with the Building Principal or Assistant Principal.
6. Administrative review with the Building Principal, including appropriate disciplinary consequences when necessary.
7. Superintendent or designee review for serious or repeated violations.
8. School Board hearing when required by law or Board policy.

The Building Principal or Assistant Principal will interpret and apply the Student Code of Conduct in a fair and equitable manner, taking into consideration the student's age, intent, disciplinary history, the severity of the incident, mitigating circumstances, and all applicable laws and Board policies.

Certain behaviors may also result in referral to law enforcement or other appropriate agencies when required by law or when necessary to protect the safety of students and staff.

Students who engage in conduct that is not specifically identified within this Code of Conduct, but that disrupts the educational environment, threatens the safety or well-being of others, damages property, or is inconsistent with the District's mission and expectations for student behavior, may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Exclusionary Disciplinary Consequences

The District is committed to using exclusionary discipline only when necessary to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment and after appropriate interventions have been considered, unless the severity of the offense requires immediate removal.

- **Out-of-School Suspension:** An Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) is the temporary exclusion of a student from school and all school-sponsored activities for a period of one (1) to ten (10) school days.
 - When a suspension exceeds three (3) school days, the student and parent/guardian will be offered an informal hearing in accordance with Pennsylvania law, during which the student will have the opportunity to respond to the allegations.

- **Expulsion:** Expulsion is the exclusion of a student from school for a period exceeding ten (10) school days and may be permanent. Expulsion may be recommended for serious or repeated violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

Only the Board of School Directors, or a duly authorized committee of the Board, may expel a student. Prior to any expulsion, the student will be afforded all due process rights required by law, including a formal hearing.

Students who are suspended or expelled may not participate in school-sponsored activities or events during the period of suspension or expulsion. Students serving an Out-of-School Suspension are also prohibited from being on District property during the suspension unless authorized by a school administrator.

DISCIPLINARY STRUCTURE

LEVEL I

Examples of Level I Offenses:

- Minor disruptive behavior
- Classroom tardiness
- Disrespectful language or gesture
- Noncompliance
- Cheating
- Lying to faculty, staff, or administrators

Possible Level I Discipline:

- Verbal reprimand
- Student conference
- Special assignment

LEVEL II

Examples of Level II Offenses:

- Forgery
- Verbal Altercation
- Presence in an unauthorized area of the building
- Continuation of Level I offenses
- Minor destruction of school property (consequence includes restitution)
- Theft
- Possession of lighters, matches, and/or tobacco paraphernalia
- Violation on a school trip
- Inappropriate language not directed at a person
- Safety violations
- Harassment violations
- Physical Altercation
- Bus violations
- Public display of affection
- Unauthorized use of electronic and/or digital devices
- Possession and/or use of tobacco/Nicotine products, including electronic cigarettes and other nicotine delivery devices

Possible Level II Discipline

- Any level 1 consequences
- Teacher Directed After School Detention – parental/ guardian contact by letter/telephone
- Conference with parent/guardian/student/ administrator
- Device is only returned to parent/guardian
- Required conference with parent/guardian/ student/administrator for reinstatement
- Confiscation of device by staff member and submission to office

LEVEL III

Examples of Level II Offenses:

- Physical fighting
- Assault
- Use of profane/obscene, abusive language or gestures directed at a person
- Open defiance of a member of the staff
- Disrespect toward a member of the staff or a visitor to the school district
- Harassment (major or continued)
- Extortion
- Ethnic Intimidation
- Violation of the drug and alcohol policy
- Major theft (consequences include restitution; circumstances reviewed as major or minor)
- Possession or distribution of pornographic materials
- Threats to staff members
- Behaviors that do or have the potential to endanger the safety and well-being of others
- Vandalism – consequence includes restitution

Possible Level II Discipline:

- Any level 1 or II consequences
- 1-3 days out of school suspension – parent/guardian contact by letter/telephone
- Required conference with parent/guardian/student/ administrator/counselor for reinstatement 10 days out of school suspension – parent/guardian contact by letter/telephone
- Superintendent review
- Proceed to Level IV discipline

LEVEL IV

Examples of Level IV Offenses:

- Physical assault on a staff member
- Violation of Weapons Policy
- Inciting so as to cause a riot
- Causing false alarms (pulling the fire alarm or calling 911)
- Possession and/or use of explosive devices
- Terroristic threats
- Arson, bomb threats

Possible Level II Discipline:

- 10 days out of school suspension with possible recommendation to the Board of School Directors for expulsion.
- All violations of the Criminal Code will be referred to the appropriate authorities.

Dress Code

At Wilkinsburg School District, we want every student to be comfortable, safe, and ready to fully participate in the school day. Students engage in a variety of learning experiences, including classroom instruction, carpet time, physical education, recess, science investigations, art, music, and other hands-on activities. Clothing and footwear should allow students to move freely, play safely, and participate confidently in all instructional activities.

Students are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate for school and that does not interfere with learning or create a safety concern. Families are encouraged to consider the weather when selecting clothing and to send students dressed appropriately for outdoor recess whenever possible.

Clothing Expectations:

Clothing should provide appropriate coverage during typical school activities, including sitting on the carpet, bending, stretching, climbing, and playing at recess.

The following are not permitted:

- Clothing that is excessively revealing or does not provide appropriate coverage during normal school movement and activities.
- Open-weave or see-through garments that expose body parts typically covered by undergarments.
- Undergarments worn as outerwear or intentionally exposed.
- Tops that do not provide appropriate coverage of the torso during normal movement.
- Shorts, skirts, dresses, or pants that do not provide appropriate coverage while students are standing, seated, or participating in school activities.
- Pants or jeans with excessively large holes that expose undergarments or body parts that should remain covered.

Clothing With Messages:

Students may not wear clothing or accessories that:

- Are suggestive, obscene, vulgar, offensive, or defamatory.
- Denigrate or demean others based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected characteristics.
- Advertise or promote alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, drugs, weapons, or violence.

Footwear:

For safety and participation in recess, physical education, and other school activities:

- Closed-toe shoes with a secure back are preferred and strongly recommended. Should families send children to school with sandals, it will be at their own risk.
- Athletic shoes (tennis shoes) are required for participation in physical education (gym class.)
- Shoes that present a safety hazard or prevent safe participation in school activities will not be permitted.

Additional Expectations:

- Hats and other head coverings may only be worn when approved for religious, medical, cultural, or school-sponsored purposes, or on designated spirit or special event days.
- Pajamas may only be worn on designated school spirit or special event days.
- Hoods must remain down while inside the school building unless otherwise approved.
- Headphones, earbuds, and smart wearable audio/video devices, including AI glasses, are not permitted during the school day unless authorized by a staff member for instructional purposes or approved accommodations.

School administrators may require a student to change clothing or footwear when attire:

- Creates a disruption to the educational environment;
- Presents a health or safety concern;
- Prevents the student from fully participating in school activities; or
- Does not meet the expectations outlined above.

Electronic Devices

The School Board prohibits the possession of personal electronic devices (such as cell phones, smart wearables, iPads, etc.) during the school day. Please refer to the [Electronic Devices Policy](#) for additional information. Phones must be turned in to your child's homeroom teacher at the beginning of each day.

Emergency Procedures

The safety of our students and staff is our highest priority. In accordance with Pennsylvania law, the Wilkinsburg School District conducts required fire drills and other emergency preparedness drills throughout the school year.

The District uses the ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) emergency response framework and the Standard Response Protocol (SRP) to prepare students and staff to respond effectively to a variety of emergencies. Age-appropriate training and practice drills are conducted throughout the year.

Because different emergencies require different responses, an alarm may not always result in an evacuation. Staff and students are trained to listen for instructions provided through the school's public address system and follow the announced response protocol.

If an evacuation is directed, students, staff, and visitors will exit the building calmly and in an orderly manner using designated routes and move to assigned assembly areas. Students will remain under staff supervision until school officials or emergency responders determine it is safe to return to the building or implement additional procedures.

English as Second Language

The English as a Second Language (ESL) program provides instruction to students with limited proficiency in speaking, listening to, reading, or writing English due to their status as immigrants, refugees, foreign exchange students, or American-born students from non-English-speaking homes. Families of students who may require the ESL Program should alert the principal when enrolling the student in school. The principal will refer the student for an evaluation, and if eligible, the student will be scheduled for services. At registration, each parent will complete a Home Language Survey to assist in the determination for eligibility. A special note about student participation in the district-sponsored ESL program for the Pennsylvania Department of Education website:

- The Pennsylvania State Board of Education regulations require school entities to adopt policies that permit families to have their children excused from specific instruction only in the limited circumstance described below: *The right to have their children excused from specific instruction that conflicts with their religious beliefs, upon receipt by the school entity of a written request from the families or guardians.*
- Consequently, a family may not seek to have his or her child excused from a LEA's ESL program unless the instruction conflicts with the family's religious beliefs.

Field Trips

Class trips and social events that take place outside of school facilities require approval by the Superintendent and the School Board. As voluntary participants in school social events and class trips, students shall be held responsible for compliance with district policies and rules. Infractions of those policies or rules will be subject to the same disciplinary measures applied during the regular school program. To participate in school field trips, the student must have written permission, and a working telephone number must be on file in the office. It is the parent/guardian's and student's responsibility to turn in the permission slip by the due date.

Health Services

The Wilkinsburg School District is committed to supporting the health and well-being of every student. A certified school nurse is available to provide first aid, manage student health needs, administer medications in accordance with [Board Policy 210](#), and coordinate required health screenings.

If a student becomes ill or is injured during the school day, they should report to the Health Office. Parents/guardians will be notified when appropriate. Families are responsible for ensuring that current emergency contact information is on file and for arranging prompt student pick-up when necessary.

Required Health Screenings

In accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Health regulations, the District conducts the following health screenings and examinations. Parents/guardians may choose to have these examinations completed by their own healthcare provider and submit the required documentation to the school nurse.

Screening	Grade(s)
Height and Weight	All Grades
Vision Screening	All Grades
Hearing Screening	Grades K–3
Physical Examination	Grades K, 1, and 6
Dental Examination	Grades K, 1, and 3

Medication at School

Whenever possible, medications should be administered at home outside of school hours. When medication must be given during the school day, the District will administer medication in accordance with [Board Policy 210](#).

Before medication may be administered at school:

- Written authorization from the student's parent/guardian and licensed prescriber is required each school year.
- Medication must be delivered to the Health Office by a parent/guardian or other responsible adult in its original, properly labeled container.
- Prescription and over-the-counter medications will be stored and administered by the certified school nurse or other authorized licensed personnel.
- Students may not carry or transport medication unless specifically authorized by law and District policy (such as approved emergency medications).
- Parents/guardians who believe their child needs to carry or self-administer an emergency medication, such as an asthma inhaler, epinephrine auto-injector, or other approved medication, should contact the school nurse before the start of the school year to complete the required documentation.

Physical Education Excuses

Students are expected to participate in physical education unless a licensed healthcare provider submits written documentation specifying the medical restriction and its duration. Students who are excused from physical education for an extended period may be assigned alternative activities to meet state physical education requirements.

Homeless Students **McKinney-Vento Act**

In accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110), all homeless children will have complete access to all education programs without discrimination or delays in services.

If your family is experiencing housing instability or for further information on policies regarding the McKinney-Vento Act and services for homeless youth, please contact:

Alyxandra Strotman @ 412-871-2100 ext 2197
Strotmana@wilkinsburgschools.org

OR

Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 5th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126
(717) 772-2006 or (800) 770-4822
www.pde.state.pa.us/svcs.students

Kindergarten/Pre-K

Children who reach the age of five **on or before September 1st** are eligible to enter **kindergarten** in September of that school year. Families are encouraged to notify the school of their child's eligibility for the kindergarten program. A birth certificate or passport and evidence of basic immunization must be presented before a child's entrance to school. New entrants to kindergarten must be enrolled prior to the end of the first two weeks of school, and transfer students are accepted.

The enrollment process for new Kindergarten students begins in the spring of the preceding school year and involves a screening process and parent information sessions in the spring. Information about these can be found on the District website or by contacting the school office.

Children who reach the age of three **on or before September 1st** are eligible for our **Pre-K** Counts program. Families are encouraged to register their child as soon as possible, as slots fill quickly. A waiting list will be created if needed.

Local Daycare Options

These are local options only, not recommendations or endorsements by the school district.

- **Two Hands Are Better Than One:** 325 S Trenton Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15221 ~ 412/ 247-5350
- **Dottie's Place 24 Hour Christian:** 1128 Ross Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15221 ~ 412/241-3335
- **First Years:** 925 Franklin Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15221 ~ 412/247-9644
- **Each One Teach One:** 500 Ardmore Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15221~412/543-3111
- **Hosanna House:** 807 Wallace Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15221 ~ 412/243-7711

Lost and Found

All articles that are found at school are taken to a depository in the building where they may be claimed. At designated times during the school year, unclaimed items will be donated to charity. Items not claimed will be disposed of or donated. It is strongly recommended that families clearly mark all items students bring to school.

Home/School Communication

Wilkinsburg School District believes that strong partnerships between families and schools are essential to student success. We are committed to providing timely, consistent, and meaningful communication to keep families informed and engaged in their child's education.

Families can stay connected through the following communication channels:

- **Email:** Teachers and staff use email to communicate about classroom activities, student progress, and school events. The District also sends monthly newsletters and other important updates via email.
- **Phone Calls and Voicemail:** Families are encouraged to contact teachers by phone or leave a voicemail when needed. The District and building administrators use automated phone calls, text messages (when available), and email to communicate important announcements, reminders, and emergency information.
- **Thursday Folders:** Elementary students bring home a Thursday Folder each week containing important school and district communications, forms, and student work.
- **District Website:** The District website provides current information about school programs, calendars, events, Board meetings, and announcements. School delays, closures, emergency updates, and other time-sensitive information will also be posted on the website.

We encourage families to ensure that the school has current phone numbers, email addresses, and emergency contact information so they receive all District communications in a timely manner.

PBIS

Wilkinsburg School District is a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) district. We look forward to another year of implementing our district-wide proactive

behavior support system, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. It is well known that schools are successful when they help children grow academically, socially, and emotionally. For this to happen, it is imperative that we have a safe environment that is supportive and conducive to growth.

By setting forth clear social and behavioral expectations, it is our goal as the Wilkinsburg School District to teach children REPLACEMENT BEHAVIORS, or what they need to do instead, so that all children can work in a school environment that is safe, fun, free from distraction, and allows children to reach their maximum learning potential.

The district has adopted three district-wide discipline expectations for both Kelly Primary and Turner Intermediate School that address the entire school, the classroom, and areas outside the classroom, such as hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, and offices. For Turner, they are: **Respect, Ownership, Attitude, Responsibility, and Safety**. For Kelly Primary, they are: **Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Ready**. These behavioral expectations will be taught to all students in the building during the first week of school.

Photographs/ Videos Of Students

The instructional staff and audiovisual department photographs and records videos of numerous school activities throughout the school year. Families who do not wish to have their child photographed or videotaped should notify the principal annually in writing of this request.

Policies

For copies of the School District Policies, please visit the School Board link at [School Board Policies](#)

Retention Process

If the student is failing to make expected progress, the parents/guardians will be notified of concerns early, so that the school and home may cooperate in helping him/her achieve greater success.

When a teacher begins to have a concern regarding whether a particular student may need to be retained, the teacher's concerns will be addressed through MTSS (Multi-Tiered Support System). In collaboration with the building principal, the teacher will utilize the MTSS process in attempting to help a student who is not progressing at a normal pace, and in making decisions whether the retention process should be considered. The teacher will discuss **possible** retention with the school principal prior to discussion with the parent.

Teachers and staff will meet, review data, and have discussions after the teacher has completed any necessary paperwork. The team will provide strategies and support for

the student. The retention paperwork process begins at the end of the 2nd Grading Quarter. The decision to retain a particular student will be made as a last resort when all other interventions have been unsuccessful.

Safe2Say Something

Safe2Say Something is a service provided by the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General that is intended to save lives and prevent violence in the school environment. It permits students, families, teachers, administrators, and Wilkinsburg citizens to anonymously report safety concerns that are routed to a command center and shared with district central administration, building administration, and the Wilkinsburg Police Department. Reports may be made by:

- Phone: 1-844-SAF2SAY (1-844-732-2729)
- Safe2Say Something Mobile app
- Online at www.safe2saypa.org

When reports are received, school personnel work together with the proper agencies to investigate and address the concern. These agencies also have the ability to communicate with the individual who submitted the tip through the Safe2Say Something program should there be a need for more information.

Special Education

Teachers and staff are required to adhere to all state and federal requirements under Chapter 14/Special Education Services, Chapter 15/ADA/Section 504, and Chapter 16/Special Education for Gifted Students. It is the responsibility of the Wilkinsburg School District to provide all students with a Free Appropriate Public Education/F.A.P.E.

Individual Education Plans/IEP

When a student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), this means the student has been evaluated by a certified school psychologist and has met the eligibility criteria for a disability and the need for specially designed instruction. Special Education is a service, NOT a placement. The student will be assigned a Case Manager/Special Education Teacher to ensure the IEP is being followed in accordance with state and federal guidelines. The IEP is a legal document that must be followed by all staff (i.e. regular education and learning support teachers, speech and language therapists), teachers of “specials” (i.e. music, art, physical education, etc.), paraeducators, related services staff, etc.

An IEP meeting is required by law on an annual basis. However, the district or the parent may request at any time during the school year an IEP meeting. Issues may be addressed and changes to the IEP may occur at that time as long as the team is in agreement. The child’s parent, Special Education teacher, regular education teacher, the school district’s designated Local Education Agent (LEA), and the student, when appropriate, are required to attend the IEP meeting. The individual who serves as the

LEA can be the Building Principal, Director of Special Education or Superintendent's designee.

A Positive Behavior Support Plan/PBSP is included in the IEP for any student who demonstrates a need to address behaviors of concern. Positive Behavior Support Plans are part of the child's IEP and must be followed by all teachers and staff to ensure students are being supported appropriately.

Special education teachers and regular education teachers must communicate frequently about every student who is placed on the special education teacher's roster. Academic progress must be documented in the student's IEP at least quarterly and sent home to the parent/guardian. It is the responsibility of the special education teachers to meet with regular education teachers and staff, including related service providers, to review the IEP so all goals and intervention strategies are understood. Once the IEP has been reviewed with the regular education teachers, the regular education teachers are required to sign a form indicating that the IEP was reviewed with them and they understood what they need to do to fulfill the requirements to implement the IEP. Also, if the student is not meeting his/her benchmarks on his/her IEP or the student is not making progress on his/her IEP goals, it is the responsibility of the teachers to communicate regarding these issues. The special education teacher must coordinate and schedule an IEP meeting to discuss the concerns. All meetings to discuss a student's IEP must include the parent and/or guardian and LEA. No changes to an IEP are allowed to be made without the consent of the parent/ guardian and LEA.

ALL staff are required by Federal Law under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (20 U.S.C 1414 (d) in part B of IDEA and 300.340-350), the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and Pennsylvania State Law under the Pennsylvania School Code of Chapter 14 to implement the requirements and sections of the IEP that are their responsibility and to provide every student with an opportunity to achieve success. IEP's (legal documents) and the rights of students with disabilities are monitored through the United States Department of Education Family Policy Compliance to ensure the implementation of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), the United States Department of Education/Special Education Division and Pennsylvania Department of Education/Bureau of Special Education.

Gifted Individual Education Plans

A Gifted Individual Education Plan (GIEP) is a legal document that teachers must implement under Pennsylvania School Code Chapter 16/Gifted Education. Students who have GIEPs have been evaluated by a certified school psychologist and determined to be "gifted" requiring "specially designed instruction." Chapter 16 places the responsibility for educating students who are mentally gifted on school districts, including ensuring that gifted education for each gifted student is based on the unique needs of the student, not solely on the student's classification. (22 Pa. Code §16.2(d)(2))

GIEPs are developed and implemented by the GIEP Team which includes, but is not limited to: the School Psychologist, the Gifted Teacher, regular education teacher(s),

guidance counselor, LEA, parent, and student. The gifted teacher is responsible for communicating and working with the regular education staff to ensure that GIEPs are being implemented appropriately. If a student with a GIEP is not meeting the benchmarks outlined in his/her goals and objectives, it is the responsibility of the gifted teacher to coordinate and schedule a GIEP meeting to address the concerns.

GIEP meetings are held annually unless there is a need during the school year to reopen the GIEP to address any issues and/or concerns.

504 Plans/Service Agreements

A student that does not qualify for special education services under IDEA (an educational law) still may qualify for services under Section 504 (a civil rights law) if the disability is shown to substantially limit major life activity, such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working. Accommodations often refer to building accessibility, classroom adjustments and curriculum modifications and may be updated or revised as the need changes.

34 CFR § 104.3 (j) defines a handicapped person with rights under the Rehabilitation Act as any person who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities
- Has a record of such an impairment
- Is regarded as having such an impairment

Examples of disabilities under Section 504 include:

- Student has cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, migraines, severe allergies or asthma; the student is allowed to obtain treatment or medication, as needed
- Student uses a wheelchair; student is permitted to leave classes early to avoid hall traffic
- Student is under a doctor's care for depression or anxiety, frequent behavioral problems, ADHD; the student is given additional time for completing assignments and allowed to sit in the front of the classroom.

All teachers are required by Federal Law under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Pennsylvania School Code of Chapter 15 to implement all accommodations listed as part of a student's 504 Service Plan.

Special Education Referral Process

Initial Evaluation Request Procedure – School Age

Please contact the School Psychologist if you have a concern that your child needs additional support in school. This could include concerns with:

- Physical challenges

- Medical conditions
- Gifted/Talented
- Hearing/Vision
- Attention/focus
- Speech/Language needs
- Learning difficulties
- Behavior

A team will meet to discuss your child's needs and determine whether further assessment is necessary or if your child's needs could be met through targeted interventions in their classroom.

The Special Education Office number is 412-871-2114.

Standards-Based Grading (SBG)

Standards-Based Grading is an approach in education that focuses on learning and helps increase achievement. It is often combined with updated instructional practices and culture to better engage students and foster a positive environment.

In SBG, grading is based on demonstration of mastery. Students attempt standards-aligned activities (projects, worksheets, quizzes, essays, presentations, etc.). Teachers assess the student output and the appropriate mastery level that was demonstrated.

Typical scale ranges include multiple descriptive criteria and reflect students' increasing skill. The table below shows the Standards-Based Grading criteria.

REPORTING CRITERIA
E: Exceeds the Standard: The student exceeds proficiency in essential skills and concepts by demonstrating in-depth, higher-level application. Only for specific ELA and Math as indicated by an *.
M: Meeting the Standard: The student demonstrates proficiency in essential skills and concepts. Performance is characterized by the

ability to apply this knowledge with accuracy, independence and quality.

P: Progress Toward the Standard: The student is developing an understanding of essential skills and concepts, but has not yet met the standard. Performance is characterized by varied consistency, independence, and quality.

N: Not Meeting the Standard: The student has not yet begun to demonstrate an understanding of essential skills and concepts. The student is making minimal progress towards meeting the standard at this time. Considerable teacher support and guidance is needed.

Standardized Assessments

At the elementary level, standardized tests are utilized to help benchmark student progress and provide information to teachers to aid in instruction. Acadience testing is used for these purposes. Families receive information about their child's assessment results at the end of the school year. The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is administered to all third, fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade students in reading and math. Grade 5 students are also assessed in Science. These tests are mandated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. A testing calendar can be found on the district website.

Student Records

There are student record files for each child in each school's main office. This information is only shared on a "need-to-know" basis due to FERPA and HIPAA regulations. The "medical records file" is housed with the school nurse in the building where the child attends. The school nurse lets the teachers of students know any medical information only when necessary. Student files contain a copy of the birth certificate, parent/guardian photo identification, proof of residence, and information relative to grades, standardized testing, attendance, and discipline.

Each time a student's address changes, a parent or guardian must present a copy of a bill, in their name, to the school secretary at the child's building. **Please continue to provide the school secretaries with parents' updated contact information in case of an emergency.**

Student Support Services

Crisis Prevention Intervention

In each building, teams of professional school personnel are trained and available to provide short-term counseling and support to students, families, and school staff in the event of a crisis.

Health Services

The Health Office maintains emergency information for each student. A certified school nurse or first aid certified adult is available to address student medical needs.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

Wilkinsburg's Student Assistance Program is designed to assist parents and school personnel in identifying issues that pose a barrier to a student's learning and school success. Some of these issues may include family stress, learning problems, drug & alcohol use, emotional and mental health problems, and other personal issues.

Participation is voluntary with parental permission.

Student Assistance is not a treatment program; rather, it is a systematic process using effective and accountable professional techniques to mobilize school resources to remove the barriers to learning. When the problem is beyond the scope of the school, SAP assists the parent and the student with information so they may access services within the community. The Student Assistance Team members do not diagnose, treat or refer for treatment, but they may refer for an assessment for treatment. It is the parent's right to be involved in the process and to review all school records under applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Parental involvement in all phases of the Student Assistance Program underscores the parent's role and responsibility in the decision-making process affecting the child's education and is the key to successful resolution of the problems.

The steps of the process are as follows:

Concerned Parent/Guardian or Staff Member

- Refers students to the Student Assistance Program Coordinator.
- SAP Coordinator discusses concerns with parents/guardians and explains the SAP process.

Information Gathering

- SAP Coordinator gathers information from the student's school records, current teachers, and any school personnel who have contact with the student.
- Core team members interview students.

Recommendations

- SAP Core Team reviews students' records, interview summary, parent/guardian interview summary, teacher summaries, and any other pertinent information and data.

- SAP Core Team creates a plan of action that may include both in-school and community services.

Conclusion/Follow-Up

- Parent/Guardian meets with the SAP Coordinator to review the student's information and plan of action.
- Appropriate in-school and community services are discussed and put into action.
- Follow-up contact/communication will be ongoing with the parent/guardian to determine the success of the plan, and to assess whether the plan can be continued or altered.

Conclusion/Follow-Up

- All SAP student files are kept with the SAP Coordinator and are not a part of the student's permanent record file.
- Student SAP information can only be released to community agencies with parent permission.
- Student SAP information will be on a "need to know basis" for school staff. This will be determined by the child's parent/guardian and the SAP coordinator.

Telephones

Students are permitted to use the telephones in the school's main office in case of emergency, and as deemed necessary by the staff and administration. Students will not be called to the phone unless an emergency exists. In case of emergency, messages will be delivered to the student by the office staff.

Valuables

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money, personal devices (laptops, iPads, cell phones, etc.), cameras, jewelry, or valuables to school. Students are responsible for their personal property. The school cannot be held responsible for losses when these recommendations are not followed.

Visitors

All visitors to Kelly Primary and Turner Intermediate Schools must report to the security desk, present a photo ID, and sign the visitor's book. Permission of the principal must be obtained in advance before a visitor may be present in the classroom. Visitors must wear and have visible, their visitor's pass throughout their time in the building.

Weather Related Delays and Cancellations

Wilkinsburg School District reports all weather-related delays and cancellations on WTAE (1250 AM) and KDKA (1020 AM) radio stations, as well as WTAE, KDKA, and

WPXI television stations. Additionally, students and parents **may receive school information, including weather-related delays and cancellations, by receiving an automated message.** This will provide immediate information regarding delays and cancellations; therefore, **it is imperative to provide the building secretary with current phone numbers at all times.**