Ferndale Area Elementary School

100 Dartmouth Avenue
Johnstown PA 15905



Student-Parent Handbook

2026-2027

The Ferndale Area School District will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. The Ferndale Area School District employees and participants who have an inquiry or complaint of harassment or discrimination or who need information about accommodations for persons with disabilities, should contact David Gates, Business Manager, Administrative Office, 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905 (Telephone 814-535-1507)

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FERNDALE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
PHONE NUMBERS

Jeffrey Boyer District Superintendent	jboyer@fasdk12.org (814) 535-1507
David Gates District Business Manager	dgates@fasdk12.org 814) 535-1507
Sutton Barron District Special Education Director	sbarron@fasdk12.org (814) 539-6168
Adam Barbe District School Psychologist	abarbe@fasdk12.org (814) 539-6168
Amy Mykut Elementary Principal	amykut@fasdk12.org (814) 535-6724
Dane Domonkos High School Principal	ddomonkos@fasdk12.org (814) 535-1507
Lori McGough Food Service Director	mcgough@fasdk12.org (814) 535-6724
Alexandra Shugars Elementary School Counselor	ashugars@fasdk12.org (814) 535-6724
Maeve Hrabosky MTSS Coordinator	mkoshute@fasdk12.org (814)535-6724
Courtney Johnson Elementary School Nurse	cjohnson@fasdk12.org (814) 535-6724
Melissa Statler Assurance Behavior Consultant	mstatler@fasdk12.org (814) 535-6724
Assurance Behavior Consultant	(814) 535-6724

FERNDALE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT WEBSITE

http://www.fasdk12.org

Principal's Welcome Letter



Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year at Ferndale Area Elementary School! I am honored to serve as the principal of our school and excited to begin another year of learning, growth, and collaboration with our students, families, and staff.

We have an exciting and busy year ahead! Through our **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**, we are committed to meeting the individual academic and behavioral needs of every student by building on their strengths and addressing their challenges through targeted support. Beyond academics, we focus on preparing our children for life by teaching the values of respect, responsibility, and kindness.

Our school-wide **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** program emphasizes positive behavior and effective communication with both peers and adults. As part of the Ferndale Hive, all students are expected to SWARM:

We SWARM at the Hive

Stay Safe
Work Hard
Always be Kind
Respect our Hive
Make Good Choices



These expectations guide our students in their daily interactions and help foster a safe, supportive, and respectful school environment.

At Ferndale, we believe that education is more than academics — it's about nurturing the whole child. We take pride in creating a school culture where every child can thrive emotionally, socially, and academically.

As we embark on this school year, I look forward to partnering with you to ensure your child receives a high-quality, engaging, and well-rounded education. While we may come from different places, with unique experiences and abilities, we are all traveling the same road — **together**. There may be rest stops and detours along the way, and we might need to pick up a few things as we go, but with a shared purpose and united spirit, we will reach our destination — **success at the Hive**!

Sincerely,

Amy Mykut

Dr. Amy Mykut
FASD Elementary Assistant Principal

Ferndale Area School District

Mission

Partnering with students, families, and the community in order to provide an exceptional education within a safe and inclusive environment that empowers our learners to achieve individual aspirations resulting in meaningful contributions to society.

Vision

Every child known, safe, inspired, challenged, and empowered.



FERNDALE AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
STUDENT / PARENT HANDBOOK

GENERAL INFORMATION

ENROLLMENT

The Board shall enroll school age students eligible to attend district schools, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. School age shall be defined as the period from the earliest admission age for the district's kindergarten program until graduation from high school or the end of the school term in which a student reaches the age of twenty-one (21) years, whichever occurs first. District of residence shall be defined as the school district in which a student's parents/guardians reside. (Policy #200)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Ferndale Area Elementary Teachers, Staff, and Administration cannot stress enough the importance of your child being in school every day, on time, if he/she is to achieve the greatest success in his/her education. Please make every attempt to have your child at school on time. **Classes begin at 8:30 A.M. and it is expected that your child will be in their classroom before that time.**

Regular attendance is required and expected of all students. It is impossible to completely make up assignments that are missed. A typical school day is filled with learning that is not limited to books, i.e., Virtual assignments, group projects, discussions, social interactions, and lab work. Paperwork and virtual work can be made up, but the valuable learning opportunities cannot. In cases when children are sick, they should stay home from school.

Act 138 is Pennsylvania's Truancy Law. We know the importance of attendance and follow the law for the welfare of our students. Act 138 is outlined below. You may refer to PA Chapter 11 Codes on Student Attendance.

A. The following is the required procedures for calling off a child from school:

1. If your child will be absent or tardy, call the Elementary Office between 7:45 and 8:15 A.M. at 814-535-6724. If need be, please leave a detailed message.
2. **All absences (illness, vacation, doctor's appointment, etc.) must be**

accounted for with a <u>written excuse</u> from either the parent/guardian OR doctor the day that the student returns to school. After <u>10 days of absence</u>, only physician/medical professional excuses can be accepted.

3. **<u>***Phone calls made regarding an absence still requires a written excuse from parent/guardian and/or doctor</u>.** There are no exceptions.
4. After **<u>3 days</u> with no written excuse** sent to school, the absence will be deemed **<u>unexcused</u>.**
5. If a physician has seen the student for an appointment or illness, please send the **doctor's excuse** to the school. Absences with proper documentation will be recorded as **<u>excused absences</u>**. Please remember, not being present in the school building is an absence regardless of the paperwork; rather it categorizes the time away from school as excused or unexcused absence. Unexcused absences may result in zero credit for any graded work missed the day of the absence.

B. Each absence is recorded.

- **Act 138 reads, "After 3 days of unexcused absences"** a student is considered to be **<u>TRUANT</u>.** The law states that the school district is required to notify parents/guardians, therefore, an unexcused absence letter will be mailed.
- **Act 138 reads, "After <u>6 days of unexcused absences</u>"; a student is deemed to be "<u>HABITUALLY TRUANT</u>". In this case, the following is required by the school district:**
    - Students must be referred to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program.
    - A school attendance improvement plan (SAIP) will be created during a conference with members of the Elementary Student Assistance Program (ESAP) committee.
    - Children and Youth Services/Juvenile Probation should be contacted regarding excessive absenteeism.
- **Act 138 reads, "A <u>maximum of 10 days of EXCUSED absences are permitted in one school year</u>.**
    - **After 10 days of absences, an excuse from a <u>licensed physician</u> is required or absences become UNEXCUSED. <u>Parent excuses will not be accepted at this point</u>.**

- **After 10 days of unexcused absences**, a citation will be issued with the local magistrate.

*In such instances of chronic illness, a blanket excuse can be forwarded from the physician that is treating the student. A letter stating such a condition should be sent to the nurse as soon as a diagnosis is specified. **Continued absences may result in student failure, substantial fines, and loss of student participation in school activities.**

C. Students Tardy for School – There is an expectation for students to be in school on time every day. **Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. will be marked tardy. In the case of tardiness, please call the school at 814-535-6724.** Students with early morning or late afternoon appointments are expected to be in school for most of the day.

- Students will be marked for ½ day absence if arriving at school after **11:30 a.m. or leaving before 12:00 p.m.** for an appointment even with a doctor's excuse for an appointment.
- Tardiness for 10 or more days, will require a parent meeting so that a Truancy Elimination Plan can be created to improve student attendance.
- Tardiness for 15 or more days, will require a School Truancy Referral be submitted to Cambria County Children and Youth Services

DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENTS

For early dismissals due to a doctor's appointment, a note should be sent to the school alerting the teacher and the office. **All parents are required to come into the lobby and sign out their child for the appointment. This holds true for students returning to school following an appointment.** The parent **is not** to go directly to the child's classroom. Under no circumstances will students be released to anyone other than the parent or legal guardian without written permission from the parent or legal guardian. Because regular school attendance is vital to a student's academic success, every effort should be made to schedule appointments after school hours.

If a student is returning to school following an appointment with a medical professional, **a doctor's excuse must be submitted to the office upon returning. A student will be marked unexcused without documentation of appointments.** The student should attend school prior to and/or following an appointment that is scheduled during the instructional day.

ASSIGNMENTS WHEN ABSENT

All effort will be made by the elementary school to send home any missed work due to student absence. At the time of your call to the school regarding your child's absence, please state who can take the work home for the student. If parents are going to pick up the missed assignments, please phone the office by **noon** to allow time to gather necessary materials. Parents may pick up the work in the office **no sooner than 2:50 p.m.**

A student with an excused absence will be permitted to make up work and receive credit for said work. He/she will be given the number of days to make up work **equal** to the missed days of an **excused** absence.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES/HOLIDAY EVENTS

For celebrations within the classroom, nutritious and allergy safe alternatives are highly recommended and can be purchased at cost through the school district. Contact Lori McGough, Food Service Director, for more information and prices. Nonfood options to be used in celebration are welcomed.

If parents/guardians choose to bring in foods and beverages from sources outside of our cafeteria, the following rules apply and will be carried out in every situation:

Birthday Parties:

1. Parties must be coordinated with the child's teacher at least **1 week** in advance of the desired celebration date. Food items must be brought in at least the day before the party. Without proper notice and planning, we cannot guarantee the date and time of the birthday celebration.
2. All food items must be **store bought (this does not include bakeries) and individually wrapped. Nutrition information labels for these snacks must be provided on the individual wrapper OR on the box/bag containing the treats. The nutrition label must be provided for the homeroom teacher to review the ingredients and nutritional value.**
3. No home-baked goods are permitted.

4. **Treats that do not comply with these rules will not be distributed to the class.**
5. Parents/Guardians will annually sign an indemnification agreement. The agreement regarding using Ferndale Area Elementary School cafeteria-provided food items versus parent-provided food items will state the following: If I choose to send in snacks for a birthday/holiday celebration, I agree to hold the district, its staff, and its representatives harmless from any and all claims, which may result from health issues/allergic reactions that may occur.

Classroom parties for the four (4) major holidays (Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter):

1. Food items are recommended to be brought in at least the day before the party, but treats will be accepted the day of the party.
2. Follow rules 2, 3, and 4 above.

*Invitations to parties **will not be distributed in school unless the entire classroom is invited.**

FOOD SERVICES

The food service program shall be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, as well as federal guidelines established by the Child Nutrition Division of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The district shall ensure that, in the operation of the food service program, no student, staff member, or other individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability. (Policy #808)

Students receive a meal menu each month.

FOOD ALLERGY MANAGEMENT

The focus of food allergy management shall be on prevention, education, awareness, communication, and emergency response. (Policy #209.1)

Food Allergy Table

To help ensure the safety and well-being of students with medically documented food allergies, Ferndale Area Elementary School provides a designated Food Allergy Table during both breakfast and lunch. This table is available for students who require an allergen-aware eating environment as determined by the school nurse and documented medical information. Students seated at the Food Allergy Table may invite classmates to join them, provided those students are eating foods that do not contain the identified allergens and follow all expectations established by the school nurse and cafeteria staff. Tables are cleaned and sanitized according to district procedures to help reduce the risk of cross-contact. Families are encouraged to notify the school nurse of any food allergies and provide the necessary medical documentation so appropriate accommodations can be made.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The normal school day begins at **8:30 a.m.** Students that are driven to school by a family member may be dropped off at the elementary lobby **NO EARLIER THAN 8:00 a.m.** Dismissal is at **3:10** p.m. for students. A **WRITTEN NOTE** from the parent is **required** if the student will be picked up by the parent. If there is a need to change the daily schedule by the district, there will be a written notice sent home to the parent, announcements will be made via One Call Now and notice will be provided on social media. **Please establish a plan so that your child is always supervised in the event of an early dismissal**.

For the safety of your child, please establish **ONE DAILY** BUS STOP after school. We do understand that there are circumstances that necessitate a change on a few occasions (babysitter, daycare, shared custody). **PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO NOTIFY THE ELEMENTARY OFFICE WEEKLY AND IN WRITING ONLY** to ensure your child's safe arrival to his/her destination. We cannot accommodate students wishing to ride home on buses with friends.

AFTER SCHOOL PICK-UP

Please send in a **written note** if it is necessary for you to pick your child up at the school instead of riding the school bus. If a child **does not** have a written note, she/he will be required to ride the bus home at the end of the day. **Proper notification eliminates confusion and ensures the safety of your child so refrain from daily changes unless in the case of an emergency.**
Please arrange to pick up your child at the end of the day **at dismissal time**. Teachers are expected to conduct classes until dismissal time. For afterschool

pickups, parents will be assigned a placard to be placed on their rearview mirror. Students will exit the building at the **Emory Street entrance** instead of the entrance at the front of the building on Dartmouth Avenue. Considering the seriousness that we take in ensuring the safety of all our students, pick-up vehicles must have the placard that corresponds with the student's assigned number in order to be dismissed.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)



Together we SWARM! This is our mission statement for our PBIS program. PBIS is a schoolwide initiative in which a proactive method to discipline is utilized. It promotes appropriate behavior and an increase in learning. Teaching behavioral expectations and recognizing students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. The purpose of PBIS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is expected and becomes the norm.

Research supports that providing a positive and direct approach to learning and behavior is a favored alternative to the traditional punishment-based alternative. This in turn will increase our school's positive climate. SWARM stands for S-Stay Safe, W-Work Hard, A-Always Be Kind, R-Respect Our Hive, M-Make Good Choices.

DETENTION

After-school detention is held in the elementary school for the following issues: misbehavior on the bus, incomplete class work and/or homework assignments or other disciplinary purposes. Detention will be assigned by the principal or by an individual teacher. Parents are notified when a detention is assigned, and arrangements are made. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation from school for any detained student.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES (PA SCHOOL CODE)

1. No student has the right to interfere with the education of his fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.
2. Students have a responsibility to attend school regularly.
3. It is the responsibility of students to be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accord with them.
4. Students have a responsibility to express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner so as not to offend or slander others.
5. Students have a responsibility to volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
6. Students have a responsibility to dress and groom themselves to meet fair standards of safety and health and so as not to cause substantial disruption to the educational process.
7. Until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed, students are responsible for assuming the rule is in full effect.
8. Students are responsible for assisting the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled in the school.
9. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of and comply with state and local laws.
10. Using public facilities and equipment with proper care is a student responsibility.
11. Submitting a proper excuse for absence from school is a student responsibility.
12. Students are responsible for being on time to all classes and other school functions.
13. Making all necessary arrangements for making up work when absent from school is a student responsibility.
14. It is a student responsibility to pursue and attempt to satisfactorily complete the courses of study prescribed by state and local authorities.
15. Students are responsible for avoiding inaccuracies in student newspapers or publications and indecent or obscene language.

<u>STUDENT RIGHTS</u> (22PaCode 12.3-12.8)

1. Suspension from school:
    a. Students suspended from school will be removed from the regularly scheduled instructional program.
    b. Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from one to ten consecutive school days. Students suspended will be removed from the regular school program and assigned to a designated location in school: Comprehensive Suspension Program (CSP) or assigned to a designated location out of school during the term of the suspension.
    c. The principal or designee in charge of the school may issue suspension.
    d. No student shall be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond.
    e. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened.
    f. After giving the student notice of the intended suspension, the school will immediately attempt contact of the parent/guardian to notify the parent of the suspension, its cause, its duration, and the expected restrictions on the student during the suspension. A written confirmation will be mailed to the home.
    g. In those cases where the parent/guardian cannot be reached, every effort should be made to keep the child in school until the end of the school day unless the nature of the offense is so severe that other arrangements are necessary. Written notice will be provided to the student. The student will be expected to deliver the written notice to the parent. Written notice will also be mailed to the parent within a reasonable time following the assigned suspension.
    h. When a student is suspended beyond three days, the student and parent/guardian have the right to attend an informal hearing, which will be held within the first five days of the suspension. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student and parent to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the incident for which the student is being suspended and for the parent/guardian or the student to show why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents/guardians to meet with the administrator to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.

The informal hearing includes the following due process requirements:

1) Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parent/guardian and to the student.
2) Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
3) A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
4) A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
5) The district shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first five days of suspension.

i. Students shall have the right without penalty to make up any work or exams missed while suspended. It is the responsibility of the student to discover what work was missed and complete it in a reasonable time.
j. When an exceptional student is suspended the process will be in accordance with requirements as defined by state and federal laws and regulations.

2. Expulsion from School
   a. Expulsion is removal of a student from the regular school program for a period exceeding ten school days up to, and including, permanent removal from school up to one school term (one year).

   b. All expulsions require an opportunity for the student and parent/guardian to request a formal hearing. The hearing may be held before the board of school directors, a duly authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the school board. The formal hearing includes the following due process requirements:

      1) Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parent/guardian by certified mail.
      2) Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing must be given.
      3) The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
      4) The student has the right to be represented by counsel.

5) The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
6) The student has the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
7) The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.
8) A record must be kept of the hearing, either by a stenographer or by tape recorder. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.
9) The hearing must be held in the time required by law.

c. During the period prior to the hearing and prior to the decision of the board, the student shall be placed in his/her normal class unless it is determined, after an informal hearing, that a student's presence in his/her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others. If 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 days if the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.

d. Where a student disagrees with the results of a hearing, an appeal may be taken to the Court of Common Pleas, or any other appropriate court.

e. Students who have been expelled who are less than 17 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law, and they must be provided an education. (See Pennsylvania Act 26 for exceptions)

1) The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parent/guardian through placement in another school, through tutorial or correspondence study, or through another educational program approved by the superintendent.
2) If the parent/guardian is unable to provide for the required education, they must within 30 days, submit to the school district written evidence so stating. The District then has the responsibility to make some provision for the student's education. If 30 days

pass without the district receiving satisfactory evidence that the required education is being provided to the student, it must again contact the parent/guardian and pending the parent's/guardian's provision of such education, the District must make some provision for the student's education.

f. Expulsion of any exceptional student will be processed in accordance with all relevant state and federal laws and regulations.

DISCIPLINE/STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

It is our shared belief that life and its consequences are all about choice. We, here at the elementary school, believe that one of our goals is to mentor and guide the students in realizing good decision-making and the consequences that come with each choice. We aim to teach each student to become self-disciplined individuals. However, if a student makes a choice to violate school rules, discipline measures will be taken, and penalties will be measured upon the severity or the persistence of the misconduct. **There is no division of authority among the faculty of the Ferndale Area Elementary School.** Teachers are authorized to reprimand or correct misbehaving students at any time or any place during the school day and at any school function or activity. Students that fail to comply with school rules and/or continue to demonstrate negative behaviors may lose privileges such as field trips, participation in activities or other appropriate penalties as determined by the principal. A copy of the FASD discipline policy is seen below. The District's Discipline Policy #218 and consequences can also be found on our school website (www.fasdk12.org). Paper copies can also be requested at the Elementary School Office.

The actual sequence of disciplinary action may vary, depending on the individual case. In general, the following sequence is followed:

a. Teacher and student
b. Teacher and parent
c. Teacher, parent, and student
d. Teacher, parent, student and principal or guidance counselor
e. All the above and other school personnel involved.

1. Recess Restriction - Students may lose up to **50% of their recess**. During this time, students will have the opportunity to reflect on their choices, complete a behavior reflection, or discuss strategies for making better

decisions in the future. Student's could be signed to the Behavior Intervention Room(BIR), a classroom, or the principal's office.

2. Lunch Detention - Supervised separation from the student body during their lunch time. Student's could be signed to the Behavior Intervention Room(BIR), a classroom, or the principal's office.

3. After-school Detention - Students will be supervised in the Behavior Intervention Room (BIR) or a classroom after school to work on homework and/or assignments.

4. In-School Suspension – Separation from the student body while assigned to the principal's office or another classroom. The teachers will send academic work to the office and monitor the student's progress.

5. Out of School Suspension (OSS) 1-10 Days– Exclusion from school for an offense for a period of up to three school days can be assigned by the principal/administration. However, if an exclusion from school is assigned for a period of up to ten school days. An informal hearing before the principal/administration is offered to the student and student's parents. In all suspension cases, the student has the responsibility to make up exams and work missed.

6. Expulsion – Exclusion from school is for an offense for a period exceeding ten school days and may result in permanent removal from school rolls.

Our school district's policies on drugs and alcohol, and the policy on harassment are described elsewhere in this handbook. Violations of these policies, as well as violations that show disregard for civil, state, or federal laws will be dealt with severely and may result in detentions, suspensions, or expulsions.

Continued defiance of rules of behavior may result in detention, suspension, or expulsion. Students may also lose privileges of field trips, participation in activities or other appropriate penalties determined by the principal.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

LEVEL I:

Examples and Recommendations

a. Lying
b. Eating in unauthorized areas
c. Horseplay or scuffling
d. Dress code violation per building handbook
e. Disruptive behavior/noise
f. Possession/use of non-instructional items
g. Public displays of affection
h. Running in classrooms, halls, cafeteria, locker rooms, etc.
i. Tardiness to school, class, or study hall
j. Violation of classroom procedures established by teacher
k. Littering

Disciplinary Options/Responses

A. Verbal Reprimand
B. Discussion with student
C. Isolation Within Classroom
D. Withdrawal of Privileges
E. Detention (as per building guidelines assigned by teacher)
F. Special Assignment
G. Telephone Call or Written Communication to Parent
H. Parental Conference
I. Administrative detention (Saturday, evening, morning)
J. Confiscation of items that are disruptive to the educational day

LEVEL II:

Examples and Recommendations

a. Continuation of Unmodified Level I misbehaviors
b. Acting in an insubordinate manner
c. Cheating
d. Bus violation
e. Cafeteria violation
f. Cutting class/study hall
g. Failure to complete assigned discipline.
h. Being in unauthorized/unassigned areas of the school building/grounds
i. Misbehavior at a school sponsored activity
j. Possession of obscene materials
k. Use of obscene language or gestures
l. Possession/use of electronic devices
m. Improper use of Internet
n. Engaging in unsafe behaviors/horseplay
o. Minor vandalism

Disciplinary Options/Responses

A. Warning
B. Administrative Detention (Saturday, evening, morning)
C. Withdrawal of Privileges
D. In-School Suspension
E. Out-of-School Suspension
F. Parental Conference

LEVEL III:

Examples and Recommendations	Disciplinary Options/Responses
a. Continuation of Unmodified Level I and/or Level II misbehaviors b. Falsification of records, excuses, passes, schedules, etc. c. Leaving school ground without permission d. Assault and/or battery on another student e. Dissemination of unauthorized materials f. Extortion/gambling g. Fighting h. Indecent exposure i. Intimidation/threat to students and/or school personnel j. Theft/possession/sale of another's property k. Possession and or use of tobacco or vape products or look a likes l. Flagrant disrespect to faculty or staff m. Bullying	A. Temporary removal from class B. In-School Suspension C. Out-of-School Suspension D. Administrative detention (evening) E. Parental Conference F. Withdrawal of Privileges G. Restitution of Property and Damages H. Referral to Outside Agencies I. Referral to appropriate Law Enforcement Agencies J. Confiscation of items that are disruptive to the educational day K. Transition Classroom Assignment

LEVEL IV:

Examples and Recommendations	Disciplinary Options/Responses
a. Continuation of Levels, I, II, and/or III Misbehaviors b. Assault and/or battery on school personnel c. Bomb Threat d. Engaging in any other conduct contrary to the criminal code or ordinances of the Commonwealth/Community on school grounds or at school sponsored activities or of school policies e. Engaging in conduct so disruptive as to interfere with the orderly operation of the schools or which create a clear and present danger to the health and welfare of the school community f. Harassment of school personnel and students g. Leading or participating in a riot h. Possession/use/furnishing/selling of controlled substances, alcohol, or drugs i. Possession/use/transfer of weapons or explosives j. Setting off incendiary devices, firecrackers, smoke bombs, etc. k. Unwarranted pulling of a fire alarm l. Major vandalism of school property or personal property of school personnel or students m. Repeated bullying	A. All proven offenses in Level IV have a mandatory suspension with informal hearing B. Referral to appropriate Law Enforcement Agencies C. Restitution D. Formal Hearing with Board of School Directors E. Expulsion F. Removal to Alternative Education Setting G. Suspension pending expulsion H. Transition Classroom Assignment

STUDENT SURVEYS

Surveys conducted by outside agencies, organizations and individuals shall be approved by the Board, based on the Superintendent's recommendation, prior to administration to students. (Policy #235.1)

EMERGENCY INFORMATION / CHANGES

For the safety of all, students are required to have an emergency card on hand in the school office. Parents are asked to complete and return these cards at the beginning of the school year. Please be sure to notify all parties that are listed on the card as emergency contacts of their responsibility to your child. In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary to contact one of these parties if the school is unable to contact the parent.

Please note: Students who do not have a completed Emergency Information Card on file will not be permitted to participate in any class field trips until the form is returned.

***Please notify the school office if there are any changes in this emergency information throughout the school year. It is important to keep information up to date in the event of an emergency.**

HOMEWORK

Assignments that are to be completed at home are to be seen as a method of connecting school and families. It allows parents and guardians to observe what occurs in their child's education and allows the child to practice what skills were instructed on a given day. Reading homework is vital.

Homework that is not completed and returned to teachers by the due date will be completed during free time. **Three** consecutive incomplete homework assignments will result in after-school detention for students in **grades 2-6**. Alternate arrangements will be made for students in grades K-1. If a student continues in the habit of not completing homework assignments, he/she may be referred to the afterschool detention.

ELEMENTARY STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ESAP)

The Elementary Student Assistance Program (ESAP) team is composed of the Multitiered Systems of Support coordinator, principal, guidance counselor, nurse, school psychologist, and teacher representatives. The team's purpose is to support and assist teachers and families with students who are experiencing social, emotional, academic issues, and attendance problems. A plan is created by the team and implemented for the success of the student. Referrals can be made by any teacher or by the parent/guardian. Information pertaining to parental referrals can be obtained in the elementary school office or by contacting our school counselor.

GIFTED EDUCATION

The Ferndale Area School District offers gifted support services in both of its buildings. This program focuses on enrichment and acceleration activities that supplement the regular education program. Instructional services are provided through direct instruction, teacher and student consultation, and classroom enrichment. The District conducts a screening process based upon review of all educational records and parent/teacher input to identify students who might qualify for gifted support services. When the data supports the need for a full evaluation, the District will seek parental consent. The evaluation includes observations from school personnel, performance on standardized assessments, review of the student's academic and health records, as well as family and teacher input. If the results of the gifted evaluation indicate that the student meets the Chapter 16 criteria as an individual who needs gifted support services, the gifted support team meets and develops a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP). Parents who believe that their child might need gifted support services should send a written request for evaluation to the building principal. (See Policy # 114)

Copies of parent rights and confidentiality issues are routinely provided to parents with the permission to evaluate and are also available to parents upon request. Parents who need more information about gifted educational programs and services or parental due process rights are encouraged to contact Adam Barbe, FASD School Psychologist, at 814-539-6168.

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

Ferndale Area Elementary School's guidance program believes that the foundation of successful learning includes education regarding the development of positive character traits. These traits will enable students to experience life with integrity by making positive life decisions towards themselves, others, and their community. Implementation of character development skills is delivered to students via four essential program components: guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and system support.

LOST AND FOUND

Every year there are numerous unclaimed items lost by students. There is a lost and found area in the cafeteria. Please have your child check for items that she/he may have lost. Please put the student's name on all items of removable clothing or belongings that they carry. Hats, gloves, sweaters, scarves, etc. could easily be returned if marked with the child's name. Any items not claimed by the end of the school year will be donated to a local charity.

MEDICATIONS

The school district will cooperate with parents and their medical practitioners in distributing prescribed medication when it must be taken during school hours. Ideally, all medication should be given at home. It is also recognized that at the present time many students can attend regular school because of the effectiveness of medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities and illnesses. However, any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day must comply with school regulations. These regulations include the following: prescription medication will be administered by the school nurse or other authorized personnel under the following conditions:

1. Upon written request from the physician and parent/guardian to the school officials will medication be administered to the student during school hours.
2. Included in the request must be the name of the student, name of medication, dosage, frequency, and route of administration. Physician's signature is mandatory.
3. All medication must be in the original protective container and properly labeled by the physician or pharmacy.

The administration of non-prescription medication is discouraged and can usually be avoided by adjusting the time schedule around school hours. If it is necessary for a child to receive non-prescription medication during school hours, it will be administered by the school nurse or other authorized personnel under the following conditions:

1. Receipt of written request or authorization from parent or guardian and a physician's signature.
2. Included within the request must be the name of the student, name of medication, dosage, frequency of administration, and route of administration.
3. All medication must be in its original unopened container that is properly labeled.

****All medications (prescription and non-prescription) MUST be transported to and from school by a parent or guardian for the safety of all students. <u>No student will be permitted to carry any medication at any time</u>. **In the case of cough drops, students may bring them to school with a note from parent/guardian giving permission for them to be administered. Cough drops must be given to the teacher; students are not permitted to carry these on their own.**

A student may carry inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors **only after** written consent by a physician is obtained to verify student knowledge of the use and administration of the medication. (Policy #210.1)

Neither the school nurse nor authorized staff will dispense medications of any kind without written permission from the parent/guardian and a physician.

Any medications not picked up by a parent at the end of the school year will be discarded. (Policy #210)

<u>IMMUNIZATIONS</u>

The PA Department of Health requires that ALL students entering school have a series of immunizations unless the child has a documented medical or religious/philosophical exemption. The requirement for kindergarten students is:

DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus & Pertussis)	4th dose after 4th birthday
Polio	4th does after 4th birthday
Hepatitis B	3 doses
MMR (Measles, Mumps & Rubella)	2 doses

Varicella (Chickenpox) 2 doses or documented proof of disease

Immunizations must be completed by the first day of the school year-NO EXCEPTIONS. If a student does not have all the above immunizations by the first day of school, needs additional doses, and the next dose is medically appropriate then your child must receive the necessary dose(s) within the first five days of school or risk exclusion. Records can be faxed to the elementary at (814)536-6506. 28 PA.Code CH 23 (Policy #203)

SCHOOL NURSE

The responsibilities of a school nurse are so much more than providing first aid during school hours. She is responsible for maintaining health records for all students, including immunizations; physical & dental examinations; vision, height, weight & body mass index measurements on all students; hearing screenings on Pre-K Counts-3rd, 7th & 11th grade students and scoliosis checks on 6th & 7th graders. On occasion, she assists in health-related instruction and disease management assistance with some of our students. The school nurse does not perform duties that are the responsibility of a physician.

The PA School Code mandates that all children upon entry of 6th grade and 11th grade have a physical assessment from a licensed professional. It also requires that all students upon entry of 3rd grade and 7th grade have a dental screening by a licensed professional. **All physicals and dentals done by your family doctor must be turned into the school no later than October 31. It may be dated up to 1-year prior. Any student who does not turn in a mandated physical or dental form will be scheduled for an assessment by the school physician and/or the school dentist.**

Students are not permitted to use the nursing station to rest unless authorized by the school nurse or administrative staff.

There are certain instances when the nurse is mandated by the PA Department of Health to exclude students from school. An example is when there is a question of a communicable disease (pink eye, etc.). If excluded, the student will have to be seen and released by a physician prior to returning to school. Written notification is required before returning to school.

Ferndale Area School District has a no nit procedure pertaining to Lice.

PUPIL ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The school district is not responsible for payment of doctor or hospital bills you might incur for injuries that happen in or around the school. This includes physical education classes, cafeteria, and recess.

We urge all students to carry the pupil's accident insurance that is available through the school. Medical and hospital coverages are explained in the policy you receive when you purchase the insurance. This coverage is available only at the beginning of the school year. A letter with information on how to apply online for the pupil's accident insurance will be sent home with all students.

School accident insurance only covers interscholastic injuries after the primary insurer has been billed.

PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCES, SCHOOL VISITS

A scheduled conference day near the beginning of the school year provides opportunities for parents to meet with teachers. However, a parent need not wait for an invitation to a conference. A parent may request a conference at any time. Parents may contact teachers to establish a meeting date and time.

These conferences are a valuable time for reporting student progress to parents and for parents to provide teachers with information that could help them better understand each child. Parent-Teacher **conferences must be scheduled in advance. All visitors are expected to have scheduled appointments. Appointments may be scheduled before or after school, or at a mutually convenient time. Exceptions may be made in the case of emergencies. Parent-Teacher Organization meetings and building-wide programs with open invitations from building administration are considered scheduled appointments.** If you request a conference with a teacher and for some reason you do not receive a reply, please contact the principal.

Messages for individual teachers may be left before and after school hours using the district's voice-mail system. To leave such a message, dial the elementary office (814-535-6724) and follow the directions as prompted.

All visitors entering the Elementary building must use the LobbyGuard system to enter the main part of the school. Visitors must have their state issued I.D. with

them and scan it into the system. A visitor's pass will be issued at the machine and visitors must report to the Elementary Office directly upon entering school property. At no time should a parent/visitor go directly to a classroom, cafeteria, etc. without first reporting to the office. This procedure is required to assure the safety of students, faculty, and staff.

PERSONAL PROPERTY/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The Board prohibits use of personal electronic devices by students during the school day in district buildings, on district property, on district buses, during the time students are under the supervision of the district, and in locker rooms, bathrooms, health suites and other changing areas at any time. Students shall not photograph or videotape other individuals at school or on school-sponsored transportation.

Cell phones and other personal electronic devices shall be turned off and kept out of sight. (Policy #237).

Students are expected to respect the personal property of others. Students are not to use or take items that belong to others without the permission of the owner. **Damage or theft of personal property will result in disciplinary action by the principal.**

Unless items are needed for a class or school activity, they may not be brought to school. Items prohibited include, but are not limited to, electronic games and smartwatches.

The school district is not responsible for any prohibited items brought to school. **Any prohibited items that are confiscated will be placed in the principal's office until parents or guardians retrieve them.** Items will not be returned to students.

REPORT CARDS / RETENTION

Report cards in grades one through six are issued four times throughout the school year. Kindergarten students receive three report cards yearly. Pre-K Counts students will receive a progress report twice yearly. Mid-term reports are sent home in the case of academic deficiencies. Academic grades/reports are for parental information based on predetermined PA Core Standards/Competencies. Grades are not a reward or a punishment; rather,

they reflect your child's academic performance. Any questions regarding grades should be addressed with your child's teacher.

When a student has a pattern of poor or failing grades and/or has excessive absences, it may be necessary for the student to be retained for their academic success in future years. Prior to retention, parents will be consulted. Remember, the overall benefit to the child will be the determining factor for any retention or promotion.

SCHOOL DELAYS, CANCELLATIONS AND EARLY DISMISSALS

If it becomes necessary to announce the cancellation of school, a delay in the start of the day or an early dismissal, this information will be relayed via the One Call Now system. Every effort will be made to give you as much notice as possible. With many parents working, it may be a good idea to form a network with relatives, neighbors, and friends to look after each other's children in the event that one of you is not home and did not hear the news of the early dismissal. **The parent/guardian is responsible for formulating an emergency plan with each child. Be sure that the student knows what to do and where to go in case of early dismissal.**

The following radio and television stations will also be notified:

WJAC-TV	Channel 6
WTAJ-TV	Channel 10
WGLU	92.1 FM
WKYE	96.5 FM
WYSN	101.7 FM
WJAC	850 AM
WADJ	1330 AM
WMTZ 1	490 AM

Before your child leaves for the bus stop, check for such announcements. Because media systems sometimes break down, it is advisable to check two or three different locations to verify the school closing or delay. Notice will also be provided through the aforementioned systems in the event of a non-scheduled early dismissal from school.
Two-hour early dismissals are scheduled before Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. Throughout the year, there will be additional 2-hour early dismissals for

clerical work for teachers and teacher in-services. Families will be reminded of these on the school calendar, menu, the school newsletter, and social media.

SCHOOL PROPERTY/VANDALISM

We take pride in our building and property. To maintain its appearance, we need the cooperation of **all** to maintain its appearance. Abuse or vandalism of school property will not be tolerated. Offenses of this nature will be punished as per the Ferndale Area School District's discipline policy.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Ferndale Area Elementary School provides services for exceptional students. If you have a child that is exceptional, or thought to be exceptional, **and** needs special services or programs, please contact the school. We will take the steps necessary to begin the evaluation process and provide services to your child. The building principal can provide further information on exceptionalities.

TEXTBOOKS AND LIBRARY BOOKS

The textbooks given to students for the year are numbered to maintain a record of inventory. Students may be required to bring home small books for reading based upon their reading level. We are also proud of the vast number of books that we have to offer from our school library. Students are expected to take care of the books and return ALL READING BOOKS AND LIBRARY BOOKS AS SCHEDULED. In order to stop the loss of thousands of dollars in materials each year, parents will be required to pay for lost or destroyed books. A letter will be sent home informing of the book lost or destroyed and the amount owed. If the child destroys or loses a consumable workbook, it will be necessary for the parent to pay for a replacement workbook.

REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS

Upon request by a parent/guardian or student, the district will make available existing information about the curriculum, including academic standards to be achieved, instructional materials and assessment techniques. (Policy #105.1)

MATH SUPPORT (HIVE Block)

The Ferndale Area Elementary School provides Title I math services via a school wide model. This program provides a balance of instruction in computation and problem solving. As a parent, it is vital that you support your child's education in the home. Upon request by a parent/guardian or student, the district will make available existing information about the curriculum, including PA Core Standards to be achieved, instructional materials and assessment techniques. (Policy 105.1) Helping with homework, asking about their day, or discussion of a certain topic are easy ways for you to help educate your child. Only with cooperation between school and home can we meet the educational needs of your child.

TITLE I READING

The Ferndale Area Elementary School provides Title I reading services via a school wide model. Guided reading and literature circles are part of our reading program. Using many types of text and literature, we can match individual abilities and build reading confidence. Upon request by a parent/guardian or student, the district will make available existing information about the curriculum, including PA Core Standards to be achieved, instructional materials and assessment techniques. (Policy 105.1) Students will not only be learning to read but reading to learn. ***The key to your child's education is gaining a love of reading, and with your help and support, our program can be successful.***

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT (MTSS)

Pennsylvania's MTSS is a standards-aligned, comprehensive school improvement framework within the areas of academic, behavioral, and social/emotional components to help all students maximize their learning potential. Students' progress is closely monitored at each necessary stage of intervention to determine the need for further research-based instruction and/or interventions. This process will further help to ensure that our students build a very solid educational foundation.

NONDISCRIMINATION IN SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 is a federal law that states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. "Title IX applies to all educational institutions, both public and private, that receive federal funds. Athletics programs are considered educational programs and activities.

There are three basic parts of Title IX as it applies to athletics:

1. Participation: Title IX requires that women and men be provided equitable opportunities to participate in sports. Title IX does not require institutions to offer identical sports but an equal opportunity to play;
2. Scholarships: Title IX requires that female and male student-athletes receive athletics scholarship dollars proportional to their participation; and
3. Other benefits: Title IX requires the equal treatment of female and male student-athletes in the provisions of: (a) equipment and supplies; (b) scheduling of games and practice times; (c) travel and daily allowance/per diem; (d) access to tutoring; (e) coaching, (f) locker rooms, practice and competitive facilities; (g) medical and training facilities and services; (h) housing and dining facilities and services; (i) publicity and promotions; (j) support services and (k) recruitment of student-athletes.

Although it is the application of Title IX to athletics that has gained the greatest public visibility, the law applies to every single aspect of education, including course offerings, counseling and counseling materials, financial assistance, student health and insurance benefits and/or other services, housing, marital and parental status of students, physical education and athletics, education programs and activities, and employment. Title IX benefits everyone -- girls and boys, women, and men. The law requires educational institutions to maintain policies, practices and programs that do not discriminate against anyone on the basis of gender. Elimination of discrimination against women and girls has received more attention because females historically have faced greater gender restrictions and barriers in education. However, Title IX also has benefited men and boys. A continued effort to achieve educational equity has benefited

all students by moving toward creation of school environments where all students may learn and achieve the highest standards.

Ferndale Area School District Title IX Statement

Ferndale Area School District affirms that no person shall, on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, age, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, veteran's status, or genetic information be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any educational program or activity. In addition, no person shall, on any of these bases, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in employment, or recruitment, or consideration, or selection, therefore, whether full-time or part-time, under any educational program or activity operated by the district. The District shall make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities upon request.

FASD is committed to the maintenance of a safe, positive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination, by providing all students course offerings, counseling, assistance, services, employment, athletics, and extracurricular activities without any form of discrimination, including Title IX sexual harassment. Discrimination is inconsistent with the rights of students and the educational and programmatic goals of the district and is prohibited at, or in the course of, district-sponsored programs or activities, including transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activities. Violations of this policy, including acts of retaliation as described in this policy or knowingly providing false information, may result in disciplinary consequences under applicable Board policy and procedures. See the full policy #103 on the district website.

Ferndale Area School District Anti-Harassment/Anti-Retaliation Statement

The District does not tolerate sexual harassment. Any individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual harassment is strongly encouraged to make a report which will be promptly and thoroughly investigated. Retaliation against individuals who file complaints about sexual harassment, or participate in the investigation of such complaints, is strictly prohibited.

Students, Faculty, or staff found to have engaged in sexual harassment or retaliation will be promptly disciplined, and such discipline may include, if circumstances warrant, suspension, expulsion and/or termination. Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to work together to prevent sexual harassment.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, the District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs or activities that it operates. This requirement not to discriminate in the District's education programs and activities extends to employment with and admission to the District.

Ferndale Area School District Policy 103 - Nondiscrimination In School and Classroom Practices. This Policy Identifies the Compliance Officer, Reporting/Complaint Procedures, and Appeal Procedures.

NONDISCRIMINATION – QUALIFIED STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The district shall provide to each qualified student with a disability enrolled in the district, without cost to the student or parent/guardian, a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). This includes provision of education and related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to afford each qualified student with a disability equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits from educational programs and extracurricular activities without discrimination, to the same extent as each student without a disability, consistent with federal and state laws and regulations. (Policy # 103.1)

MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL ADULT/STUDENT BOUNDARIES

The Ferndale Area School District ensures that all parties including employees, volunteers, student teachers and independent contractors and their employees who interact with students or are present on school grounds abide by the policy and are expected to maintain a professional, moral, legal, and ethical relationship with district students that are conducive to an effective, safe learning environment. All adults are informed of conduct that is prohibited and the disciplinary actions that may be applied for violation of board policies, administrative regulations, rules, and procedures. (Policy #824)

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF CHILD FIND AND SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

School districts are required by the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA 2004) to provide a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities who need special education and related services. (Note: the duty to identify, locate, evaluate, and provide special education services to school-age individuals incarcerated in local correction institutions rests with the school district within whose boundaries such an institution is located.) School-age children who need special education and related services are identified as children with disabilities. These students have been identified as needing specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities:

*Autism
*Emotional disturbance
*Deafness
*Hearing impairment
*Specific learning disability
*Mental retardation
*Multiple Disabilities
*Orthopedic Impairment due to chronic or acute health problems
*Speech and language impairment
*Visual impairment including blindness
*Deaf-blindness
*Traumatic Brain Injury
*Developmental Delay
*Other health impairment

Intermediate Unit 8 and each school district in Bedford, Blair, Cambria, and Somerset counties has established and implemented procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate students and young children suspected of being exceptional. These procedures include screening activities which include but are not limited to review of group-based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, and report cards); hearing screening (at a minimum of kindergarten, special ungraded classes, first, second, third, seventh, and eleventh grades); vision screening (every grade level); motor screening; and speech and language screening. When screening indicates that a student may be a child with a disability, the school district will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. Parents who think their child is exceptional may also request that the school district conduct an evaluation.

Evaluation is defined as procedures used in the determination of whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs. This evaluation is conducted by a multidisciplinary team (MDT) that includes the parent and a group of qualified professionals.

An IEP team develops a written Individualized Education Plan (IEP) based on the evaluation results. An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, objectives (when required), and the individualized programs and services that the student will receive. IEPs are reviewed on an annual basis. For more information regarding the special education process, please contact Mrs. Sutton Barron, Director of Special Education Services at 814-539-6160 or sbarron@fasdk12.org.

GASKIN SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

The Gaskin Settlement Agreement is a formal resolution between the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and a group of families and advocacy organizations that filed a class-action lawsuit against PDE on behalf of a group of children with disabilities in 1994. The goal of the settlement is to ensure that Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams determine whether the goals in a student's IEP can be implemented in the general education classroom with supplementary aids and services before considering a more restrictive placement. The activities agreed to in the Settlement Agreement are designed to increase the capacity of school districts to provide appropriate specially designed instruction, related services, supplementary aids and services, and support to students with disabilities placed in general education classrooms. The agreement does not change an individual student's program, placement, or IEP. Only the IEP team can make such modifications.

In the Settlement Agreement, PDE agreed to make systemic changes pursuant to its general supervisory role over special education, including the following:

- Developing display materials for all public schools showing all children are welcome.
- Providing increased professional development for teachers and other school personnel.
- Expanding information and training that supports parents of children with disabilities.
- Ensuring that IEP teams determine the appropriateness of implementing IEP goals in general education classrooms with supplementary aids and services.
- Providing a single IEP for a student with a disability who also qualifies for gifted support.

- Modifying portions of the IEP or annotated IEP to provide more information related to students participating in general education.
- Clarifying complaint resolution and investigation procedures.
- Monitoring of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) requirements to ensure that districts comply with federal and state laws related to student placement.
- Establishing a Least Restrictive Environment advisory panel of parents, advocates, and educators to review system-wide progress in the delivery of instruction to students with disabilities in general education classrooms.

View the entire Settlement Agreement on the District website: www.fasdk12.org under the special education link.

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS
FOR FASD ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

ACCEPTABLE USE OF INTERNET, COMPUTERS AND NETWORK RESOURCES

The Board supports use of the computers, internet, and other network resources in the district's instructional and operational programs to facilitate learning, teaching and daily operations through interpersonal communications and access to information, research, and collaboration. (Policy #815)

APPEARANCE / DRESS

Student clothing must be neat and clean with no depictions promoting drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sex, racism, violence, weapons, obscene language, inappropriate messages, vulgarity, double meaning, or anything that would be inconsistent with acceptable public behavior or disruptive to the learning environment.

Short shorts and short skirts are prohibited. Shorts and skirts are to be no shorter than the "Fingertip Rule" (tip of their fingers while their hands are at their sides, fully extended. (If it's close, an administrator will make the final decision.)

The following are not permitted: pajamas, exposed midriff, low-cut/plunging neckline shirts, open shirts showing inappropriate bare skin or undergarments (including sport bras), and visible undergarments (including underwear). Tops must provide appropriate coverage. Sagging pants that expose shorts/undergarments are not permitted.

Any clothing above the "Fingertip Rule" that has holes, rips, tears or is transparent / translucent are prohibited.

Excessively shredded and/or ripped jeans/pants/shorts/shirts and any other excessively shredded/ripped article of clothing are prohibited.

Hats and other head coverings, including bandanas, sweatbands, "do-rags", wave caps, and hoodie hoods will not be worn in the building at any time.

Bandanas are not to be worn or visible on a student at any time.

Jewelry should not be disruptive to the learning environment or pose a safety concern:

- No large, sharp, dangling necklaces or bracelets
- No chains hanging from belts, purses, pockets or wallets
- No animal collars or excessive necklaces or bracelets 26
- No pendants that represent a weapon, promotes drug/alcohol use, or contains any liquid substance.

Make-up and hairstyles must be consistent with the stated dress and appearance philosophy:

Hairstyles and makeup that interferes with or disrupts the classroom-learning environment are prohibited.
Footwear must be worn at all times. high heels, flip-flops or sandals with no backs, and other types of footwear that could cause a child to fall are prohibited. Any footwear that poses a safety hazard is not permitted. Shoelaces should be tied.

Outerwear, such as jackets and sunglasses, may not be worn in the classroom. Dress code also applies to dress during Physical Education (especially shorts length and footwear; tennis shoes).

Dress code also applies to dress during Physical Education (especially shorts length and footwear; tennis shoes). Students who refuse to modify their attire may be sent home, parents may be contacted to bring appropriate clothing or may remain in the "Behavior Intervention Room" until appropriate clothing is obtained. Repeated lack of cooperation will result in additional or more substantial disciplinary action, including in-school suspension.

The principal has the final determination on the appropriateness of the clothing.

Children who habitually attend school unwashed and in dirty clothes or with clothes that are not suitable for the season, are considered to be neglected. The elementary school counselor, school nurse, or principal will contact parents when the situation arises. We are required by law to report such incidents to the appropriate authorities. School personnel have an affirmative obligation to report to the appropriate authorities based on their professional training or other experience that a child has been abused or neglected.

BUS ASSIGNMENT

Students are to ride the assigned bus that passes nearest to their home or provides for the safest route to walk to and from the bus stop. They are to sit in their assigned seat and board and get off the bus at this same stop **every day**. In the case of an **EMERGENCY**, students will be permitted to ride a different bus with permission from the principal. In this circumstance, parents should provide a **written note** to the principal justifying the need for this change. **Students will not be permitted to ride a school bus home with a friend. This will alleviate any issues of lack of seating or safety. If you move during the year and the bus number or stop changes, please notify the office so our bus lists can be updated, and new seat assignments can be made.** The school district is required to maintain a daily roster for each bus. Students who ride a bus other than the one to which they are assigned are violating school policy and may lose riding privileges.

***Parents must establish **ONE** consistent morning and **ONE** afternoon bus number and bus stop, which **cannot be changed daily nor be changed via the telephone**. **Frequent changes and telephone requests create an unsafe situation, are difficult to monitor, and will not be permitted. Students must ride their assigned bus home or be picked up by the parent.** For the safety of all students, the school must know where the students are being transported at the end of the day.

BUS BEHAVIOR

Proper student discipline is necessary to ensure the efficient and safe operation of the school bus system. To assist us in creating a safe atmosphere while your child is being transported, video cameras have been installed on every bus. **Failure to show regard for bus safety rules can result in the suspension of riding privileges**. Students whose bus privileges are suspended are still required to attend school. **It is the parents' responsibility to provide transportation for the duration of the suspension.**

SCHOOL BUS RULES

The following guidelines are the rules set forth to maintain a safe ride to and from school for all students at the Ferndale Area School District. These rules are to be followed on school sponsored activities, events, and trips as well:

Obey the driver or adult; enter and exit the bus safely; stay properly seated in your assigned seat; keep your body parts to yourself; do not throw anything on the bus or out of the bus window; refrain from yelling or use of outside voices; no profanity or indecency; no prohibited items or vandalism; do not eat, drink, or chew gum; ride only the bus that you are assigned and Be Responsible, Be Safe. Remember, your actions can affect everyone on the bus with you.

Ferndale Area School District records both audio and video on all District transportation. District Policy 810.2 permits audio and video recording on school buses and school vehicles.

BUS DISCIPLINE MATRIX

Bus referral matrix below lists the offense/number of referrals and the discipline response that would accompany:

- Referral 1- Warning
- Referral 2- Silent lunch, Recess Restriction and re-assigned seat on the bus
- Referral 3- After school detention
- Referral 4- In-School Suspension
- Referral 5- One week off of the bus
- Fighting on the bus will be an automatic 3 day Out of School Suspension (OSS) AND 5 days off the bus

BUS STOPS

All Pre-K Counts and K5 students must have an approved adult at the stops before and after school. If there is no adult present at the stop after school, the child will not be permitted off the bus and may be brought back to the elementary school until such time that a parent is contacted to come and pick up the student. Older students may be without adult supervision at bus stops. Many complaints about student behavior originate from incidents that take

place either before students get on the bus or after they get off the bus. The safety of the students at the bus stops is of utmost importance and students are expected to behave in a safe manner to avoid injury. Students are subject to the school discipline policy while at the bus stop.

Students are to wait in a safe place, stay off the streets and stay off private property when waiting for the bus. Parents can help by accompanying their child to and from the bus stop daily.

CELL PHONES

The Ferndale Area School District is committed to maintaining a focused, safe, and distraction-free learning environment in alignment with state guidance, including Pennsylvania Senate Bill 1014. This policy establishes clear expectations for the possession and use of cell phones and all non-school-issued electronic devices during the school day.

From **8:00 AM** until **dismissal**, personal electronic devices must not be seen, heard, or used at any time. Students are permitted to bring cell phones to school. However, **cell phones must be turned off and kept in backpacks** during the entire school day. This includes classrooms, hallways, the cafeteria, recess, and the bus line.

Consequences for Cell Phone Violations

1st Offense

- Warning and the student must comply with the directive to put the cell phone away.

2nd Offense

- Immediate confiscation of the device and sent to the office for safekeeping by the student. The student may have it back at the end of the day.
- Automatic lunch or after school detention

3rd Offense

- Immediate confiscation of the device and sent to the office for safekeeping. The parent/guardian of the student must pick it up for the student.
- Automatic 1 Day of ISS

4th Offense and Beyond

- Immediate confiscation of the device and sent to the office for safekeeping. The parent/guardian of the student must pick it up for the student.
- Automatic 1 Day of OSS

Parent-to-Student Communication

Parents/guardians may:

- Contact the school office and request that a message be delivered to the student.
- Call the school office and request that administration arrange a phone call with the student when appropriate.

Student-to-Parent Communication

Students who need to contact a parent or guardian during the school day may:

- Request permission from administration or office personnel to use a school telephone.
- Make a phone call from the office when approved by school personnel.

Parents are strongly encouraged NOT to text or call their child's personal cell phone during the school day, as students will not have access to their devices.

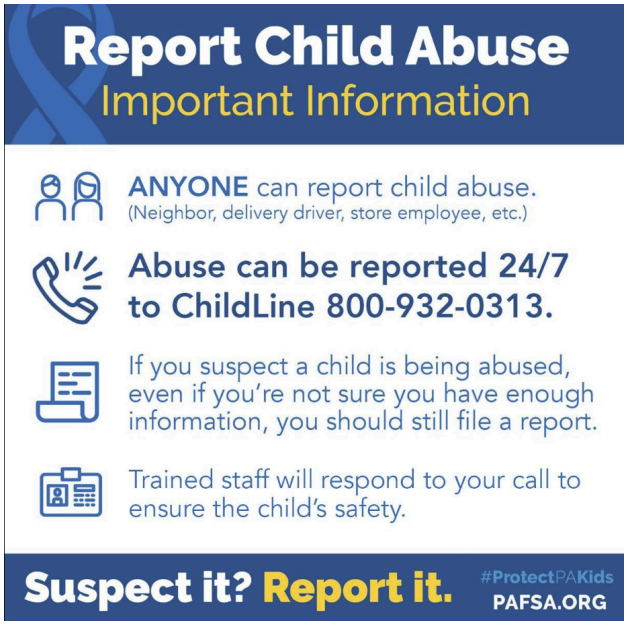
Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy may be granted only when documented and pre-approved by administration, including:

- Accommodations specified in an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Accommodations specified in a Section 504 Plan
- Medical needs approved by Ferndale Area School District Administration

CHILD ABUSE

Under the Child Protective Service Act of 1975, all school district personnel (administrators, teachers, nurses, etc.) are **MANDATED BY LAW** to report suspected child abuse. Reports of suspected abuse will be made immediately by telephone and a written report will follow within 48 hours.



Concerned citizens may also make a report of suspected child abuse if he/she has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused child by calling Childline at 1-800-932-0313. All reports made are strictly confidential and you may remain anonymous. Parents may use the line directly without notifying the school. (Policy #806)

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

A permanent record file containing grades, biographical data, health records and standardized test scores is kept in the elementary office for each student. These records are considered confidential information and will not be released to any agency outside the school, except for another public school district, without **written** permission from the student or his/her parents (if the student is under the age of 18).

If a parent or guardian wishes to examine their child's records at any time, they may do so by contacting the elementary office. Convenient arrangements will be made for the parent or guardian to meet with the principal to explain the contents of the individual file.

The parent, or eligible student, has the right to refuse to permit the release of directory-type information to newspapers and outside agencies, which is personally identifiable. If the parent or eligible student wishes to exercise this right, the school administration shall be informed in writing by **September 8.** (See Policy #216)

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL/CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

The use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs adversely affects a student's ability to achieve academic success. Because of the physical and emotional harm, and the serious social and legal consequences, the school district has adopted policies to keep district schools free of these substances. Instructional programs will be provided which help students obtain and use current and accurate information, develop, and maintain a positive self-concept, and use appropriate social and personal skills to resist involvement with alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

The district prohibits students from using, possessing, distributing, and being under the influence of any controlled substances during school hours, at any time while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, and during the time spent traveling to and from school and school-sponsored activities. (District Policy #227)

If based on the student's behavior, medical symptoms, vital signs or other observable factors, the building principal has reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of a controlled substance and the student denies such, the student **will** be required to submit to drug or alcohol testing, as a condition to not having disciplinary action imposed. The testing may include but is not limited to the analysis of blood, urine, saliva, or the administration of a Breathalyzer test.

GUIDELINES REGARDING THE LEGAL NAME OF A STUDENT

Each student has one and only one legal name. This name will be the only one used by the Ferndale Area School District in any OFFICIAL communications and dealings with the student, including official records. Preferred names may be used on report cards, homework papers, class lists, and verbal communications. In accordance with the Pennsylvania School Law, Volume 1, Chapter 95, and Section 95.06:

> *"the name of a child may be legally changed in only TWO ways: through court adoption proceedings or name change by order of the court."*

Upon receipt of AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT FROM THE COURT indicating adoption or name change, the school district will IMMEDIATELY change all records to

comply with such change. Any questions should be directed to the Superintendent at 814-535-1507.

GUM

The use of gum on any school property, including buses, classrooms, hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, and playground is prohibited.

HARASSMENT/BULLYING

The district strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the district to maintain an educational environment in which harassment in any form is not tolerated.

The District prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment of students and third parties by all district students and staff members, contracted individuals, vendors, volunteers, and third parties in the schools. The district encourages students and third parties who have been harassed to promptly report such incidents.

Complaints of harassment shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action taken when allegations are substantiated. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the district's legal and investigative obligations.

Bullying:



The definition of bullying according to FASD Policy #249 is "intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following":

1. Material interference with a student's education
2. Creation of a threatening environment
3. Material disruption of the orderly operation of the school

The board prohibits all forms of bullying by district students at any school setting. This would include the school, school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or any activity sponsored by the school. This would also include "relating to or arising out of school, school-related activities or school-related functions."

Any report of bullying/cyber-bullying will be investigated promptly, and action will be taken when allegations are verified.

Possible Consequences for Bullying Violations:

Counseling with the school counselor, parental conference, loss of school privileges, exclusion from school-sponsored activities, detention, suspension, expulsion, counseling/therapy outside of school and/or referral to law enforcement officials.

LUNCHROOM

Proper manners and talking in a reasonable tone of voice are expected of all students while in the lunchroom. Poor manners or loud, disruptive behaviors are not permitted. Food should be kept off the floor because it is not only unsightly, but could cause someone serious injury. Students are to remain in their seats and follow the direction of the cafeteria supervisor. Those who display inappropriate behavior and violate lunchroom rules will be removed from the cafeteria and may receive further disciplinary action.

OPEN CONTAINERS / WATER BOTTLES

The purpose of the policy is to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all students by regulating the use of water bottles within the school premises. Ferndale Jr-Sr High School students will comply with the following water bottle / drinking container guidelines:

1. Students are allowed to bring and use water bottles / drinking containers during school hours.
2. Water bottles should contain only water. All other beverages are not permitted.
3. Students should use water bottles responsibly and avoid causing disruptions.
    a. Teachers / Classrooms reserve the right to ask students to place water bottles in specific locations or outside of classrooms to avoid disruption or unsafe learning environments.
4. All water bottles must have a secure cap or lid to prevent spills and leaks.

5. Search and Inspection
    a. If there is reasonable suspicion that a water bottle contains a substance other than water, school staff have the right to inspect the bottle.
        i. Reasonable suspicion may be based on observations, reports from other students, or other credible information.
6. If a student is found with a water bottle containing a prohibited substance, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken in accordance with the Student Handbook.
7. Morning Entry - Students entering the building with an opened drink/beverage other than water in an approved water bottle will be asked to leave drink/beverage on table.

RECESS

Most students enjoy going outside when the weather is suitable. Students must follow safety rules to avoid injuries. Dangerous or unsafe behaviors are not permitted. Jump ropes, balls and other materials are provided so that you can enjoy the outdoors in safety. Play equipment is to be used for its intended purposes. Students should not go into the alley, between the cars, into the bushes, or on the street. Parents are asked to not use the alley parking lot entrance during school hours.

It is imperative for each student's safety that all students follow the guidelines for playground safety.

WEAPONS POLICY

For the safety of all, the federal and state governments have enacted laws and the Ferndale Area School Board has adopted a policy that bans weapons of any kind in the school or on school property. **Failure to comply with this policy will result in suspension and may result in expulsion from school regardless of age.**

It is very important for parents to be aware of and carefully monitor the items (toys and weapon replicas) that children possess and pack in their book bags and pockets. **The only way to prevent a serious incident is to prohibit dangerous objects and weapons on school property.** Parents/guardians and students will

be asked to sign a form confirming their awareness of the Ferndale Area School District policy and consequences regarding weapons on school property. Your cooperation is extremely important in this matter. (District Policy #218.1)

SEARCHES

School officials have the authority to lawfully search students or their belongings, including lockers, automobiles, electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing and other possessions without a warrant, when in school, on school grounds or when otherwise under school supervision, if there is a "**reasonable suspicion"** that the place or thing to be searched contains material that would pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of the school population, or evidence that there has been a violation of the law, policy, or school rules. Searches include Individualized Suspicion Search, Random or General Search without Individualized Suspicion, Searches Upon Consent, Searches by or At the Request of Law Enforcement Officials, Locker Inspection and Searches and Searches Involving Removal of Clothing or Examination Beneath Clothing. (Policy #226)

The following procedure will be followed in the searching of a student:

1. The student will be questioned by the administration about the incident/concern whenever possible. Reasonable suspicion will be determined at this time.
2. The student will have the opportunity to voluntarily produce the item(s) he/she is suspected of having in his/her possession. If the student produces the item(s) in question, parents will be contacted immediately. If deemed necessary, Local Law Enforcement officials will be contacted.
3. If a student voluntarily participates in the search, the search will be conducted by the administration. Upon the conclusion of the search, regardless of what, if any items are found, the parent/guardian will be contacted.
4. If a student refuses to be searched by school officials, parents and local law enforcement officials will be contacted and the student may face a search conducted by law enforcement officials, off school premises.
5. In the event of a weapon or a controlled or dangerous substance being confiscated as a result of a search, students will face disciplinary action according to the Discipline Code and criminal charges and proceedings through the local law enforcement agency.
6. Searches by the administration may include the use of hand wands or metal detection units.

THREATS/ACTS

A "Threat" is defined as "a person's claim to commit violence" communicated with the intent to harm another; to "cause evacuation of a building;" or to "cause serious public inconvenience" in reckless disregard of others.

Ferndale Area School District prohibits any district student from communicating threats directed at any student, employee, Board member, community member or school building. There is no tolerance of this action and consequences will be based upon individual situations. (See Policy #218.1)

TOBACCO OR VAPE USE/POSSESSION

The Ferndale Area School District prohibits use and/or possession of tobacco or vape products by students **AT ANY TIME** in a school building and on any property, buses, vans, and vehicles owned, leased, or controlled by the school district.

Tobacco or vape use and/or possession are prohibited by students at school-sponsored activities that are held on or off school property and/or when they represent the school district (work study program, seminars, school visits, field trips or other similar events). (Policy #222).

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS

The Ferndale Area School District encourages the public to attend activities and events sponsored by the district, but it also maintains that order and preservation of school facilities must be managed.

Any individual whose conduct may constitute a disruption can be prohibited from attendance at a school event or program. Illegal gambling and the possession and use of controlled substances, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages and weapons on school premises are strictly prohibited. (Policy #904)

FASD ELEMENTARY SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

AFTERSCHOOL TUTORING

After School tutoring may be offered to students in grades 2-6 based on qualifying criteria. Teachers, ESAP, or the principal refers students to the tutoring program based on academic needs. The qualifying academic criteria includes low grades on the student's mid-term report and/or significant homework issues. Students receive additional support and instruction on grade level material to improve their understanding of concepts. Teachers and support staff conduct tutoring.

ASSEMBLIES

A variety of entertaining and educational programs have been planned for this year. Some programs are for specific grade levels and others are for the entire school. Please remember when attending an assembly that you represent our school. The presenters and guests are to be treated with respect. Students who do not complete their assigned work, behave in an unacceptable manner, or have outstanding debt may not be permitted to attend the special assemblies.

FIELD TRIPS

From time-to-time individual classrooms or entire grades will go on educational field trips. When on such a trip, our students represent the school in the public eye. In all cases parental permission will be required. **Students who demonstrate an inability to behave properly and do not follow school rules and regulations will not be permitted on field trips. Attendance on a field trip will be at the principal's and teacher's discretion.** (District Policy #231)

Please note: Students who do not have a completed Emergency Information Card on file will not be permitted to participate in any class field trips until the form is returned.

FUNDRAISERS

While we do attempt to find programs that do not have a cost, these are quite difficult to find. We ask you, the families, and communities, to help us in these endeavors. Throughout the year, there will be fundraisers to aide us in raising money to help make memories for our students with field trips, assemblies, and special events. Please do your part, in whatever way that you can. Even the smallest donation is more than nothing at all.

At no time do we want the children going door to door for sales. We do not believe that this is a safe practice and would never encourage these sales. Donations from family members, close friends and neighbors are acceptable. You will be notified in a timely fashion of upcoming fundraisers and how you can contribute. We appreciate your support in this project.

~~**PEER LEADERS**~~

~~Sixth grade students that are nominated by their classroom teachers, guidance counselor and principal can become a peer leader. Characteristics of a peer leader include exemplary academic ability, excellent attendance, good self-control, judgment, and character. This program is not taken lightly, and it is an honor to be chosen for this program. All peer leaders receive training and are monitored at all times by a teacher. The Peer Leader program at the elementary school is designed to offer any elementary grade student in need of extra assistance in academics the opportunity to work with a peer leader. In the event of poor choices made by a peer leader, he/she will be asked to step down from this position.~~

STUDENT LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Ferndale Area Elementary School is committed to developing student leaders who demonstrate responsibility, character, and a commitment to serving others. Throughout the school year, selected upper elementary students may have opportunities to participate in leadership programs such as the EarlyAct Club and other school service initiatives that support younger students and contribute to our positive school culture.

Students selected for these leadership opportunities are expected to model our school-wide expectations by demonstrating strong character, positive behavior, good attendance, responsibility, and respect for others. Leadership is considered both an honor and a responsibility. Students may assist with mentoring younger students, welcoming new students, participating in school and community service projects, and supporting various school activities throughout the year.

Participation in these programs is a privilege. Students who do not consistently demonstrate the expectations of a student leader may be removed from their leadership role at the discretion of school administrators or program advisors.

READING TEAM

Students in grades 5 and 6 may participate in the elementary reading team. The team competes twice per school year against schools within the region. Those who enjoy reading and answering questions based upon the books are encouraged to join.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Ferndale Area family is always striving to offer our students opportunities in sports and activities. Although these are not district-sponsored programs, students of our boroughs can participate in elementary aged basketball, cheerleading, football, and wrestling. Information is distributed at school to the students for your review and sign-ups.

POLICIES

The following full text policies are available on the District tab of the school website, www.fasdk12.org. If you are unable to access the website, please request paper copies of the policies from the Elementary School Office.

Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources (Policy 815)
Attendance (Policy 204)
Bullying/Cyber Bullying (Policy 249)
Care of School Property (Policy 224)
Child Abuse (Policy 806)
Confidentiality (Policy 207)
Controlled Substances (Policy 227)
Dress and Grooming (Policy 221)
Eligibility of Non-Resident Students (Policy 202)
Food Allergy Management (Policy 209.1)
Food Service (Policy 808)
Homeless Students (Policy 251)
Maintaining Professional Adult/Student Boundaries (Policy 824)
Nondiscrimination in School and Classroom Practices (Policy 103)
Possession/Use of Asthma Inhalers/Epinephrine Auto-Injectors (Policy 210.1)
Public Attendance at School Events (Policy 904)
Social Events and Class Trips (Policy 231)
Student Assistance Program (Policy 236)

Student Discipline (Policy 218)
Searches (Policy 226)
Terroristic Threats/Acts (Policy 218.1)
Tobacco Use/Possession (Policy 222)
School Visitor (Policy 907)
Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials (Policy 220)
Use of Medication (Policy 210)
Weapons (Policy 218.1)

Homeless Education

Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program was established to make sure homeless youth have access to a free and appropriate public education while removing barriers that homeless children face. Its goal is to have the educational process and student services continue as uninterrupted as possible while the children are in homeless situations. Some of the other main objectives of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program are to increase awareness about the needs of homeless children, explain current laws and policies, and provide practical tips for working with homeless children. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Improvement Act of 2001 requires all school districts to inform parents/guardians of their rights under this act. Specifically, it states that, pending any dispute resolution regarding school placement, a school district must immediately enroll a homeless student in the student's school of origin or other school selected on the basis of the child's best interest and provide a written explanation of the rights of appeal to the parent/guardian of the student.

Additional information, Homeless Guides, Dispute Resolution Guidance and other valuable information for students and parents/guardians can be found on the District website www.fasdk12.org and you may reference District policy 251, Homeless Students.

Links:

Education for Homeless Youth Basic Education Circular (BEC)

FASD Board Policy - Students Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care and other Educational Instability

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001

On July 22, 1987, the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act became public law. This was the first comprehensive federal law dealing with the problems of homelessness in America. Recently included in the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, it is now called the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001. The Education for Homeless Children and

Youths (EHCY) program, authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act), is designed to address the needs of homeless children and youths and ensure educational rights and protections for these children and youths. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) amended the McKinney-Vento Act, and changes made by the ESSA will take effect on October 1, 2016.

Unaccompanied Youth

Under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (MKV), youth who are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and are lacking a fixed, regular or adequate nighttime residence are considered displaced and eligible for rights under the homeless education law.

Homeless Liaison Contact:

Mr. Dane Domonkos, Jr.Sr.HS Principal. domonkos@fasdk12.org phone 814-535-1507 x5003

Key duties of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaison:

- Develop, modify and review LEA policies and procedures.
- Use housing questionnaires, (Intake Form) to document enrollment of homeless students. Develop a system of data records of homeless students, including monitoring academic records, attendance information, graduation rate, etc.
- Use the state system for data input.
- Be familiar with the privacy rights of homeless students and families, ensure FERPA rights of all.
- Develop, revise and distribute materials, hand-outs and other related documents for students, parents, staff and community.
- Coordinate McKinney-Vento issues and activities among LEA administrators.
- Implement dispute procedure, when necessary, assure issuance of letter of denial and inform student and parent of right to appeal and process.
- Construct and revise as needed, LEA website, handbook and other documents. Coordinate and manage Title I set aside funds with the business office.
- Coordinate immediate free lunch and breakfast for homeless students with food service staff. Communicate with other LEA's (liaisons) on issues

involving homeless students. Specifically, transportation, academic records and student best interest determinations.
- Establish ongoing communication with parents and keep them informed of student progress and school activities. Encourage parental involvement.
- Engage in community activity to identify unenrolled youth. Perform outreach with local entities such as shelters and agencies.
- Coordinate, distribute and seek donations and support for homeless students and families. Coordinate and communicate with the regional PAECYEH office.
- Attend training and seminars on regional and state level.

Attendance Updates - Act 138 of 2016

The law expressly requires schools to notify in writing the person in parental relation with a child within ten (10) school days of the child's third unexcused absence that the child has been "truant." The new law explicitly defines "truant" as a child subject to compulsory school laws "having three (3) or more school days of unexcused absence during the current school year. This notice:

a. Must include a description of the consequences that will follow if the child becomes habitually truant in the future;
b. Must be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the person in parental relation; and
c. May include the offer of an attendance improvement conference.

If the child continues to be truant and incurs additional absences after this notice has been issued, the school must offer the student and parent a student attendance improvement conference.

The new law defines "school attendance improvement conference" as a "conference where the child's absences and reasons for the absences are examined in an effort to improve attendance, with or without additional services." The law requires schools to invite the following individuals to the conference:

a. The child.
b. The person in parental relation to the child.

c. Other individuals identified by the person in parental relation who may be a resource (e.g., a grandparent, sibling, family friend, advocate, community member, etc.).
d. Appropriate school personnel.
e. Recommended service providers (e.g., case managers, behavioral health providers, probation officers, children and youth practitioners, etc.).

The school must hold the conference even if the parent declines to participate or fails to attend after the school provides advance written notice and makes attempts to communicate via telephone. There is no legal requirement for either the child or parent to attend an attendance improvement conference. The school must document the outcome of any attendance improvement conference in a written attendance improvement plan. Schools may not take further legal action to address unexcused absences until after the date of the scheduled attendance improvement conference has passed.

Procedure when child is habitually truant (accumulates six unexcused absences).

Like the old law, the procedure schools must follow when a child is habitually truant depends on the age of the child.

Habitually truant children under fifteen years of age.

If a habitually truant child is under fifteen (15), the school must refer the child to either: (1) a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program or (2) the county children and youth agency (CYS) for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under the Juvenile Act. Additionally, the school may file a citation against the parent of a habitually truant child under fifteen (15) in a magisterial district court.

Habitually truant children fifteen years of age and older.

If a habitually truant child is fifteen (15) or older, the school must either: (1) refer the child to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program or (2) file a citation against the student or parent in a magisterial district court. If a habitually truant child aged fifteen (15) or older incurs additional absences after a school refers that child to an attendance improvement program or the child refuses to participate in an attendance improvement

program, the school may refer the child to the local CYS agency for possible disposition as a dependent child.

In all cases, regardless of age, where a school refers a habitually truant child to a magisterial district court or CYS, the school must provide verification that it convened and held a student attendance improvement conference.

Consequences, if convicted, of habitual truancy:

1. Increased fines up to $750. The new law states that a person convicted of habitual truancy may be fined: (1) up to $300 per offense, with court costs, for the first offense; (2) up to $500 per offense, with court costs, for the second offense; and (3) up to $750 per offense, with court costs, for a third and any and all subsequent offenses.

2. Jail reduced to three days. The new law reduces jail time to three days, from five days.

3. Referral to CYS for second conviction in three years. Under the new law, if a parent or student is convicted a second time for habitual truancy within three years, the court must refer the child to CYS for services or possible disposition as a dependent child under the Juvenile Act.

4. Provides judges with discretion on whether to send the Department of Transportation a certified record of a student's conviction for license suspension. While the law still requires DOT to suspend a child's license, the discretion the new law affords to magistrates should limit the number of students whose licenses are suspended for truancy. Restoration of driving privileges is more fair to students.

Where a student's license has been suspended, he or she may seek to have his or her eligibility restored by providing DOT with a form that indicates that (1) the child has 53 attended school for a period of at least two months after the first conviction or four months after the second conviction without an unexcused absence or tardy; or (2) is subject to exception to the compulsory school attendance law; or (3) has graduated from school.

1 or 2 days doesn't seem like much, but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years of school
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely that won't affect my child?

He/she is only missing just...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly ½ year
20 minutes per day	1 hr 40mins per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 minutes per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	3 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years

Attendance Matters

Every student. Every day.

FASD ALMA MATER



When twilight shades invite
Mem'ries to call our own
Then it is that our thoughts
Turn to that friend
Others fade from my sight
Years have passed by
Pal of mine Ferndale Hi
I'll ne'er forget



Through these short high school years
We've known both joys-and fears
You shared with me my joys
Lightened my grief
Each year knits close the tie
Of friendships met
Pal of mine Ferndale Hi
I'll ne'er forget

Now tho our paths divide
Our hearts are still as one
Old joys bring rapture still
Enchant our thoughts
If we ne'er meet again
In years to come
Pal of mine Ferndale Hi
I'll ne'er forget

School colors: Black and gold
School Mascot: Yellow Jacket