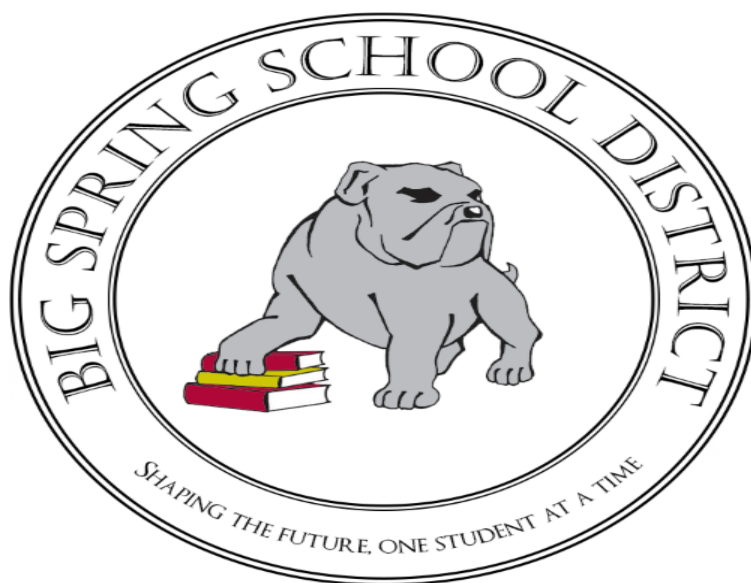


# **Big Spring Middle School**

43 Mount Rock Road  
Newville, PA 17241

## **2026-2027 STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK**



**Mrs. Clarissa Nace - Principal**  
**Mr. Bradly Fry - Assistant Principal**

Middle School Phone Number: 717-776-2471  
Middle School Fax: 717-776-2468

**The following is the listing of middle school office personnel and contact information:**

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Principal

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6th, 7th and 8th Grade School Counselor

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School Nurse

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Administrative Assistant to the Assistant Principal

Mrs. Cynthia Kanc  
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Administrative Assistant to the School Counselors

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## GENERAL RULES

1. All students are responsible for following board policies and school rules and regulations while on the bus, during school hours, and while attending school functions.
2. Students who travel on the bus will exit the bus, enter the building, and report to homeroom at 7:25 am.
3. Students will enter the building via the front door.
4. Each student has a specific schedule stating where they are expected to be each period of the day. The only deviation from this schedule is when a student is signed out in E-Hall Pass.
5. No sales transactions are permitted on school property except those approved by the principal.
6. Objects that do not contribute to classroom instruction or that cause disruptions in the school building are not permitted. These objects include but are not limited to, the following: cigarette lighters, laser pens, skateboards, noisemakers, stuffed animals, and water pistols.
7. Chewing gum is a privilege left to the discretion of the classroom teacher. Students who abuse this privilege are subject to discipline.
8. Public displays of affection are not appropriate for school.
9. Students may use backpacks for transporting school materials to and from school, as well as during the school day. The use of a backpack during the day is a privilege that can be revoked if abused.
  - \*Students are encouraged not to bring valuables to school. Students should not use or touch other students' personal belongings.
10. If students are not present in school on a particular day, they are not permitted to attend activities after school (i.e., dances, sporting events) that day. (see page 18 for extra-curricular activities)
11. Students are expected to utilize the transportation provided to and from school by the District unless the family has arranged for an alternative mode. Students staying for after-school activities which may involve walking to another facility on campus should do so utilizing sidewalks and crosswalks.
12. Students may only use school-issued Chromebooks throughout the school day.

## BUILDING REGULATIONS

Students may not enter the building before 7:15 a.m. Students should not be dropped off before 7:15 am. Students must remain in the commons until 7:25 a.m. At 7:25 a.m., students will be dismissed to their lockers and/or homerooms. No student is allowed in the classroom section of the building or lockers after 2:55 p.m. unless the student is required to be in the building for a school activity or program and is supervised by a staff member.

Students are not permitted to loiter after school. Students not participating in an after-school activity must leave the property by 3:00 p.m.

## THE MIDDLE SCHOOL OFFICE

The personnel in the middle school office are available to assist students. The middle school office is open from 7:15 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

## THERAPY DOG

Big Spring Middle School is lucky enough to have the service of a certified therapy dog. If a student has severe allergies/fear of dogs, please reference the middle school webpage for further information.

## VISITORS

The Big Spring School District welcomes parents, community members, and visitors into our buildings to observe or participate in a wide variety of educational experiences. We believe that student and staff safety is of the utmost importance. For students and staff to thrive they must feel secure in their environment. Each building is required to have parents, family members, and/or visitors show a form of identification before being issued a visitor badge. For safety purposes, all visitors must buzz the office and state the purpose of entry. For certain events that are held during the school day, we will be asking that guests RSVP so that badges can be made ahead of time.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students are advised to refrain from bringing personal property or excessive amounts of money to school. When possible, checks should be used to pay for school obligations.

## PHONE USAGE

The principal, assistant principal, or secretary must permit students to use the office telephone.

## CELL PHONE USE (*and other personal electronic devices*)

Cell phone use is strictly prohibited during the school day. **Cellular phones must be turned off and stored in either a backpack or locker during the school day (7:15 AM - 2:45 PM). They are not to be visible at all during the school day.** This policy includes all personal electronic devices (tablets, gaming devices, etc.) as well as AirPods and any other listening device. Watches that have the capability to receive text messages may be worn but they **are not** allowed to be used for texting during the school day. Cell phone use on field trips will be handled on an individual basis. All violations of this policy will result in the following:

- 1st Offense - Warning
- 2nd Offense - Lunch Detention
- 3rd Offense - 1 Hour After School Detention
- 4th offense - 2 Hour After School Detention
- 5th Offense and beyond - ISS

**Please Note:** Parents and/or family members should not call/text students during the school day as it is a temptation to the student to respond, thereby violating the school's usage policy and more importantly, it can disrupt the learning environment. If a parent needs to contact a student with an emergency situation, the contact should be done through the office (717-776-2471).

*\*Students will be permitted to use the phone in the office if there is a personal need to call a family member.*

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS/SAFETY PROCEDURES**

The district has an automated calling system in place. This system will be used for closing, delays, early dismissals, and other messages when deemed necessary.

During the first week of school, every teacher will explain emergency safety procedures. During the fire drill, students must follow the instructions of their teacher, and move quickly and quietly to exit the building but should not run. In the event of any other emergency, students should remain quiet and follow the directions of their teacher or an administrator.

## **CUSTODY SITUATIONS**

If there is a custody situation that dictates or restricts parent/guardian access to the school in ANY way, please furnish a copy of that updated stipulation to the school. The school can and will only act following the most up-to-date paperwork that has been provided for the student's file. If custody papers are not provided, the student will be released to either parent.

## **PARENT MEETINGS**

Parents should email teachers directly to schedule a meeting. Parents may call the office to leave a message for a teacher regarding scheduling a parent meeting.

## **CAFETERIA/PRICES**

Students will go to the cafeteria as scheduled and follow these guidelines:

1. Students will not take open containers of food outside of the cafeteria.
2. Students will remain in the cafeteria until dismissed or given permission to leave by the staff.
3. Students who behave inappropriately in the cafeteria will be assigned a consequence.

**Prices for the 2026 – 2027 school year:**

|           |        |
|-----------|--------|
| Breakfast | free   |
| Lunch     | \$3.00 |

a la carte items are marked with the price  
The district uses the Mosaic Point of Sale system to account for meal purchases. With mySchoolBucks, parents can register for an account and view information. Please visit <http://www.myschoolbucks.com>.  
If you have any questions, please contact Shelli Kent, at 717-776-2423.

## REMOTE LEARNING

Situations may arise where students will be granted the option of remote learning by the administration. When participating remotely, students are expected to take full advantage of their learning opportunities, just as they would if they were in the classroom. When using the school's technology and platforms, all students will be expected to adhere to the expectations outlined below. Students should check the Middle School webpage for further instruction.

1. Daily Routine – When granted a remote learning option, students will still follow their daily schedule. It is important that the student regularly checks their email and responds to those emails promptly. On occasion, a student may be required to meet online with a staff member. It is expected that the student will attend those online meetings when requested. A student may also request an online meeting with a staff member. To do so, the student should send an email to the staff member and coordinate a time to meet.
2. Class Meetings – Each student's device camera will be turned on unless otherwise noted by the classroom teacher. Microphones should be muted when there are distractions in the student's learning environment. All students are expected to engage in class discussions just as if the class was meeting in person. Students who do not attend an online meeting will be marked absent and will be reported as unexcused unless an appropriate excuse is provided to the school within three school days.
3. Due Dates – It is the student's responsibility to adhere to the due dates for assignments established for each class. Students have three days to turn in assignments prior to impacting their attendance.
4. School Rules – Just as if the student were in the classroom, school rules apply. This includes dress code, use of technology, harassment through digital media, and use of appropriate communication skills (i.e. misuse of chat feature). Failure to comply with school rules will result in appropriate discipline as outlined in other sections of this handbook. Abuse of the school's technology could result in the restricted use of that technology.

## SCHOOL BOOKS, SUPPLIES, ETC.

School-owned materials may be provided to students throughout the school year. It is the responsibility of the student to care for and protect such articles. If they are lost, stolen, or damaged, the student will be required to pay the current retail catalog price.

## E-HALL PASS

All students will have access to the E-Hall pass system. This system will be used anytime a student needs to sign out of their assigned classroom.

For more information on the E-Hall pass system, please contact the middle school office.

Students are required to have validated hall passes when they are in the hallways during class periods.

## **DRINKS & SNACKS**

Snacks during the school day are allowed at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Drinks are allowed as long as they have a lid that can be closed to prevent spills in the classroom. Students are encouraged to bring in water bottles as refill stations are available throughout the school.

## **CLUBS**

Big Spring Middle School is proud to offer an abundance of club opportunities for our students. Clubs occur every Thursday morning, and students have the opportunity to choose what clubs they would like to be involved in.

## **HOMEWORK FOR AN ABSENT STUDENT**

When requesting homework for an absent student, parents should allow a full working day for the teacher to organize assignments. Parents are encouraged to email teachers and check Google Classroom, and teacher pages on the Middle School website. Students can also email teachers for assignments.

## **LOCKERS & LOCKS**

Lockers will be assigned to students at the beginning of the school year. Any students requiring assistance with their locker should contact their homeroom teacher. It is highly recommended that lockers remain locked at all times. If a student chooses not to use a lock, the school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Locks are available to every student by filling out a Google form that is on the Big Spring Middle School website. Once the form is filled out, the lock may be picked up in the school counseling office. School district locks not returned at the end of the year will result in a \$5 fee. If students wish to put a personal lock on their locker, that is allowed with the understanding that the lock may be cut off if needed.

Lockers are the property of the Big Spring School District and can be searched at any time for any reason with no qualifications or exceptions.

## **BIG SPRING MIDDLE SCHOOL NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

NJHS is more than an honor roll. The NJHS chapter establishes rules of membership that are based on a student's outstanding performance in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership, citizenship, and character. Students who achieve a 4.0 as the final average of the four content areas (Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies) at the end of their sixth or seventh-grade year are eligible candidates. Following the induction ceremony, students must subsequently maintain a 90% average of the four content areas each marking period they are a member of NJHS. Candidates must submit an NJHS application to the advisor for membership selection. Scholastic eligibility alone does not guarantee acceptance to the NJHS. Only seventh and eighth-grade students are eligible for NJHS.

Upon selection for membership to NJHS, the student must adhere to all rules and regulations outlined in both the BSMS NJHS Chapter Bylaws and the NJHS National Constitution.

## **REGULAR BELL SCHEDULE**

| SCHEDULE ITEM                              | TIMEFRAME                                      | LENGTH     |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Doors Open                                 | 7:15 AM                                        |            |
| Commons Time                               | 7:15 AM - 7:25 AM                              | 10 minutes |
| Homeroom<br>Breakfast<br>Announcements     | 7:25 AM - 7:35 AM<br><b>7:35 AM: Late Bell</b> | 10 minutes |
| AM WIN                                     | 7:35 AM - 7:50 AM                              | 15 minutes |
| Period #1                                  | 7:53 AM - 8:43 AM                              | 50 minutes |
| Period #2                                  | 8:46 AM - 9:36 AM                              | 50 minutes |
| Period #3                                  | 9:39 AM - 10:29 AM                             | 50 minutes |
| Period #4                                  | 10:32 AM - 11:22 AM                            | 50 minutes |
| WIN A                                      | 11:25 AM - 11:55 AM                            | 30 minutes |
| WIN B                                      | 11:58 AM - 12:28 PM                            | 30 minutes |
| WIN C                                      | 12:31 PM - 1:01 PM                             | 30 minutes |
| Period #5                                  | 1:04 PM - 1:54 PM                              | 50 minutes |
| Period #6                                  | 1:56 PM - 2:45 PM                              | 49 minutes |
| <b>Dismissal from<br/>6th Period Class</b> | <b>2:45 PM</b>                                 |            |

### THURSDAY CLUB SCHEDULE

| SCHEDULE ITEM                                             | TIMEFRAME                                      | LENGTH     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Doors Open                                                | 7:15 AM                                        |            |
| Commons Time                                              | 7:15 AM - 7:25 AM                              | 10 minutes |
| Homeroom<br>Breakfast<br>Announcements                    | 7:25 AM - 7:40 AM<br><b>7:35 AM: Late Bell</b> | 15 minutes |
| Club Time<br>(2x/month)<br>Student Supports<br>(2x/month) | 7:40 AM - 8:30 AM                              | 50 minutes |
| Period #1                                                 | 8:33 AM - 9:16 AM                              | 43 minutes |
| Period #2                                                 | 9:19 AM - 10:02 AM                             | 43 minutes |
| Period #3                                                 | 10:05 AM - 10:48 AM                            | 43 minutes |
| Period #4                                                 | 10:51 AM - 11:34 AM                            | 43 minutes |
| WIN A                                                     | 11:37 AM - 12:07 PM                            | 30 minutes |
| WIN B                                                     | 12:10 PM - 12:40 PM                            | 30 minutes |
| WIN C                                                     | 12:43 PM - 1:13 PM                             | 30 minutes |
| Period #5                                                 | 1:16 PM - 1:59 PM                              | 43 minutes |
| Period #6                                                 | 2:02 PM - 2:45 PM                              | 43 minutes |
| <b>Dismissal from<br/>6th Period Class</b>                | <b>2:45 PM</b>                                 |            |

## 2-HOUR DELAY SCHEDULE

| SCHEDULE ITEM                              | TIMEFRAME                                      | LENGTH     |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Doors Open                                 | 9:15 AM                                        |            |
| Commons Time                               | 9:15 AM - 9:25 AM                              | 10 minutes |
| Homeroom<br>Breakfast<br>Announcements     | 9:25 AM - 9:45 AM<br><b>9:35 AM: Late Bell</b> | 20 minutes |
| Period #1                                  | 9:45 AM - 10:16 AM                             | 31 minutes |
| Period #2                                  | 10:19 AM - 10:50 AM                            | 31 minutes |
| Period #3                                  | 10:53 AM - 11:24 AM                            | 31 minutes |
| Period #4                                  | 11:27 AM - 11:58 AM                            | 31 minutes |
| WIN A                                      | 12:01 PM - 12:31 PM                            | 30 minutes |
| WIN B                                      | 12:34 PM - 1:04 PM                             | 30 minutes |
| WIN C                                      | 1:07 PM - 1:37 PM                              | 30 minutes |
| Period #5                                  | 1:40 PM - 2:11 PM                              | 31 minutes |
| Period #6                                  | 2:14 PM - 2:45 PM                              | 31 minutes |
| <b>Dismissal from<br/>6th Period Class</b> | <b>2:45 PM</b>                                 |            |

## EARLY RELEASE SCHEDULE

| SCHEDULE ITEM                              | TIMEFRAME                                      | LENGTH     |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Doors Open                                 | 7:15 AM                                        |            |
| Commons Time                               | 7:15 AM - 7:25 AM                              | 10 minutes |
| Homeroom<br>Breakfast<br>Announcements     | 7:25 AM - 7:45 AM<br><b>7:35 AM: Late Bell</b> | 20 minutes |
| Period #1                                  | 7:45 AM - 8:15 AM                              | 30 minutes |
| Period #2                                  | 8:17 AM - 8:47 AM                              | 30 minutes |
| Period #3                                  | 8:49 AM - 9:19 AM                              | 30 minutes |
| Period #4                                  | 9:21 AM - 9:51 AM                              | 30 minutes |
| Period #5                                  | 9:53 AM - 10:23 AM                             | 30 minutes |
| WIN A                                      | 10:25 AM - 10:55 AM                            | 30 minutes |
| WIN B                                      | 10:57 AM - 11:27 AM                            | 30 minutes |
| WIN C                                      | 11:29 AM - 11:59 AM                            | 30 minutes |
| Period #6                                  | 12:02 PM - 12:32 PM                            | 30 minutes |
| <b>Dismissal from<br/>6th Period Class</b> | <b>12:32 PM</b>                                |            |

## BSMS Remote Learning Day Schedule

|                                                                   |                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Teacher Planning / Meetings                                       | 7:25 – 9:00 AM      |
| Period 1                                                          | 9:00 – 9:15 AM      |
| Period 2                                                          | 9:20 – 9:35 AM      |
| Period 3                                                          | 9:40 – 9:55 AM      |
| Period 4                                                          | 10:00 – 10:15 AM    |
| Period 5                                                          | 10:20 – 10:35 AM    |
| Period 6                                                          | 10:40 – 10:55 PM    |
| Lunch                                                             | 11:00 – 11:30 AM    |
| Office Hours                                                      | 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM |
| Asynchronous Learning for Students<br>Teacher Planning / Meetings | 12:30 – 2:55 PM     |

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION ATTIRE

All students will be expected to wear safe, movement-friendly clothing. This clothing must allow you to sit, bend, crouch, run, jump, spin, roll, and even be upside down and remain covered and comfortable. Wear athletic footwear. Specific expectations for P.E. attire will be presented on the first day of P.E. by each Health and Physical Education Teacher.

**Physical Education Expectations:** Dressing for PE classes is imperative to ensure the successful completion of the course. All students who forget their clothing will be allowed to use clean clothing of the appropriate size provided by the physical education department to satisfy their academic obligation.

There will be an option for parents to purchase a uniform if interested. Please visit the Middle School Webpage for more information. \* If a student does not have safe and movement-friendly clothing:

| *Student accepts the clothing offered |                                                                           | *Student refuses the clothing offered |                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1st time                              | Communication with parents. The student participates and loses no points. | 1st time                              | Warning, communication with parents, alternate written assignment.                                                     |
| Any time after that                   | Students participate but can only earn up to 80% of their daily points.   | 2nd time                              | Communication with parents, and alternate assignment - can only earn up to 50% of their total points.                  |
|                                       |                                                                           | 3rd time                              | Lunch detention, communication with parents, and alternate assignment - can only earn up to 50% of their total points. |

## DRESS

Big Spring Middle School expects all students will dress in a way that is appropriate for the school day or for any school-sponsored event. Student dress choices should respect the District's intent to sustain a community that is inclusive of a diverse range of identities. The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s). The school district is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size. Any restrictions to the way a student dresses must be necessary to support the overall educational goals of the school and must be explained within this dress code.

**1. Basic Principle:** Certain body parts must be covered for all students at all times.

Clothes must be worn in a way such that private body parts are fully covered with opaque fabric. The bottom of the shirt/tops must be at minimum touching the top of the bottoms the whole way around the body when standing. All items listed in the “must wear” and “may wear” categories below must meet this basic principle.

**2. Students Must Wear** \*while following the basic principle of Section 1 above:

- A Shirt (with fabric in the front, back, and on the sides under the arms), AND
- Pants/jeans or the equivalent (for example, a skirt, sweatpants, leggings, a dress or shorts), AND
- Shoes.

*\*Courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, and job readiness) may include assignment-specific dress, but should not focus on covering bodies in a particular way or promoting culturally-specific attire. Activity-specific shoe requirements are permitted (for example, athletic shoes for PE).*

**3. Students May Wear**, as long as these items do not violate Section 1 above:

- Hats facing straight forward or straight backward. Hats must allow the face to be visible to staff, and not interfere with the line of sight of any student or staff member
- Religious headwear
- Fitted pants, including opaque leggings, yoga pants, and “skinny jeans”
- Ripped jeans, as long as underwear and buttocks are not exposed
- Tank tops, including spaghetti straps; halter tops
- Athletic attire

**4. Students Cannot Wear:**

- Violent language or images
- Images or language promoting drugs, alcohol, vaping, or paraphernalia (or any illegal item or activity)
- A bulletproof vest, body armor, tactical gear, or facsimile
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography

- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class or consistently marginalized groups
- Any clothing that reveals visible undergarments (visible waistbands and visible straps are allowed)
- Accessories that could be considered dangerous or could be used as a weapon
- Any item that obscures the face or ears (except as a religious observance)
- A hood

## 5. Dress Code Enforcement

To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, school staff shall enforce the dress code consistently using the requirements below. School administration and staff shall not have the discretion to vary the requirements in ways that lead to discriminatory enforcement.

- Students will only be removed from spaces, hallways, or classrooms as a result of a dress code violation as outlined in Sections 1 and 4 above. Students in violation of Sections 1 and/or 4 will be provided three (3) options to be dressed more to code during the school day:
  - Students will be asked to put on their alternative clothing, if already available at school, to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
  - Students will be provided with temporary school clothing to be dressed more to code for the remainder of the day.
  - If necessary, students' parents may be called during the school day to bring alternative clothing for the student to wear for the remainder of the day.
- No student should be affected by dress code enforcement because of racial identity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.

Teachers have the right to request that students wear attire appropriate for their class, which could restrict some items that may be worn in Section 3. Additionally, a teacher may ask a student to remove their hat. Failure to do so could be considered insubordination.

These dress code guidelines shall apply to regular school days and summer school days, as well as any school-related events and activities.

Students who feel they have been subject to discriminatory enforcement of the dress code should contact their counselor or school administration.

## SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES

School counselors are professional educators who have been specially trained to help students with both personal and academic problems. Middle school counselors are experienced in working cooperatively with students, parents, and teachers to create the best plan for success for each student according to his/her developmental needs. Counselors use brief individual counseling and small group counseling to maximize student growth. In meeting with students, counselors work to maintain an atmosphere of respect, privacy, and understanding of the unique needs and values of each student.

## **ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Student accident insurance is available to those students who wish to purchase it. Parents shall be responsible for filing student accident claims with the insurance company for all accidents. Complete 24-hour coverage is available. The insurance is administered by A-G Specialty Insurance LLC, which can be reached at (610) 933-0800. Co-op work experience students must subscribe to the insurance or show proof of other adequate coverage. Payments should be made by check or money order to A-G Specialty Insurance LLC. During the 2025-26 school year, the cost for 24-hour coverage is \$90.00 per student, and coverage during school hours is \$22.50 per student. Information can be found at [www.bigspringsd.org](http://www.bigspringsd.org) under the Parent section.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued electronically in Aspen and a paper copy is sent home at the end of each nine weeks to inform parents of students' progress after each marking period. Current student grades can be viewed in Aspen at any time.

## **HONOR ROLL**

- The honor roll system will consist of two levels – Distinguished Honors and Honors.
- A student on the Distinguished Honors level must have an A in all subjects (both core and non-core)
- A student on the Honors level must have a grade of B or above in all subjects (both core and non-core).

## **PERCENTAGE GRADE GUIDELINES**

Middle school teachers use the following percentage grading guidelines when assessing quizzes, tests, homework, class participation, projects, and other student work:

A = 90 – 100%      B = 80 – 89%      C = 70 – 79%      D = 60 – 69%      F = 59% and below

In all classes, predetermined weights are used to calculate marking period grades. If you have further questions, please connect with your child's teacher.

## **FINAL GRADES**

Final grades will be determined using the following guidelines:

In the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, the final grade for the year in a core subject is determined by adding the percentage of each marking period grade and dividing by four.

In the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades, final grades for the year are used to determine which core subjects are passed or failed. A student must achieve an average of a D (60%) or higher to pass a core subject.

## **HOMEWORK PROCEDURES**

### **Philosophy/Purpose**

The purpose of homework is to prepare students for assessments and to allow teachers to know the level of students' understanding of concepts.

### **Teacher Expectations**

Teachers will:

- communicate the point value for each homework assignment to the students.
- model homework concepts and give clear directions when homework is assigned to ensure student success.
- give some type of feedback to students on all homework assignments; feedback may and should be given in a variety of different forms and may not always include a grade in the teacher's grade book.
- use all homework assigned to support instruction.
- establish a system for absent students to acquire homework assignments.

### **Student Expectations**

Students will:

- complete all assigned work with accuracy and neatness.
- take home all necessary materials such as notebooks, textbooks, and Chromebook to complete assignments.
- ask for help if they do not understand the concepts or material.
- use class time wisely.
- use the system established by their teachers to obtain and complete missed work due to an absence.
- choose a peer and acquire his/her phone number in case they need to call for assistance.
- charge their Chromebook each school day.

### **Parent Expectations**

Homework assignments should not typically require parental involvement for completion. However, parents can and should support their children with the homework process.

Parents should:

- be aware that their child will have homework to be completed at home. Check Aspen to be aware of missing assignments.
- establish a homework routine to be used each night.
- provide a quiet and well-lit area to do homework.

- furnish basic school supplies (pens, pencils, paper, colored pencils, folders/binders, erasers). A specific supply list is listed on the Middle School Webpage. *If any family is unable to provide these items, please notify the school counseling office and ask for assistance.*
- support the return of homework daily.
- communicate with teachers if there are any questions or concerns. E-mail is suggested but phone calls are welcomed.

### Additional Homework Guidelines

Note the following guidelines:

- Students will be given one additional day to complete homework for each day of a short-term absence.
- A late homework assignment is handed in after it is due.

## **BAND AND CHORUS**

- **6th grade** - Students will be given a two-week grace period to add or drop band or chorus at the beginning of the school year.
- Students will be permitted to ADD band or chorus at the end of every quarter. Band and chorus teachers will advertise these deadlines. Parents must confirm these requests.
- **7th and 8th grade** - If a student is in band AND chorus, that student can drop band or chorus as requested by the student and parent, but cannot drop both.
- There will be no changes to band or chorus (adds or drops) once the school year starts, unless this is a fluid move as described above for grades 7 and 8 students.

## **DANCE RULES**

- All school rules and policies apply during dances.
- Attending dances is a privilege. Habitually negative behavior may result in the privilege being revoked.
- Habitually absent/tardy students may be denied dance privileges. Habitually unexcused absences between dances may result in dance privileges being revoked.
- No student will be admitted to the dance after one-half hour of its designated start without prior approval of the administration.
- Students must have transportation available in the parking lot after a dance. Any student who has to wait for an extended period for a ride may be denied future dance privileges.
- Dancing that mimics any type of sexual activity, or exhibits lewdness, excessive contact, or inappropriate actions are not permitted.
- **Students are expected to attend the entire dance and will not be permitted to leave early unless granted prior approval by administration.** Once students leave the dance, they will not be permitted to re-enter the dance. Prior approval by the administration is needed for parents to pick students up early. Parents may only pick up their child and may not transport other children without written permission from that child's parent.

- Students are expected to remain in the areas that are designated for students at the dance. Any students found outside these areas will be removed from the dance and may face disciplinary action.
- Students' attire should follow the school dress code and be of good taste as determined by school administrators.
- Students must be present at school the day of the dance to attend.

## **BUS TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES**

1. Riding the bus is a privilege that can be removed at any time for negative behavior.
2. Audio and video recording devices may be used on buses for monitoring safety and behavior.
3. Parents/guardians who wish to request permanent changes in student transportation other than to and from the student's home must complete the online Childcare/Bus Stop Change form. The online transportation change form must be submitted at least five (5) days in advance of any request for a student transportation change.
4. Babysitting and childcare providers must be located within the boundaries of the school in which the child is enrolled, and all babysitting and childcare providers must be located on an established bus route.
5. Student transportation arrangements in effect in the 2025 - 2026 school year, WILL be continued in the 2026 - 2027 school year unless the parent/guardian submits the Student Transportation Form to the Student Transportation Department.
6. Student transportation arrangements must remain the same Monday through Friday. The pick-up location must remain the same Monday through Friday. The drop-off location, even though it may be different from the pick-up location, must also remain the same for every day of the week. Parents/guardians do have the option of having the school bus deliver their child to a location different from the location from which the child was picked up; however, this location must remain the same for every day of the week.
7. Bus passes will be issued only in cases of emergencies or other extreme circumstances deemed valid by the administration. If a student is to be dropped off with another student, a note from a parent of each student must be submitted.
8. The Big Spring School District encompasses almost 200 square miles; therefore, it is not unusual to have various geographic areas of the school district affected differently by the weather. For this reason, when roads are impassable, as verified by the District's bus drivers, parents are permitted to have their children remain at home. Such absences will be designated as excused absences provided that the parents submit an excuse for absence for impassable roads just as they would do for any other type of absence.

## **BUS REGULATIONS**

1. Students are expected to obey all rules established by their bus driver.
2. Each pupil shall be assigned a regular seat in the bus.
3. Only assigned students shall ride on any bus.
4. Pupils shall be permitted to leave the bus only at their established stop.

5. Pupils riding school buses should be at their bus stop ready to board the bus prior to the scheduled arrival time. Habitual lateness could result in loss of riding privileges.
6. Generally, a student being excluded from a bus on a first offense will not be permitted to ride the bus for a period of three (3) days. He/she will be required to furnish his/her own transportation for this three-day period.
7. If a student is excluded a second time, it will be for an indefinite period. The student, the student's parents, a school administrator, and the bus driver will confer before a decision is made regarding restoration of bus privileges.
8. All school rules apply at the bus stop and on the bus.
9. Middle school students must board the bus at the middle school. Students are not permitted to walk to the high school to board the bus.

## **ACTIVITY BUS**

Only students with valid activity bus passes are permitted to ride the activity buses. Students involved in extra-curricular activities need to secure a valid activity pass from their coach/advisor and have it on their person to be permitted onto the activity bus.

The activity buses go along the following routes:

### **#3 (North Side of District)**

Leave Big Spring High School at 5:30 PM; Leave Big Spring Middle School at 5:35 PM; Right on School House Lane; Right to Carlisle/Newville Road (Route 641 East); Continue on Route 641 to McAllister Church Road; Left on McAllister Church Road; Right over Creek bridge on Burgners Road; Left on Old Mill Road; Right on Creek Road; Right on Bloserve Road; Left on Enola Road (Route 944); Right on Doubling Gap Road; Left on Roxbury Road (Route 997); Left on Whiskey Run Road at Little Washington; Left on Steelstown Road to Newville.

### **#9 (South Side of District)**

Leave Fitness Center at 5:30 PM; Leave Big Spring Middle School at 5:35 PM; Right on School House Lane; Left on Route 641 to traffic light; Left on Route 233 to Route 11; Left on Route 11 to Mt. Rock Road; Right on Mt. Rock Road to Church Road; Straight on Church Road to Lebo Road; Right on Lebo Road to Pine Road; Right on Pine Road to Route 233 and Keck's Store; Right on Route 233 to Walnut Bottom Road; Left on Walnut Bottom to Brookside Market and Firehouse Road; Right on Firehouse Road to Route 11; Right on Route 11 to Oakville Road; Left on Oakville Road through Oakville to Route 641; Right on Route 641 to Newville Borough.

## **TOKEN SYSTEM**

Positive behavior tokens will be used to recognize the desired student behaviors represented in the Bulldogs C.A.R.E. Matrix. Positive behavior tokens may also be awarded to students who are exemplifying the Global Citizen/Empathetic Advocate component of the Profile of a Graduate or are demonstrating growth in regarding a reoccurring behavioral challenge. The tokens will be awarded to students by BSMS teachers, staff, and administrators. Each month, students will have the opportunity to use the tokens to purchase merchandise or other rewards (Dawg Den, other privileges) during lunch. Students may choose to accumulate their tokens over several marking periods or even years to purchase larger items.

## BULLDOGS C.A.R.E.



# BIG SPRING MIDDLE SCHOOL *Bulldogs* C.A.R.E. Plan

🐾 Bulldogs C.A.R.E. — Commitment • Attitude • Respect • Excellence 🐾

**BULLDOGS C.A.R.E.**



**COMMITMENT**  
Commit to the process of growing yourself in school academically.



**ATTITUDE**  
Make positive contributions in support of our school community.



**RESPECT**  
Be "you" and be kind and accepting of others.



**EXCELLENCE**  
Learn and grow from every mistake and every experience.

BIG SPRING MIDDLE SCHOOL

C.A.R.E. Ticket

No. 1



STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CAUGHT BEING: \_\_\_\_\_

Why did this student earn the ticket? \_\_\_\_\_

*"Each act of care has the power to make our school a better place."*



**1**

**STEP 1**



Educate our students on the C.A.R.E. components.



**2**

**STEP 2**



Brand and speak the C.A.R.E. language with our students.



**3**

**STEP 3**



Recognize students with coins who model C.A.R.E. attributes and behaviors.



**4**

**STEP 4**



Recognize, weekly, a student to receive the C.A.R.E. Ticket.



**5**

**STEP 5**



Recognize students each semester who accumulated the most C.A.R.E. tickets.



🐾 *Shaping the future, one student at a time.* 🐾



# Bulldogs C.A.R.E.!

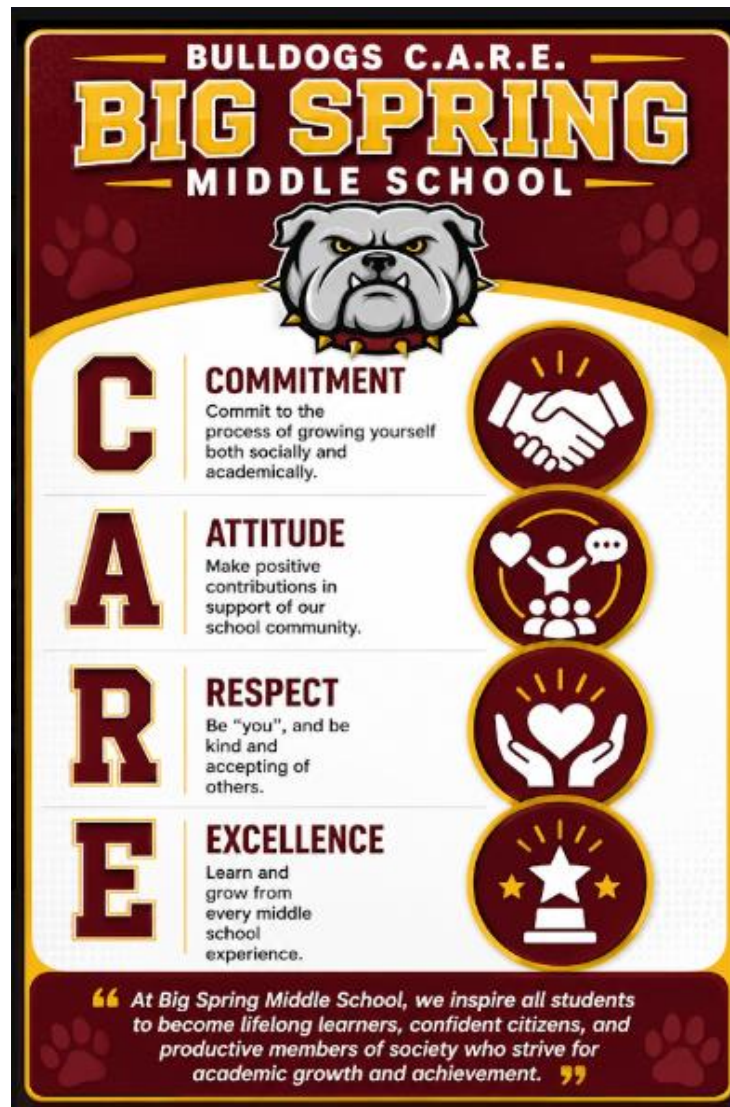


| BULLDOGS<br>C.A.R.E.: | Commitment                                                                                                                                                          | Attitude                                                                                                                                       | Respect                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Excellence                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CLASSROOMS            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Come prepared</li> <li>✓ Complete assignments</li> </ul>                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Arrive to class with an open mind ready to learn</li> </ul>                                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Respect classmates</li> <li>✓ Respect teachers</li> <li>✓ Respect yourself</li> <li>✓ Respect classroom expectations</li> <li>✓ Be safe</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Strive to be the best version of yourself (socially and academically)</li> </ul>                       |
| HALLWAYS              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Get to class on time</li> <li>✓ Don't "hang" in the hallways</li> </ul>                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Listen to adults in the hallway</li> <li>✓ Speak kindly to everyone</li> </ul>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Respect others and school property</li> <li>✓ Don't walk in groups that take up the whole area</li> <li>✓ Stay on the right side</li> <li>✓ Be safe</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be helpful, as needed</li> <li>✓ If you see trash, pick it up</li> </ul>                               |
| CAFETERIA             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Have your card or know your account number</li> </ul>                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Talk quietly</li> <li>✓ Clean-up after yourself</li> <li>✓ Push in your chair</li> </ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Listen to adults</li> <li>✓ Include others at your table</li> <li>✓ Use "please" and "thank-you"</li> <li>✓ Be safe</li> </ul>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leave your space cleaner than when you arrived</li> <li>✓ Follow all cafeteria expectations</li> </ul> |
| RESTROOMS             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Don't waste time in the restroom</li> <li>✓ Use the restroom for its intended purposes, not for class avoidance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Clean-up; don't leave a mess</li> </ul>                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Respect the privacy of others</li> <li>✓ Be safe</li> </ul>                                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Practice good hygiene</li> </ul>                                                                       |
| BUS                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Know your seat number</li> <li>✓ Enter and exit in a timely manner</li> </ul>                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Speak in a quiet voice</li> <li>✓ Stay in your seat</li> <li>✓ Speak kindly to each other</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Respect others</li> <li>✓ Respect others' space/belongings</li> <li>✓ Use headphones when listening to music</li> <li>✓ Be safe</li> </ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Keep hands and feet to yourself</li> <li>✓ Listen and be respectful to your bus driver</li> </ul>      |
| COMPUTER              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Bring your charged Chromebook daily</li> </ul>                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use Chromebook only when directed</li> <li>✓ Only access the websites you are asked to use</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be honest</li> <li>✓ Report all problems and damage to your Chromebook</li> </ul>                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use your Chromebook as a tool to help you grow as a learner</li> </ul>                                 |



\*Please reference the Big Spring Middle School student handbook for specific expectations.





## C.A.R.E. Tickets

Every week each teacher will have the opportunity to present a C.A.R.E. ticket to one student who has continuously exemplified the characteristics described in the BSMS C.A.R.E. Matrix. When a student is presented with a ticket, they should turn it into the guidance office where they will be entered into a drawing for a grade-level prize each quarter.

**BULLDOGS C.A.R.E.**  
BIG SPRING MIDDLE SCHOOL

**C.A.R.E. Ticket**

**No. 1**

**STUDENT NAME:**

**GRADE LEVEL:**

**Teacher who gave the student the ticket:**

**Why did the student get the ticket?**

## STOP TECHNIQUE

Stop Technique: How to Respond if You are the Recipient of Unkind Words

1. Say the word “stop.” You may also hold up one hand, elbow touching the body.
2. Walk away (if possible).
3. IF the disrespectful behavior continues with the same person, tell an adult—the adult will:

Ask you what the problem is.

- Ask if you said stop.
- Ask if you walked away calmly.
- If you have said stop and walked away calmly, the adult will say “Thank you, I will handle it from here” and help address the problem.

Responding to a “Stop” Signal:

1. Stop what you are doing.
2. Take a deep breath.
3. Walk away (if possible) and go on with your day.

Remember, you are to do this EVEN when you don’t think you did anything wrong!

## INCENTIVES

Self-motivation, such as knowing that you are doing the “right thing”, should be the ultimate goal for the BSMS positive behavior program. BSMS will use a mixture of both emotional (verbal & written praise) and physical rewards using tokens.

Positive behavior recognition will occur throughout the year. This recognition may include team/grade level events, individual behavior tokens, end-of-the-marking period recognition, and/or school-wide assemblies.

### Quarterly Attendance Incentives

Big Spring Middle School recognizes the importance of consistent attendance and being on time for school. Attendance incentives will be offered quarterly to encourage and celebrate students who demonstrate strong attendance habits.

Students may qualify for quarterly attendance incentives by meeting attendance expectations during each marking period. Incentives may include grade-level recognition, team-based rewards, drawings, special privileges, or school-wide activities.

To be eligible, students must have strong attendance, limited tardies, and no pattern of unexcused absences. Administration reserves the right to review individual circumstances when determining eligibility. The purpose of attendance incentives is to encourage positive habits, celebrate student responsibility, and support regular participation in learning.

# DISCIPLINE

One of the most important lessons that must be learned in life is self-discipline. Good conduct throughout the building, grounds, and bus is an expected part of self-discipline. The Middle School enforces all board-approved policies related to discipline. These policies help to develop self-discipline while regulating behavior. Such regulation is necessary to ensure good behavior and safety in our school. Although self-discipline is our goal for all students, we also realize that this is an "ideal" and will not always be achieved.

If students have difficulty maintaining self-discipline and control, a variety of disciplinary methods may be employed to help them understand how to be responsible, respectful, and safe.

These techniques include (but are not limited to):

- further explanation of expectations
- warnings
- teacher-issued lunch detention
- administratively issued lunch detention
- special assignments
- apology
- counseling
- behavior contracts
- conferences (with student and/or parent/guardian)
- restitution
- restriction from participation in clubs, lunch, or dances
- lunch detention (assigned by administration)
- detention after school
- suspensions (in-school/out-of-school)
- expulsion from school

The following is a representative but not an all-inclusive list of infractions that may result in one of the above techniques:

- any unusual or unrequested act or display that serves no purpose toward the educational program
- any act of misconduct that is interpreted by the administration to be of a serious or unusual nature
- a series of minor school violations
- assaults on fellow students \*
- assaults on school employees \*
- racial slurs, harassment and/or intimidation
- sexual offense \*
- threatening school official/student \*
- reckless endangerment
- burglary \*
- arson \*
- vandalism \*
- disorderly conduct \*
- bomb threat \*
- possession of a weapon \*
- terroristic threat \*

- tobacco products (use, possession, sale, or distribution) \*
- vaping device (use, possession, sale, or distribution)\*
- drug paraphernalia (possession, sale, or distribution) \*
- drug/alcohol (use, possession, sale, or distribution)-including “look-alikes” and unauthorized medication\*
- fights \*
- vulgarity, swearing, offensive language/gestures
- insubordination
- stealing \*
- lying
- truancy, tardiness to school/class, or skipping classes or parts thereof
- disruption of class, assembly, and/or student events
- throwing/shooting objects
- inappropriate dress
- possession of disruptive or dangerous item
- kissing
- inappropriate display of affection
- cheating on a test or quiz or plagiarism
- littering in hallways
- two or more students in a bathroom stall at one time

*\*Could result in a police referral*

## LEVELS OF DISCIPLINE

There will be progressive discipline assigned for recurring infractions. This can include but is not limited to:

Hallway misconduct:

1st offense - warning/1-hour detention

2nd offense - 2-hour detention/1-day in-school suspension

Name Calling:

1<sup>st</sup> offense – 2-hour after-school detention

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – 1-day in-school suspension

Racial/Ethnic Slurs or Intimidation:

1<sup>st</sup> offense – in-school suspension

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – out-of-school suspension

Fighting:

1<sup>st</sup> offense – 2-day out of school suspension with a possible police referral

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – 5-day out-of-school suspension with a possible police referral

Possession and/or use of Tobacco/Nicotine/Vaping Products:

1<sup>st</sup> offense – 3-day in-school suspension with a possible police referral

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – 5-day in-school suspension with a possible police referral

\*Any first-time offender of the District’s tobacco/vaping policy who agrees to participate in the Student Assistance Program and follows the recommendations of the outside agencies, which may include participation in a cessation program, will not have a police referral. There will be no reduction of consequences for repeat offenders.

Possession and/or use of Alcohol, Drugs, Look-alike drugs, and possession of Paraphernalia:

1<sup>st</sup> offense – 25-day out-of-school suspension/45-day exclusion from extra-curricular activities/Police referral

\*Drug and alcohol counseling may reduce this suspension to 10-day/45 school day exclusion from extra-curricular activities

2<sup>nd</sup> offense – Expulsion/Loss of extra-curricular activity/police referral

Possession of Knives, Guns, Ammunition, or other weapons:

1<sup>st</sup> offense – Immediate police referral/Potential expulsion

## LUNCH DETENTION

There are two ways that students can receive lunch detention at BSMS if they deviate from school rules: either from their classroom teacher or from administration. When serving lunch detention, **students must get their lunch first and then report directly to the main office.**

To successfully complete lunch detention, students must adhere to the following rules:

- **No Talking:** The detention room is a quiet environment.
- **Limited Computer Use:** Chromebooks/computers are not permitted unless the student is actively working on school assignments and it is approved by the teacher in charge.
- **Reflection Sheet:** Students will be required to fill out a reflection sheet regarding the behavior that earned them the detention.

**Important:** If a student fails to follow any of these rules, their time in detention may **not count** as being served, and they may be required to repeat it.

## DETENTION

Big Spring Middle School has a detention period after school for students who deviate from the rules. Lack of transportation will not be an excuse for not attending detention when assigned. Students have 10 minutes after detention to leave school property. On a detention day, students must fulfill any detention obligations before being eligible to participate in any extra-curricular activity. If a student does not attend assigned detention, he/she may be assigned in-school suspension.

## IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

- No student may receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reason for the suspension and has been allowed to respond before the suspension becomes effective.
- Communication to the parents/guardians shall follow the suspension action taken by the school
- Students suspended from school, either in-school or out-of-school, are specifically denied admittance and/or participation in all school events until the day following the day of suspension.

- When the in-school suspension exceeds ten (10) consecutive days, an informal hearing with the principal shall be offered to the student and the student's parent or guardian before the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) school day following the procedures established under the section hearings.
- The student's school district has the responsibility to make some provision for the student's education during the period of the in-school suspension.

### RULES

1. Students should report to their lockers and then go directly to the office.
2. Students are responsible for bringing all necessary materials.
3. Students will not talk to any other student at any time.
4. Students will not sleep or put their heads down on the desks.
5. Students will remain seated in their assigned seats during the entire day.
6. Students will be required to fill out a reflection sheet.
7. Students will be removed from the suspension room, if necessary.
8. The in-school suspension supervisor may assign additional work as required.
  - Students will not chew gum or eat snacks in the suspension room.
  - Additional consequences may be assigned to those who do not comply with these rules.
  - Students are permitted to use school-issued devices in the ISS room only when needed for assignments and as approved by the ISS supervisor.

## **OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION**

- Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days.
- Suspension may be given by the Principal/Assistant Principal or persons in charge of the public school.
- No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and allowed to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened.
- Parents and the Superintendent of the District will be notified in writing when the student is suspended.
- When the suspension exceeds three (3) days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements outlined in the section relating to the hearing.
- Suspension may not be made to run consecutively beyond the ten (10) school day period.
- Students shall be held responsible for making up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments by guidelines established by the Board of School Directors.
- Students suspended from school, either in-school or out-of-school, are specifically denied admittance and/or participation in all school events until the day following the day of suspension.

## **EXPULSION**

- Expulsion is exclusion from school by the Board of Education for a period exceeding ten (10) school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. All expulsions require a formal hearing.
- During the period beyond the initial ten (10) day suspension but before the hearing and decision of the Board of School Directors in an expulsion case, the student will be placed in his normal class as outlined in subsection 2.
- If it is determined by the Superintendent after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others, and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than ten (10) school days, if the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study as per Board policy.
- Students who are less than eighteen (18) years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled, and they must be provided an education.
- The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents or guardians through placement in another school, through tutorial or correspondence study, or through another educational program approved by the district's Superintendent.
- If the parents or guardians are unable to provide for the required education, they must within thirty (30) days submit to the Superintendent written evidence stating so. The district then has the responsibility to make provisions for the student's education. If thirty (30) days pass without the district receiving satisfactory evidence that the required education is being provided to the student, it will recontact the parent and, pending the parents' or guardians' provision of such education, the district must make provision for the student's education or proceed under paragraph 3, or do both. If the parents/guardians have not complied with the approved educational program, the school district may act in accordance with Chapter 12 and/or Juvenile Court to ensure that the child will receive a proper education.

## **SCHOOL POLICE**

The School Police Officer ensures a safe and secure learning environment at Big Spring Middle School by enforcing laws, district policies, and promoting positive relationships among students, staff, and the broader school community. The officer works in partnership with school administrators and local law enforcement to prevent and respond to incidents, while serving as a visible, approachable figure of safety and authority.

### **Key Responsibilities:**

- Patrol school grounds, facilities, and surrounding areas to deter and respond to criminal behavior or safety concerns.
- Enforce local, state, and federal laws as well as district policies within the school environment, to include issuing summary citations for violations or referring incidents to the Pennsylvania State Police.
- Investigate incidents occurring on school property, including theft, fights, vandalism, threats, use of vapes or drugs on school property, etc.
- Act as a liaison between the school, local law enforcement, and community organizations.
- Develop and maintain positive relationships with students, promoting trust and open communication.
- Assist in emergency response planning and participate in safety drills and threat assessments.

- Provide security at school events, including athletic competitions and extra-curricular activities.
- Provide classroom presentations or participate in programs on topics such as substance abuse, bullying, mock traffic stops, or any other issues students and staff would like to discuss law-enforcement-related.
- Respond to and defuse conflicts or disturbances in a professional and effective manner.
- Assist in crisis intervention, student welfare checks, and mental health referrals when necessary.

## **KEY SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES**

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. All students enrolled in the Big Spring School District are expected to conduct themselves by the rules of the system and individual schools. It is also expected that parents will cooperate with school authorities in helping students to maintain such conduct.
2. Learning is extremely difficult unless basic rules and regulations are maintained. Therefore, the school district staff is empowered to maintain order in the schools that will be conducive to the learning situation.
3. Student responsibilities include regular attendance, conscientious effort in the classroom, work, and compliance with school rules and regulations. Most of all, students share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.
4. No student has the right to interfere with the education of their fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.
5. Students should respectfully express their ideas and opinions so as not to offend or slander others.
6. It is the responsibility of the student to:
  - Be aware of rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves accordingly.
  - Be willing to volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
  - Dress and groom themselves to meet fair standards of safety and health, and so as not to cause substantial disruption to the educational processes.
  - Assume that until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed, it is in full effect.
  - Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled therein.
  - Be aware of and comply with state and local laws.
  - Exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.
  - Attend school daily, except when excused, and be on time at all classes and other required school functions.
  - Make all necessary arrangements for making up work when absent from school.
  - Pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by state and local school authorities.
  - Avoid indecent/obscene language.
7. School rules are assumed to be “reasonable” until they are rescinded or waived. Students, therefore, should obey school rules, while working through channels to help change those with which they do not agree.
8. The individual building principal shall be responsible for the dissemination of printed rules and regulations for students in their respective school.

## **ATHLETIC POLICY – ARTICLE II – ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for an interscholastic athletic competition, a student must pursue a curriculum defined and approved by the principal as a full-time curriculum. Where required, this curriculum or its equivalent must be approved by, and conform to, the regulations of the state Board of Education and the Pennsylvania School Code, as well as any local policies established by the local school board.

To be eligible for any extra-curricular activity, a student may not fail two or more core courses. Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of a marking period and shall be reported weekly. [In cases where a student's cumulative work from the beginning of the marking period does not, as of any Thursday, meet the standards provided for this section, he/she shall be ineligible from the following Sunday through the next Saturday.]

During the period of ineligibility, the student-athlete may practice with the team, but may not participate in games/matches/contests or scrimmages.

In cases where a student is failing two or more courses at the end of the marking period, said student shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletics for twenty (20) school days of the next marking period, beginning on the first day report cards are issued.

If any student is retained at a grade level, they will not be eligible to participate in any extra-curricular activities for the first 20 days of the new marking period.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

There are weekly eligibility requirements for all extra-curricular activities. Students in extra-curricular activities must report to school before 9:00 a.m. on a regular bell schedule school day unless the absence has been approved by the principal in advance. If a student arrives at school after 9:00 a.m. a doctor's excuse is also necessary or they will be ineligible for practice, games, or performances. In the case of a two (2) hour school delay, students in extra-curricular activities must report to school by 10:00 a.m. or they will be ineligible for practice, games, or performances. Students wishing to utilize the fitness center must meet all extra-curricular requirements. See Athletic Policy – Article II – Eligibility for specific requirements.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE STUDENT BODY AT ATHLETIC EVENTS**

1. Remember that a student spectator represents the same school as the athlete.
2. Recognize that the good name of the school is more valuable than any game won by unfair play.
3. Accept the decisions of officials.
4. Throwing things onto the gym floor or field during contests is punishable by detention, suspension, or removal from the event and/or future subsequent activities.
5. Recognize and applaud an exhibition of fine play and good sportsmanship on the part of the visiting team.
6. Accept defeat or victory in the same spirit of good sportsmanship.
7. Be considerate of the injured on the visiting team.
8. Do or say nothing which will bring discredit to the school.

## **TOBACCO - ACT 145 OF 1996**

Act 145 of 1996 requires schools to refer to District Justice students using, carrying, or possessing tobacco in a school building, on a school bus, or on school property. For purposes of this act, tobacco is defined as a lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, or other lighted smoking product as well as smokeless tobacco in any form. The school is a smoke-free building for all occupants, and violations will result in police referral and subsequent fines. Upon conviction, a student will be found guilty of a summary offense and will be subject to a fine and court costs.

## **ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS POLICY** **(Board Policies 233.23, 233.24, 233.25, and 233.34)**

The Big Spring School District prohibits any student from possessing, using, selling, giving, delivering to another person or consuming any narcotic, dangerous drug, marijuana, look-alike drugs, alcoholic beverage, or any pill, capsule, powder, liquid, or other substance of whatever form or texture which may adversely affect the health, safety, or welfare of any student, including, but not limited to stimulants or depressants, before or during participation in a school activity.

The policy is also in effect when any violations occur on any property owned or leased by the Big Spring School District, including school buses and vehicles located on the premises.

A violation of this policy shall be subject to the following procedure:

1. The principal shall be immediately notified.
2. If the principal establishes that a violation has occurred, the principal shall notify the Superintendent of Schools and the student's parents. Law enforcement officials can be notified.
3. The principal shall determine/recommend what disciplinary action will be taken.

It shall be the policy of the Big Spring School District to offer help to any student who desires such help. A Student Assistance Program team is available in the middle school to assist and evaluate students at risk.

## **WEAPONS POLICY** **(Board Policy 233.21, 233.22, and 233.23)**

Possession of a weapon on school grounds, in school buildings, or on school transportation is a crime in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Possession of a weapon at school-sponsored activities also presents serious legal, safety, and welfare problems to the school community. Therefore, the Big Spring School District emphasizes that possessing a weapon or knowing about or not reporting, before or during the course of a District investigation, the possession of a weapon in the buildings of, on the grounds of, at school-sponsored activities of, or in any conveyance providing transportation to or from any elementary or secondary educational institution of the Big Spring School District, is a serious violation of the rules and regulations of the Big Spring School District. Additionally, because of the potentially harmful effect on the school community and the strong public desire to prevent persons from possessing objects which

have the appearance or characteristics of weapons in the buildings of, on the grounds of, or in any conveyance providing transportation to or from an elementary or secondary education institution in the Big Spring School District, for purposes of this policy, objects which have the appearance or characteristics of weapons shall be considered weapons, and possession of such objects or knowledge without proper reporting of possession of such objects also shall be a serious violation of the rules and regulations of the Big Spring School District. Any student who violates the district's weapons policy may be expelled from school permanently.

### **Parental and Employee Notification of Weapon Incidents (Act 44 of 2025)**

Beginning January 6, 2026, Pennsylvania Senate Bill 246 (Act 44 of 2025) requires schools to notify families within 24 hours whenever a weapon or potential weapon is found on school property, at school events, or on school transportation. The law requires notification even when there was no intent, the situation was minor, or the item was immediately secured.

## **POLICY ON TERRORISTIC THREATS/ACTS (Board Policy 233.19)**

The Board of School Directors recognizes the danger that terroristic threats present to the safety and welfare of District students, staff, and community. The Board acknowledges the need for an immediate and effective response to a situation involving such threats. The Board prohibits anyone from communicating terroristic threats or committing terrorist acts directed at any student, employee, Board member, community member or school building.

## **UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the Big Spring School District to maintain a working and learning environment free from all forms of intimidation, abuse, hostility, offensive behavior, sexual harassment, and unlawful discrimination, hereinafter referred to either individually or collectively as "*unlawful conduct*." By way of example, and not limitation, such improper conduct may take the form of:

Unwarranted verbal or physical conduct, verbal or written derogatory or discriminatory statements, racial slurs, or unwelcome sexual remarks or advances. Any such behavior violates the policy of the district and is hereby prohibited.

Any student in the District who engages in such improper conduct shall be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. Any student who believes that she/he is or may be the victim of any improper conduct by any employee of the District or by any student may file a complaint with a guidance counselor, principal, or with the Superintendent's Office. The complaint may be filed by the student or on behalf of the student by the student's parent or guardian. The complaint will be processed following the procedure specified in School Board Policy No. 248, "Prohibition of Improper Conduct and Student Complaint Process."

## **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

The Big Spring School District believes that regular daily attendance at school is important to student success in school. The laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania make the parents responsible for a child's school attendance. If a student is absent, the parents must furnish a written explanation for a child's absence when the student returns to school. If a parent's or

doctor's excuse is not returned within three (3) school days, the day will be designated unlawful/unexcused. Parents who have questions about student attendance are encouraged to contact the attendance contact in their child's building during regular school hours. A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts. Please note that medical requirement letters can be issued at any time during the school year at the discretion of the building principal. Copies of the policies and procedures related to attendance can be found on the district's website. Early dismissal for medical or dental appointments should be requested in writing prior to the time of the absence.

In addition, we want to make you aware that habitually truant students may not transfer during the school year to a cyber charter school unless a judge determines that the transfer is in the best interest of the child; and we are providing you with resources on our Student Assistance link which can be found on our district website <https://www.bigspringsd.org/services/student-assistance> (24 P.S. § 13-1333(a)(2.1)-(2.2)).

### **Attendance Contacts**

Big Spring High School: Leah Wilson [Lwilson@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:Lwilson@bigspring.k12.pa.us)

Big Spring Middle School: Tanya White [Twhite@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:Twhite@bigspring.k12.pa.us)

Mount Rock Elementary: Allison Baer [Abear@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:Abear@bigspring.k12.pa.us)

Newville Elementary: Caitlin Pepper [Cpeffer@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:Cpeffer@bigspring.k12.pa.us)

Oak Flat Elementary: Michelle Gutshall [Mgutshall@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:Mgutshall@bigspring.k12.pa.us)

District Office: Jessica Winesickle [Jwinesickle@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:Jwinesickle@bigspring.k12.pa.us)

**Excused Absences:** Impassable roads; quarantine; death in the immediate family; or other urgent reasons approved by administration. The reason must be serious and apply to the child and not, ordinarily, to other members of the family or home conditions. Exceptions to this policy may be made at the discretion of the administration.

**Unexcused Absences:** Overslept; missed bus; work at home; not returning excuses on time; truancy; and/or absent from school without the knowledge and consent of the parent and school. All unexcused absences for students of compulsory attendance age (under 18 years) are considered unlawful. After three (3) unlawful absences, a First Notice will be issued to parents.

**Repeated Tardies and Unexcused Absences:** Regular attendance and arriving at school on time are essential for student success. Students are expected to report to school and class on time each day. Repeated tardies, early dismissals, and unexcused absences may result in school-based interventions and consequences.

When a student develops a pattern of tardiness or unexcused absences, school staff may use one or more of the following interventions or consequences:

- Parent/guardian contact
- Student conference with an administrator, counselor, or attendance contact
- Lunch detention or after-school detention
- Loss of privileges, including dances, clubs, field trips, reward activities, or other school-sponsored events

- Attendance improvement plan
- School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC), when applicable
- Referral to the school social worker, Student Assistance Program, or outside agency supports
- Citation or referral to the magisterial district judge, when required by compulsory attendance law and district policy

Students who arrive late to school must report to the office upon arrival. Tardies may be excused only when appropriate documentation is provided and approved by the school. Habitual tardiness may be treated as a disciplinary and attendance concern.

**Educational Trips:** Students may be granted an excused absence to participate in an educational trip, tour, or activity when the following conditions are met:

1. Parents must submit a written request at least two days prior to the absence. A form is provided by the school for completion by the parent.
2. Student participants must be under the direction and supervision of the parent/guardian or an approved adult.
3. Parents must supply an itinerary or list of places of educational value to be visited.

Prearranged educational trips in excess of five days for the same school year will be treated as unlawful absences. Thus, any absence in excess of five may be coded as unlawful and subject to the issuing of first notices and/or fining. The school reserves the right to limit the number of trips and/or the number of absences classified as excused for any one trip. Other exceptions and additions to this policy may be made by administrative personnel based upon the circumstances associated with the educational trip.

### **School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC)**

Parents will be invited to a School Attendance Improvement Conference when their child has accumulated five (5) or more illegal absences. The purpose of the SAIC is to examine the student's absences and reasons for the absences in an effort to improve attendance with or without additional services. A parent, school counselor, or administrator may request a SAIC before a student accumulates 5 illegal absences. Neither the student nor the person in parental relation shall be required to participate, and the SAIC shall occur even if the person in parental relation declines to participate or does not attend the scheduled conference. If a student continues to accumulate illegal absences, district staff may file a citation with the magisterial district judge and/or refer the student to the local children and youth agency for additional services and support.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL ALTERNATIVES AND THE STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The primary responsibility of schools is to educate students. If a student is under the influence of mind-altering chemicals, that student cannot learn. If a student is depressed and feels hopeless, he or she cannot learn effectively. If a student disrupts the school climate, other students will not be able to learn and teachers will not be able to teach.

A Student Assistance Program is a way to identify at-risk students who are having school-related problems because of alcohol and drug use, are at risk of suicide, and/or are experiencing mental health problems. It is also a method for intervening and referring these students to appropriate community services. It is an intervention, not a treatment program. The heart of the program is the Student Assistance Team, which is a core group of school personnel specially trained to assist these students. The student assistance program team (SAP) will review referrals weekly to determine the need for student assessment and intervention strategies. The SAP team shall consist of administrators, counselors, the nurse, and faculty members. Because the Big Spring School District respects parents/guardians and regards parents as partners in the formal education process of their children, Student Assistance Team members at Big Spring will contact parents/guardians prior to gathering information about and prior to initiating any assessment of a student.

A student referred for assessment will participate in conferences with a member(s) of the SAP team. Additional assessments will be conducted by outside agencies as needed. Assessed students may participate in programs designed to educate participants, to encourage family interaction, and to promote wellness and responsible behavior.

1. A student who volunteers for the Student Assistance Program will not receive any punishment unless his/her drug and alcohol involvement is under current investigation by school and/or police officials. This does not apply to the selling and/or distribution of drugs and/or alcohol.
2. Any student who violates the District's drug and alcohol policy and chooses **not** to become involved in the Student Assistance Program will be punished along the following minimum guidelines: 1st offense for possession and/or consumption - 25 days of out-of-school exclusion. 1st offense for selling and/or distribution – 45-day exclusion from school.
3. Any first-time offender of the District's drug and alcohol policy, except those involved in the selling and distribution of drugs and/or alcohol, who agrees to participate in and complete the Student Assistance Program and follows all recommendations by an outside agency will have their period of exclusion from school reduced by a maximum of fifteen (15) school days. There will be no reductions for repeat offenders. During the time that the student is excluded from school, his/her parents/guardians are responsible for arranging for the student's education. The parents/guardians must contact the middle school guidance office and arrange an appropriate educational program for the student.

If the parents/guardians fail to meet this requirement, it will jeopardize the student's opportunity to fulfill class requirements for promotion and graduation.

4. **extra-curricular option** for students who violate the District's drug and alcohol policy: If a student fails to comply with the district's drug and alcohol assessment, counseling, placement, and/or activities recommended by the Student Assistance Team and referral agencies, the student will be dealt with as outlined in school policy. For the student who has violated district policy (first offense only) by possessing and/or consuming drugs/alcohol, but agrees to complete the drug and alcohol assessment, counseling, placement, and/or activities, the student is:
  - a. excluded immediately from any extra-curricular activity in which he/she was participating at the time of the violations, and may not return to extra-curricular participation for 45 school days from the date of the offense.For the student who has violated district policy (first offense only) by selling and/or

distributing drugs and/or alcohol but also agrees to complete the drug and alcohol assessment, counseling, placement, and/or activities, the student is:

- a. excluded immediately from any extra-curricular activity in which he/she was participating at the time of the violation;
  - b. excluded from participation in any extra-curricular activity for 90 days from the date of the offense.
5. Students involved in drug/alcohol on the second offense will not be allowed to reduce their punishment by being involved in the SAP team but, on a volunteer basis, may enlist in the program a second time.
  6. Students referred by the Student Assistance Team, students who volunteer to participate, and students who violate the district's drug and alcohol policy will participate in one or more drug and alcohol assessment conferences conducted by drug and alcohol assessment counselors.
  7. Those students who have violated the district drug and alcohol policy and who agree to the recommendation of the Student Assistance Team may be required to participate, along with at least one parent/guardian/responsible adult, in a series of educational program sessions at a time and place to be established by the staff of The Cumberland-Perry Drug and Alcohol Commission. The main thrust of the sessions will be dispelling myths, educating the participants, and promoting family interaction.
  8. The Cumberland-Perry Drug and Alcohol Commission offers information and assistance to interested parents and students. The staff members may be reached at 240-6300 (Carlisle) or 1-866-240-6300. The address of the Cumberland-Perry Drug and Alcohol Commission is, Cumberland County Courthouse, East Room 206, Carlisle.

## **INTERNET ACCESS AND USAGE**

The Big Spring School District will provide access to the Internet for teacher aides, teachers, administrative staff, other District employees, and students, with their parents' or guardians' consent, to locate resources to meet their school-related needs. District staff will work together to help students develop the critical thinking skills necessary to discriminate among information sources, to identify information appropriate to their age and developmental levels, and to evaluate and use information to meet educational goals that are consistent with the District's Strategic Plan. Access to the Internet through District resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked for anyone who uses the resources inappropriately as determined by District authorities.

The district provides web content filtering services on all student devices for blocking access to inappropriate and malicious materials while students are using the internet in school and at home. Because of the nature of the Internet as a global network connecting thousands of computers around the world, the landscape is constantly changing and requires the technology department and our technology partners to continually monitor and block inappropriate and harmful materials. Even with these safeguards in place, the district is unable to block access to every inappropriate source at all times. Accessing these and similar types of sources or transmitting such sources with district owned devices will result in suspension and/or other disciplinary measures in accordance with District policies. Through a program of education, the District will educate students, teacher aides, teachers, and administrative staff about their individual responsibility to refrain from engaging in unacceptable uses of the network and about the consequences of their actions if they violate the policy.

The above is information from the Big Spring School District's Internet Access and Usage Policy. To view this policy in its entirety, including guidelines on social networking for educational purposes and the ability for students to bring their own technology to school, please visit the Technology page.

## **PERSONAL DIGITAL DEVICE GUIDELINES**

### **STUDENT RULES**

1. All PDDs must be silenced and put away when entering the building.
2. Students must ask a teacher prior to using a PDD.
3. Any PDD may only be used for instructional purposes.
4. Students must use the guest network when using their PDD.
5. No PDD may be used in the restroom.
6. No photos or video recording may be taken with a PDD.

### **STUDENT DISCIPLINE FOR MISUSE OF PDD**

1. Any electronic communication used for non-instructional purposes may result in an after-school detention.
2. Use of PDD for non-instructional purposes (playing games, social media, etc.) may result in an after-school detention.
3. Any photography or video of a person or persons on or off campus may result in a loss of PDD privileges as well as other disciplinary action.

## **1:1 DEVICE PROGRAM**

Each school year, sixth-grade students will be issued a computer device for their exclusive use at school and home. Students will utilize this computer device through their eighth-grade year, at which point they will return it and be issued a new device upon entry to ninth grade. The purpose of this initiative is to fully engage students and create a learning environment that fosters critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity.

Parents and students must sign and return a computer device and Acceptable Use Agreement before a computer device will be issued for use. Any student who transfers out of BSMS will be required to return their computer device and accessories. If the computer device and accessories are not returned, the parent/guardian will be responsible for payment in full.

Students are responsible for bringing their computer devices to all classes unless specifically advised not to do so by their teachers. Computer devices must be brought to school each day in fully charged condition.

While enrolled at BSMS, the District maintains ownership of the device. If requested by the Technology Department or Middle School Administration, students may be required to turn in their computer devices for maintenance or inspection. Additionally, the District utilizes an Internet Content filter that complies with the federally mandated Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). All computer devices, regardless of physical location, will have Internet activity filtered.

Students are responsible for the general care of the computer device they have been issued and are required to purchase a protection plan. The cost of this plan is \$25. It provides one-time repair/replacement coverage in the event of accidental damage. Damage caused by intentional misuse or abuse will be the responsibility of the student. All issues and/or damages should be reported to the School Office to be logged for repair.

### **Damage, Misuse, or Destruction of School Property and Devices**

Students are responsible for caring for all school property issued to them or used by them during the school day, including Chromebooks, chargers, cases, textbooks, library books, furniture, classroom materials, athletic equipment, and other district-owned items.

Accidental damage to a Chromebook may be covered according to the terms of the district's device protection plan. However, damage caused by intentional misuse, neglect, horseplay, vandalism, or destruction is not considered accidental. Students and families may be responsible for repair or replacement costs when school property is lost, damaged, or destroyed.

Examples of misuse or destruction may include, but are not limited to:

- Throwing, dropping, hitting, or stepping on a Chromebook or school-issued device
- Removing keys or damaging screens, cases, chargers, labels, or asset tags
- Writing on, carving into, or intentionally damaging desks, walls, lockers, bathrooms, books, or other school property
- Using a device in a way that causes damage or interferes with the learning environment
- Failing to report damage in a timely manner

Consequences may include parent/guardian contact, restitution, loss of device privileges, restricted device access, detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension, police referral, and/or other disciplinary action as determined by administration.

## **CYBER/LIVE STREAMING STUDENTS**

Live Stream students should report tech issues to [helpdesk@bigspringsd.org](mailto:helpdesk@bigspringsd.org). Students will see it listed as Student Helpdesk in the Google directory when composing the email. The email will route to the tech department for actual ticket creation and tracking in our system. The helpdesk will work with those students and determine if the fix can be done remotely or if the device needs to be brought in. Given the importance of devices for virtual learning, our goal is to turn repairs around quickly or provide a loaner if necessary.

If the student is unable to email us due to the issue and they have no other method to email (smartphone, parent's help) they should call the school office. The secretary answering the phone can simply email [helpdesk@bigspringsd.org](mailto:helpdesk@bigspringsd.org) and provide the name, phone #, and if possible a short description of the problem in the subject (IE: broken screen, can't connect to the internet, sound issue, etc.).

### **Face-to-Face Students**

Students take devices to the office for repairs. The student should complete a device repair form including the name and description of the problem. The office will email the Helpdesk around 10:00 am and again at the end of the day if there are devices that need to be serviced. All devices will be returned to the office when fixed.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

The Big Spring School District is committed to supporting students' health and well-being while they are members of our school community. As a result, we offer various services to support our students. This section identifies and describes each of the services, identifies who to contact should you have any questions, and also provides links to our district website which offers additional information.

### **Student Assistance Program (SAP)**

Employees of the Big Spring School District are committed to providing students with maximum learning experiences. We recognize that students cannot reach their potential if they are experiencing difficulties. The SAP team is committed to identifying issues that pose potential barriers to a student's success. The issues could be related to mental health concerns, attendance, discipline records, changes in academic performance or substance use. If you have a concern about a student, please contact a team member or complete a referral form. We encourage students to refer a friend if there are concerns. The heart of the program is the SAP Team composed of school personnel specifically trained to work with these students.

Please refer to the link on our webpage for additional information regarding the SAP. You can also find a list of the team members and how to contact them, if you have questions.

### **School Counseling Services**

School counselors are professional educators who have been specially trained to help students with both personal and academic problems. Our school counselors are experienced in working cooperatively with students, parents, and teachers to create the best plan for success for each student according to his/her developmental needs. Counselors use brief individual counseling and small group counseling to maximize student growth. In meeting with students, counselors work to maintain an atmosphere of respect, privacy, and understanding of the unique needs and values of each student.

Please reference our website to learn more about our counselors and which counselor serves each building.

### **Health Services**

The Big Spring School District supports students' health and well-being. Each building is staffed with at least one certified nurse who is available to assist students with medical needs. Students have access to the building nurses throughout the school day as needed. Parents/Caregivers may also contact our school nurses with questions or concerns about medication, treatment, or any medical conditions.

The following screenings are mandated by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Screenings are not to be substituted for regular exams by your healthcare provider. The screenings are performed by the school nurse and health room nurses unless otherwise specified.

Height and Weight (BMI): 28 PA Code, Chapter 23.7 states “Height and weight measurement shall be conducted at least once annually and preferably twice annually.”

Vision: 8 PA Code, Chapter 23.4 states “Vision screening tests shall be conducted annually by a nurse, teacher or medical technician. If a student does not pass the visual screening a referral notice will be sent home. If you have a concern or suspect a visual problem, a comprehensive eye exam by an eye care professional is highly recommended.”

Hearing: 28 PA Code, Chapter 23.5(d) states “Each year, pupils in kindergarten, special ungraded classes and grades one, two, three, seven and 11 shall be given a hearing screening test. If a student does not pass the hearing screening a referral notice will be sent home. If you have a concern, suspect a hearing problem, or your child has an existing hearing condition, contact with your health care provider is recommended.”

If you have any questions, please reach out to your child’s building nurse. Their contact information can be found on our website.

### **Immunization Requirements for all School Children**

Under present regulations, all new students entering kindergarten or first grade in Pennsylvania schools are required to have the following immunizations:

- 4 doses of Tetanus\* (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of Diphtheria\* (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 3 doses of Polio (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 2 doses of Measles\*\*
- 2 doses of Mumps\*\*
- 2 doses of Rubella (German Measles)\*\*
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 doses of Varicella (Chickenpox) vaccine or history of disease

\* Usually given as DTP, DTap, DT, or Tdap

\*\* Usually given as MMR

7th grade ADDITIONAL (required for entry)

- 1 dose of Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)
- 1 dose of Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) if 5 years have elapsed since last tetanus immunization

12th grade ADDITIONAL (required for entry)

- 2 doses of meningococcal vaccine, unless first dose was on or after 16th birthday

These immunization requirements allow for exemption from immunization for medical reasons and religious beliefs. A physician or parent must sign the back of the card for an exemption to be honored. Without the required immunizations or documentation, a student may not be allowed to begin school in August or may be admitted on a 5-day provisional basis. PA Department of Health regulations allow only 5 days from the start of school before you risk exclusion from school for not being immunized.

### **Student Medication Procedures**

1. No prescription or non-prescription medication shall be administered to any student by any employee of the Big Spring School District except as provided for in Board Policy #210 and administrative procedures.
2. Parents who bring prescription and/or non-prescription medications onto school property must deposit the medications in the nurse's office with the nurse, in the building office (with the principal or principal's designee), or the approved designated area (with the nurse, principal, or the principal's designee). Students at the elementary level must bring medication directly to the nurse, principal, or the principal's designee.
3. Prescription medication may be taken during school hours under the following conditions:
  - a. The physician and the parent need to provide a written request to administer the medication during school hours as well as the duration of the medication. If the parent arrives at school with a student's daily medication in the original prescription container but without a physician's order, the school nurse may administer it for up to 3 days until the parent can obtain a doctor's written order and provide it to the school nurse.
  - b. The parent's written request relieves the Big Spring School District and its employees of any liability for the administering of medication.
  - c. The written request for the administering of medication must include the purpose of the medication, the dosage, the time at which the medication is to be taken, the length of time for which the medication is prescribed, and the possible side effects of the medication. When it is time for the student to take an approved medication, the student must report to the nurse's office, building office, or designated area and take the medication in the nurse's presence.
  - d. All medication sent to school for student use must be securely stored and kept in the original, labeled container. If parents wish to keep a medication container at home, the parent should request a separate medication container for school use at the time the prescription is filled.
  - e. The nurse shall maintain a record of the names of all students to whom medication may be administered, the name of the prescribing physician, the dosage and timing of the medication, and a notation of each instance of the administration of the medication.
  - f. The nurse may administer a drug ordered for a student in the dosage and manner prescribed by the physician, licensed PA, or Nurse Practitioner. School nurses may refuse to give any medication, which within the parameters of their knowledge, could create an unsafe situation for a student while attending school (e.g., narcotics). School nurses may give emergency medication which, when failure to provide that medication, could result in the death of a student (e.g., insulin shock, asthma attack, and reactions to bees or other severe allergic reactions).
  - g. Parents should not send more than a 30-day supply of medication at any one time.
4. Parents may send to school non-prescription medication that is on our approved medical orders provided that the parent or elementary school child delivers the medication to the nurse's office or building office with a note from the parent requesting that the medication be given and specifying the time of administration and the dosage. If the parent's instructions do not match the package instructions, the nurse may refuse to give the medication. The parent or student must deliver the medication in its original container or package. School personnel will not permit students to self-administer medication that is brought to school unlabeled. Students will not be provided with medication at school unless parents follow the procedures outlined above. Asthmatics, with proper documentation, and with the knowledge of the school nurse, may carry inhalers and may self-administer medication.
5. Medication for off-site activities – Prescriptions normally taken during school hours may be taken on a field trip or skipped if one of the following conditions is met:
  - a. The student's guardian, family member, or designee of a guardian accompanies the student on the field trip and administers the medication. Proper clearances must be obtained by adults before they will be permitted to accompany a student on a field trip.

- b. A licensed nurse attends the field trip.
  - c. The prescribing Doctor/PA/CRNP indicates on the medication form that dose may be skipped or a parent may withhold the day's medication during field trip activities. The only exception is the use of an Epi-Pen which may be given in an emergency by an individual trained in Epi-Pen administration. State law addresses medical Good Samaritan civil immunity (42 Pa. C.S. & 8331) to protect anyone administering this emergency medication.
6. No over-the-counter medications will be provided or administered during off-site activities unless carried and given by the student's family member or pre-arrangements are made.
7. Students may not carry medication with them or keep it in their lockers. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medications. All medication must be stored in the Nurse's Office. An exception is given with a written physician request for rescue, emergency, and life-sustaining medications only (e.g., EpiPens, insulin, inhalers, etc.).

## **GUIDELINES FROM OUR SCHOOL PHYSICIAN REGARDING ILLNESS**

When do I keep my child home from school?

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher · Vomiting the night prior or morning of school
  - Diarrhea: in addition to not feeling well
  - Persistent cough
  - Severe sore throat; check the inside of the throat as white pustules may require a doctor visit for a strep test
  - Other cold or flu symptoms that can spread to students/staff
  - If your child appears unusually tired, irritable, pale, or has an unusual lack of appetite
  - Any undiagnosed rash, skin lesion, swollen glands, eyes that are red or pink with discharge
- Children who are experiencing any of the above symptoms are not ready for a rigorous day at school. Most children need at least 24 hours to recover.

When should my child return to school?

- Fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing-medication
- Symptom-free from vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours and has been able to keep down at least two meals
- Rashes have been diagnosed as not contagious and a doctor has cleared the student to return to school.

**\*\*Please remember, if your child was too sick to attend school in the morning, please do not bring them in later because they are feeling better. When in doubt, leave them out.**

The District is dedicated to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students. Our HIV/AIDS policy, in accordance with Board Policies 203.1 and 314.1, ensures the well-being of students and staff while protecting individual rights. Based on current evidence, HIV is not normally transmissible within the school setting. Infected students have the same rights as others and will not face discrimination regarding school attendance or activities. Routine HIV screening is not required for attendance. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss this policy further with the building principal. For more information or concerns, please contact the principal's office.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

Big Spring School District, along with other public agencies in the Commonwealth, must establish and implement procedures to identify, locate and evaluate all children who need special

education programs. BSSD is responsible for providing every child in the district a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Additional information about special education services can be found on our district website.

If you have questions regarding special education services please contact your child's Case Manager.

### **Gifted Education Services**

Gifted services are specialized educational programs designed to meet the needs of students who demonstrate high levels of aptitude or achievement in one or more areas. These services aim to provide enrichment, acceleration, or differentiated instruction to support students' intellectual and creative development. Students who show a need for these services go through an evaluation process to determine if they qualify for such services. Additional information can be found on our district website.

If you have questions regarding gifted education services please contact your child's case manager and/or a building administrator.

### **Homelessness (Policy 251)**

Big Spring School District recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational programs and services provided to other district students. The District's Homeless Liaison along with school staff shall identify homeless children within the district, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.

Policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers for enrollment, attendance, transportation and success in school for homeless students, may be waived.

Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular and nighttime residence, which include the following conditions: living in hotels, motels, campgrounds; living in emergency shelters either transitional or domestic violence; unaccompanied youth and run away children; families temporarily doubled up due to loss of housing (fire, eviction, etc.); living in cars, parks, public spaces.

Resident families are encouraged to contact our school social worker, Jessica Winesickle (jwinesickle@bigspring.k12.pa.us) or their school counselor or their building principal to discuss their situation. Families new to the district should speak with the Central Registration staff during their registration appointment.

The district shall provide transportation for homeless students to the school that is determined to be in their best interest. If the school of origin is outside district boundaries or students experiencing homelessness live in another district but will attend their school of origin in this district, the districts shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation.

More information about the entitlements of homeless youth can be found here on our website.

## ANNUAL NOTICES

The Big Spring School District is required by federal law to provide students, parents, and the public with notices. These notices can also be found on our webpage.

### Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that gives parents and students over the age of 18 (“eligible students”) certain rights concerning the student’s educational records. Under FERPA, parents and eligible students have the following rights:

- To inspect and review the student’s education records maintained by the school within 45 days of the school’s receipt of a written request. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record they wish to inspect. A school official will decide on access and notify the parent or eligible student of the place and time the record(s) may be available for review. The school is not required to provide copies of records and may charge a fee if copies are requested.
- To request an amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. The request must be in writing and clearly specify: (a) the part of the record requesting to be changed, and (b) why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the school official will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for an amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- To consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s record except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official; and/or an official of another school district in which a student seeks to enroll. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill a professional responsibility.
- To file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Annual Notice for Disclosure of School Directory Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that requires the school district, with certain exceptions, to obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's educational records. However, the school district may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent unless you have advised the district to the contrary in accordance with district procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the district to include this type of information in certain school publications. Examples of school publications are:

- A playbill or program, showing your child's role in a drama or music production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists published at school or in newspapers;
- Graduation program;
- Sports statistics listed in programs, such as football or wrestling which may include height and weight of team members.

Directory information can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include but are not limited to:

- Other schools the student is seeking to attend;
- Class ring manufacturers or yearbook publishers;
- State or federal authorities auditing, evaluating programs, or enforcing state/federal laws;
- A court by order of a subpoena.

The school district has designated the following as directory information and may disclose it without written consent:

- Student name, address, telephone number, email, photograph;
- Most recent educational agency or institution attended, grade level degrees, honors, awards, major course of study;
- Participation in school-sponsored activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, date and place of birth.

If you do not want the district to disclose directory information about your child without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by October 1.

### **Parent/Student Procedural Safeguards Notice**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Federal law concerning the education of students with disabilities, requires the Local Education Agency (LEA) to provide parents of a child with a disability with this notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards available under the IDEA and the U.S. Department of Education regulations. This document can be found in its entirety on our district website.

### **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The Big Spring School District (“District”), as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and its corresponding regulations (“Title IX”), does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities.

Any questions regarding Title IX can be directed to the Title IX Coordinator, Dr. Nadine Sanders, the District’s Assistant Superintendent at 717-776-2000 ext. 2409 or [nsanders@bigspring.k12.pa.us](mailto:nsanders@bigspring.k12.pa.us).

### **\* 2026 - 2027 STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT**

Parents/Guardians are required to acknowledge in ASPEN that they have reviewed the Student/Parent handbook as part of the back to school gateway process.