

Shenango Elementary School



STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

**Students and parents are responsible
for the contents of this Student Handbook.**

Shenango Area School District

School Board

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Mrs. Denise Palkovich, Vice President
Mr. Randy Angelucci
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Mr. Andy Bruno
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Administrative Staff

Superintendent – Dr. Joseph McCormick
Elementary School Principal (K-4) – Mr. Adam Vincent
Middle School Principal (5-8)- Mr. Derek Sumner
Senior High School Principal(9-12) – Mr. Todd Anthony
Director of Technology – Mr. Rob Heath
Director of Special Services – Dr. James Janacone
School Psychologist – Ms. Erika Lunn

Phone Numbers

Elementary School – (724) 658-5566
Transportation – (724) 658-5763
Junior/Senior High School – (724) 658-5537
District Office – (724) 658-7287

District Mission

The mission of the Shenango Area School District is to provide a learning environment that enables students to acquire the skills and the knowledge to be productive citizens and lifelong learners.

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Preface

The purpose of this handbook is to provide students, parents and/or guardians, school personnel, and the public with a description of behavioral expectations and policies that students enrolled at Shenango Elementary School are expected to follow. It defines appropriate student conduct and presents consequences that may be employed by school officials for individuals who exhibit inappropriate behavior.

Please note: It is impossible to list all situations that may occur in a public school setting. Therefore, any item that may arise and is not listed or mentioned is left to the discretion of the administration.

Academics

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Shenango Elementary School maintains high standards regarding academic integrity. Each student is expected to do his/her own work. Any student who does not adhere to this standard will receive a zero (0) for the assignment, activity, assessment, etc.

REPORT CARDS

At the end of each nine-weeks grading period, report cards will be sent home with the student. The report card should be examined by the parent/guardian, the envelope signed, and returned to school within one week. The final report card will be mailed home as noted on the SASD Calendar.

A+ 98-100	C+ 77-79
A 93-97	C 73-76
A- 90-92	C- 70-72
B+ 87-89	D+ 67-69
B 83-86	D 63-66
B - 80-82	D- 60-62
	F 59 and below

Depending on the grade level, social studies and science/health may not receive a letter grade.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

If a student receives an incomplete grade, it is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements to make up the work missed. If the incomplete grade (I) is a result of excessive absence or the failure or refusal of a student to fulfill class assignments within a prescribed amount of time, the grade may be changed to an (F).

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports for all students are sent home at the midpoint of each grading period. They are also posted on the parent portal.

HONOR ROLL (Grades five and six)

To be on the HIGH HONOR ROLL, a student must have all "A's", 90% - 100%.

To be on the HONOR ROLL, a student must have all "A's" and "B's", 80% - 100%.

COMMUNICATION

Parent-School Communication: It is important to establish a system of consistent communication between school and home. Shenango's primary form of communication is Parent Square, but the method of communication may vary by teacher including phone calls, emails, etc.

Grades K-1: Each child will be provided with a folder at the beginning of each nine weeks. Parents should review and sign any necessary contents within this folder.

Grades 2-6: Each child will be provided with an ASSIGNMENT BOOK at the beginning of the year. Students will be **required** to record all assignments. Parents should review and sign this assignment book on a daily basis. Additional space is provided to address any teacher or parent concerns. Pages should not be removed. In the event that an assignment book becomes damaged or lost, parents will be responsible for the cost of a replacement.

Parent-Teacher Conference: Requests for a conference may be made at any time through the daily communication process, email, or by a call to the school's office secretarial staff. The teacher will respond to these parental requests as soon as possible to discuss the situation through a telephone conference, email reply, or to make arrangements to meet at a mutually agreed upon time and date.

HOMEWORK

The educational philosophy of the elementary school is to teach the fundamentals of reading, writing, speaking, and mathematics and their application in all subject areas. Teachers provide instruction to each student so that mastery of the subject matter can occur. However, homework is a vital part of this learning process since instruction often needs to be reinforced with additional practice outside of the classroom. Homework should become part of a regular routine. Parents should help students in establishing and maintaining this routine. Kindergarten and first grade students will have a homework folder. Second through sixth grade students will have an assignment book. Teachers will assign homework so no child is heavily burdened by nightly school assignments.

The following are examples of homework assignments that may be given to students:

- Independent practice of newly learned skills
- Expansion activities beyond the subject matter presented in class
- Extended reading (such as reading of a number of pages in the text with a stated purpose for the reading)
- Independent student projects that are approved by the teachers

Parents should encourage and support good study habits and the daily completion of homework assignments. A learning environment in the home can be established by:

- Showing a positive attitude toward education
- Taking an interest in your child's school work
- Establishing good study conditions
- Monitoring your child's study habits
- Exercising patience as you encourage your child

Parental assistance can be provided in the completion of homework, however it should be the child's work. If you notice that your child is having a great deal of difficulty completing the homework assignments even though he/she has put forth his/her best efforts, parents are encouraged to contact his/her teacher to discuss the problem.

Homework not completed within the designated time could have a negative effect on a student's grade.

Please refer to SASD Policy #130 for more information.

Attendance

STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

The following subsections are based on the PA Compulsory Education Attendance Law of 1996 and the subsequent revisions surrounding school attendance, including ACT 138 of 2016. Key definitions include:

Truant – having incurred three (3) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current year by a child subject to compulsory school attendance

Habitually Truant – six (6) or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year by a child subject to compulsory school attendance

EXCUSED ABSENCES

When a student is absent from school the PA Compulsory Education Attendance Law of 1996 states that they must bring a written excuse to school signed by a parent or guardian when they return. **The written excuse must be turned in within three (3) school days otherwise it becomes unexcused/unlawful.** This excuse is to be submitted using Parent Square. This excuse must include one of the legal reasons for an absence listed below.

They are:

1. Student's own illness
2. Death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent)
3. Religious reasons
4. Quarantine
5. Others as excused by the Principal

UNEXCUSED/UNLAWFUL ABSENCES (TRUANCY)

Students who are considered Truant or Habitually Truant will be placed on a Truancy Elimination Plan, which will include the following procedures:

1. Once **three (3) unexcused absences** occur a notification letter will be mailed to the student's address.
2. Once a student becomes Habitually Truant, defined as **six (6) unexcused absences**, the school is required to hold a School Attendance Improvement Conference. The parent/guardian and student along with appropriate school personnel will be invited.
3. A School Attendance Improvement Plan will be put in place. Possible outcomes may include being placed on Doctor's Excuse and/or being referred to the Lawrence County CYS Truancy Reduction Program.
4. Continued absenteeism will result in having a citation filed with the local magistrate. Consequences levied by the magistrate may include: fine and court costs, suspension of driving privilege, delay of driving privilege, community service, student put in placement, parent/guardian put in placement, or any combination of the above.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCE / DOCTOR'S EXCUSE

The Pennsylvania School Code requires regular attendance during the days and hours that school is in session for all students enrolled in school.

Parents are **required** to submit a **written** explanation for the legal absence of their child **within three (3) school days** from date of the child's return to school. **Failure to provide such written**

explanation will result in the absence being declared unexcused/unlawful. Parents may send the excuse through Parent Square, the mail, by fax directly to the school, or with the student. An accumulation of absences of more than ten (10) days (unexcused or excused) that school is in session is considered excessive. As stated above, written excuses provided by parents/guardians must be turned in within three (3) school days otherwise the absence becomes unexcused/unlawful. When a student has excessive absences they may be required to provide a doctor's excuse for any further absences to be declared legal. Based on prior attendance history the building administration may place a student on Doctor's Excuse prior to the 10th absence if necessary. Absences while on doctor's excuse can only be declared legal with the written excuse from a physician. The student must be seen or advised by a physician, being ill per the history of the parent/guardian is not acceptable. Absences not accounted for by a physician will be unexcused and the student will be declared truant.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCE/ TRUANCY CHARGES

As stated above, an accumulation of absences of more than ten (10) days (unexcused or excused) that school is in session is considered excessive. If issues with attendance are not resolved, the school may take further disciplinary action. If an accumulation of absences of fifteen (15) days or more is reached, the school may file truancy charges with the local magistrate or require other local disciplinary measures such as School Service hours.

MAKE-UP WORK FOR ABSENCES

Make-up work is the responsibility of the student. The amount of time given for make-up will be equal to the amount of time missed, with a maximum of two weeks given upon returning to school. Make-up work not completed within the designated time will be recorded as a 0 (zero).

REQUESTING ASSIGNMENTS

This request will be honored beginning the **second** day of absence. The assignments may be picked up after 3:30 p.m. the day of the request providing the **request is made to the office before 10:00 a.m. that day.**

SHENANGO CYBER ACADEMY ATTENDANCE

Shenango Area School District attendance and absenteeism policy will apply for all SASD students who enroll in traditional in-person schooling and students who enroll in the Shenango Cyber Academy (SCA).

Therefore, SCA students are responsible for regular participation and attendance. Students are required to participate in online learning each day that school is in session, according to the Shenango Area School District academic calendar. Students may work additionally during times when SASD is not in sessions, such as weekends and holidays, but this does not replace the need for daily attendance.

SASD guidelines for recording and reporting absences and failure to complete assignments will also be applied to all SCA students. Monitoring and reporting of attendance will be performed by an SASD teacher who is assigned to oversee all SCA students. Repeated and excessive violations that require action and/or reporting for violation of compulsory attendance laws will be reported to by building level administrators and reported to the local agencies and magistrate as required by law.

VACATIONS

If an educational trip is anticipated during the school year, parents are required to complete a vacation form requesting approval. **Shenango Elementary School strongly recommends that these events take place during non-school time.** Prior to the anticipated trip, parents are required to complete a Vacation Form (available in the elementary office or website) listing the details of the educational trip. **Students must be in good standing with attendance and academics.** This may be approved by the principal one week before the departure date. Not receiving prior approval may require the days to be counted as unlawful.

TARDY TO SCHOOL

There are very few legitimate excuses for tardiness. The district provides bus transportation that assures punctuality when used. Parents must accompany the student into the office to be signed in. A tardy slip must be obtained from the office staff. Acceptable reasons for tardiness are limited to:

1. Bus difficulties (this does not include missing the bus)
2. Student's illness and/or accident
3. Family emergency

In the event that **five (5)** unexcused tardies occur, the school will contact the parent/guardian encouraging punctuality.

When **ten (10)** unexcused tardies occur, a meeting involving the parent, principal, and/or guidance counselor will be required.

After ten (10) unexcused tardies, further action may result with charges of truancy at the local magistrate or require other local disciplinary measures such as School Service hours.

EARLY DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

There are very few legitimate excuses for early dismissals from school. Acceptable reasons for early dismissals are limited to medical, dental, and legal appointments and those extenuating circumstances deemed necessary by the administration. Attempts should be made to schedule appointments when school is not in session. It is understood that certain appointments can only be accommodated during school hours. If a child needs to be dismissed for an appointment, the parent should record using School Dismissal Manager by selecting "leaving early-not coming back" indicating the time that the child will need dismissed and who will be picking up the child. Parents will need to come into the office for the child to be dismissed. **Parents must provide written documentation from the appointment in order for the appointment to be excused. The documentation must be received within three (3) school days.**

In the event that **five (5)** unexcused early dismissals occur, the principal will contact the parent/guardian.

When **ten (10)** unexcused early dismissals occur, parents will be invited to attend a School Attendance Improvement Conference. A School Attendance Improvement Plan will be developed and implemented.

SENT HOME DUE TO ILLNESS

The school **nurse or administrator** may only release students who become ill during the school day. All students leaving the building for any reason must receive permission from the office and **must be signed out by an adult** before leaving.

Discipline

This code of conduct applies to any student:

1. On school property;
2. In attendance at school;
3. Traveling to and from school;
4. At any school-sponsored activity; or
5. Whose conduct at any other time or place has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline, or protecting the safety and welfare of the students or staff in the school.

ELEMENTARY DISCIPLINE CODE

Listed below are the Elementary School discipline rules and regulations. The principal shall have the authority and leeway to address incidents not covered in this code that might cause any health, safety, or educational concerns for the staff and/or students in the school. Otherwise the following code shall be in effect. With regard to all levels of discipline, when any action has been submitted to a higher authority, their responses take precedence.

1. **Level I** – Level I offenses include minor misbehavior which **disrupts** orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the operation of the school. Individual staff members usually handle these offenses.

The following behaviors are considered to be Level I expectations:

1. Walk quietly in halls
2. Display respect for others
3. Use school facilities as designed
4. Keep hands and feet to self
5. Keep food in cafeteria
6. Obey directions from staff
7. Adherence to Dress Code
8. Be kind, safe, and responsible

If students are not complying to the above Level I expectations, the following discipline responses may include:

1. Verbal reprimand
2. Removal from group or room
3. Restriction of privileges
4. Teacher/student conference
5. Parent contact – Plans for improvement should be created
6. Teacher Detention
7. Other disciplinary measure deemed necessary by administrative personnel

2. **Level II** – Level II offenses **disrupt the learning climate** of the school. These infractions may require the intervention of personnel on the administrative level because the use of Level I disciplinary options has failed to correct the problem.

Examples of “typical” Level II infractions:

1. Continued violation of Level I
2. Swearing
3. Harmful statements/Bullying
4. Inappropriate comments/contact
5. Defiance
6. Disruption of learning
7. Cheating

Typical Level II discipline responses:

1. Continuation of appropriate Level I options
2. Teacher conference
3. Written conduct referral to principal/parent
4. Teacher/parent conference - Plans for improvement should be created
5. Detention (Before School, After School, or Saturday)
6. Suspension by principal
8. Other disciplinary measure deemed necessary by administrative personnel

3. **Level III** – Level III infractions sometimes result from the continuation of Level I and II misbehavior. Also included are acts against persons or property. Some of these infractions have consequences, which might **endanger the health or safety** of others in the school.

Examples of “typical” Level III infractions:

1. Continued violation of Level I and II behaviors
2. Stealing
3. Fighting
4. Threatening
5. Possession of alcohol and or drugs (SASD Policy 227)
6. Destroying others property
7. Vandalism
8. Tobacco possession (SASD Policy 222)
9. Possession of obscene materials
10. Harming a person (physically)
11. Extortion

Typical Level III discipline responses:

1. Use of appropriate Level I and II options
2. Taking away extra curricular activities
3. Suspension (in-school or out-of-school)
4. Expulsion (based on formal hearing with school board)
5. Other disciplinary measure deemed necessary by administrative personnel

4. **Level IV** – Level IV infractions could result from the continuation of lower level offenses. Also included are acts, which **result in violence** to another person(s), or property, which pose a threat to the health, welfare, and safety of others in the school.

Examples of “typical” Level IV infractions:

1. Continuation of Level III
2. False alarms
3. Weapon possession (SASD Policy 218.1)
4. Assault on school personnel
5. Arson
6. Selling drugs/alcohol (SASD Policy 227)
7. Terroristic threats (SASD Policy 218.4)

Typical Level IV discipline responses:

1. Continuation of Level III responses
2. Remove student from classroom and notify parent/guardian
3. Principal must notify superintendent and prepare report
4. Contact proper authorities
5. Refer to SASD Policies 218.1, 218.4, 222, and 227 for appropriate action with weapons, terroristic threats, tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.
6. Other disciplinary measure deemed necessary by administrative personnel

Policies

AFTER SCHOOL ACCESS

No student is to be in the building after 4:00 without a specific reason. Students who are reported to be in the building without reason are subject to disciplinary action that may include restriction from activities and facilities.

BACKPACKS AND BOOK BAGS

Backpacks and book bags may be used to transport school supplies to and from school, but must be kept in the classroom during the school day. Students should not carry nonessential items to and from school.

BUS/VAN TRANSPORTATION

Bus privileges may be suspended for misconduct such as fighting on the bus, use of profanity, use of tobacco, disobedience to the bus driver, or repeated infractions. Any misconduct endangering the safety of other students will result in suspension of bus privileges. **Drivers have the right to assign seats at any time.** For more information, please see “School Transportation” on page 14.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL (SASD Policy 227)

Shenango Area School District does not permit the possession or use of any illegal substance on the school grounds. As such, students are prohibited from possessing, ingesting, or to be under the influence while on school grounds or at any school function.

Any student found to be in possession of, under the influence of, or participating in any drug, look-alike drug, health endangering compound, or alcohol related activity will be disciplined. The following actions may be taken:

1. Parents notified
2. Local Law Enforcement notified
3. Suspension
4. Drug and alcohol counseling
5. Referral to CORE team
6. Placement in an alternative school
7. Recommendation for Expulsion

EDUCATIONAL DISTRACTIONS

Students should not bring any items that would disrupt the educational process. (Including trading cards etc.)

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Student possession of electronic devices, strictly for the use of **educational purposes**, is permitted **only by the discretion of the classroom teacher** and building administration. Electronic devices should be powered off at all times unless permitted to be in use by the classroom teacher. If a student uses an electronic device without teacher approval or for non-educational purposes, the device will be confiscated and turned over to the office for disciplinary action. Disciplinary action can include but is not limited to the following: confiscation of device until parent picks up and/or more serious discipline action depending on the details of the infraction.

1. Also, the district does not assume responsibility for electronic devices that are lost, damaged, or stolen. If these items are brought to school they are the students’ responsibility.
2. The capture of any digital image on any device is strictly prohibited.
3. Devices cannot be charged on school grounds. If the battery runs out, the device must be put away.

4. Students may not answer or initiate communication during instructional time.
5. The extent of tech support is providing access to the wireless guest network, where available.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Any student owing any obligation to the school will not receive his/her report card until all obligations have been fulfilled. Unfulfilled obligations (i.e., lost textbooks, library books, overdue cafeteria account, etc.) may also affect eligibility to participate in activities until the obligation is fulfilled. It is that student's responsibility to make sure that issued items are not damaged, lost, or stolen.

HARASSMENT (SASD Policy 248)

Shenango Area School District strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. Any forms of harassment that consist of verbal, written, graphic, physical, sexual, or conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age disability, or religion is not tolerated.

Any student who believes she/he has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy is encouraged to immediately report the incident to the building principal or a district employee. Disciplinary action for those students in violation of the harassment policy can include, but are not limited to, consequences spelled out on page 9 in this student handbook.

LUNCH

Shenango Area School District operates a federally sponsored breakfast and lunch program. As such, lunches may be purchased from school or brought from home. Parental or other deliveries of fast food to school are not permitted.

Lunch will be offered to the students, faculty, and staff at the following rates. For the 2023-24 school year, all student breakfast and lunch meals will be free of charge. (A la carte items/extra portions are not included as free items and will have various costs depending on each item.)

Milk	\$0.40
Elementary Breakfast	FREE of charge
Elementary Lunch	FREE of charge
High School Breakfast	FREE of charge
High School Lunch	FREE of charge
Adult Lunch	\$4.75

MEDICATIONS/PHYSICIAN'S ORDERS

Any controlled substance (medication) that is to be taken during the school day by a student must be registered with the nurse and must be accompanied by a physician's order and a parent medication authorization form. Prescription medications must come in the pharmacy labeled container. Over the counter medications must come in the manufacture's original packaging. All medications must be delivered to school by an adult, unless other arrangements have been made with the school nurse. Use or possession of any medication without registration is prohibited. This policy also includes over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, etc. Students who require the use of emergency medications, such as rescue inhalers and epi-pens, must register them with the school nurse. See the nurse if you have any questions.

Any modification to a student's school day, course of study, or their ability to train/compete in sports/activities must be in writing by a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathic medicine licensed in Pennsylvania or in writing from his designee with prescriptive authority (nurse practitioner or physician's assistant).

The Pennsylvania Public School Code, Section 1414.2(g) allows parents/guardians to request an exemption to the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector for their student. In order to request this exemption, contact the school nurse to make an appointment to discuss this decision, review and sign the opt-out form.

PLAGIARISM/CHEATING

Plagiarism/Cheating is a very serious offense and works directly against the purpose and vision of Shenango Area School District. It hinders the student's ability to reach their maximum potential in becoming a worthy member of society. Teachers and administrators will take steps to guard against students plagiarizing ideas from other sources, cheating directly from other students, and using artificial intelligence (such as ChatGPT and Photo Math) to complete their work. In addition to issuing disciplinary responses, teachers will use available resources, including but not limited to Turnitin.com, GoGuardian, and AI Writing Check to monitor the work of students and uphold the Academic Integrity Policy.

STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION LIST (HEIGHTS AND WEIGHTS)

The school nurse will monitor the well-being and physical health of all Shenango Area School District students. As part of the monitoring, each student's height and weight will be measured, recorded, and kept as part of that student's school medical record. If health concerns for the student arise during the collection and review of information, the school nurse will contact parents and guardians to provide direction and support.

SCHOOL PHONE USE

Phone calls are discouraged during the school day. If a student needs to contact home for any reason, they are to report to the office to use a school phone.

SEARCHES

The district has a compelling interest in protecting and preserving the health, safety, and welfare of the school population. Therefore, school officials have the authority to lawfully conduct a search without a warrant of any student or their belongings when in school, on school grounds, or when otherwise under school supervision. Student belongings include but are not limited to items such as electronic devices, purses, backpacks, clothing, and other possessions in clothing, lockers, and automobiles.

When there is a reasonable suspicion of prohibited contraband, material that would pose a threat to the school population, or evidence that there has been a violation of the law, Board policy, or school rules, a search may be performed by designated school employees and administrators.

Additionally, random searches may also occur upon entrance and attendance at all on-campus activities, including school days, field trips, athletic practices and events, and other extracurricular gatherings. Random searches will be supervised by a member of the administrative team or school resources officers.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION (SASD Policy 233)

The principal or person in charge of the school may suspend any student for disobedience or misconduct for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days and shall immediately notify the parent/guardian and the Superintendent in writing when the student is suspended. Students serving an out-of-school suspension must make up missed exams and work, and shall be permitted to complete assignments pursuant to established guidelines.

Expulsion is exclusion from school by the Board for a period exceeding ten (10) consecutive school days. The Board may permanently expel from the District rolls any student whose misconduct or disobedience warrants this sanction. No student shall be expelled without an

opportunity for a formal hearing before a duly authorized committee of the Board, and upon action taken by the Board after the hearing.

TERRORISTIC THREATS/ACTS (SASD Policy 218.4)

The Board recognizes the danger that terroristic threats and acts present to the safety and welfare of the district students, staff and community. Terroristic threats are threats to commit violence communicated with the intent to terrorize another, to cause evacuation of a building, or to cause serious public inconvenience. Terroristic acts are offenses against property or involving danger to another person. The Board prohibits any district student from communicating terroristic threats or committing terroristic acts directed at any student, employee, board member, community member or school building.

Disciplinary action for those students in violation of the terroristic threat/acts policy can include, but are not limited to, consequences spelled out on page 9 in this student handbook.

WEAPONS POLICY (SASD Policy 218.1)

The Shenango Area School District Board recognizes the importance of a safe school environment to the educational process. Possession of weapons in the school environment is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by law.

Weapons shall include, but not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku stick, brass or metal knuckles, firearm, shot gun, rifle, BB or pellet gun, look-alike gun, chemical agent, explosive device, and/or any other tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

A student shall be considered in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker; under the student's control while s/he is on school property, on property being used by the school at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school; or while the student is on his/her way to or from school. A student shall also be considered to be in possession of a weapon when it is determined that the student has brought onto or has been in possession of a weapon on any school property, any school-sponsored activity. Possession of a weapon shall be grounds for expulsion pursuant to this policy regardless of the intent of the student.

Please Note:

The school superintendent (or his or her designee), on an individualized case basis, may appeal to the school board, requesting that the action called for in the Shenango Area School District Student Handbook may be changed or adjusted based on extenuating and mitigating factors of the individual case directly related to the policy.

Dress Code

I. Rationale

The rationale for establishing a dress policy for the Shenango Area School District goes beyond setting a set of rules for students to follow. To develop an appropriate dress code, the entire school community was represented before any decisions were recommended. The first step in the process was to meet with representatives of students, parents, teachers, community, school board members, and administration as well as studying neighboring school district policies. The administration believes the purpose of a dress policy is to ensure the maintenance of a proper

educational environment and to prevent disruptions to that environment. We believe the way a student dresses is important for the following reasons:

- A. We are striving for excellence in every aspect of the school system. Recent and ongoing changes to curriculum, building and grounds, extra-curricular, and technology have significantly helped us reach our goal of excellence. We believe that students learning how to become self-disciplined is one of our final components to reach our goal. We believe that self-discipline is setting standards for our students and living by those standards. By dressing appropriately in school, students are demonstrating that they are self-disciplined.
- B. It is our belief that schools should prepare the students for real life roles. In the work force, employers expect their employees to dress by their standards. Our dress policy should not be looked upon as the district making the students dress a certain way, but rather it should be thought of as preparing students for life.
- C. There is a perception by many people that when students dress appropriately, their behavior and performance in school is better. It also creates a safe environment for all students to learn.

Finally, when students dress appropriately there is less peer pressure for students to keep up in a social realm. The school setting should be considered a learning institute, not a place to compare fashion based upon socioeconomics.

II. Tops

- A. Excessively low cut tops are not permitted.
- B. All tops must have short or long sleeves. Clothing may be layered. For example, tank tops and dresses are permitted with a layer over or underneath.
- C. Students are not permitted to wear articles of clothing with inappropriate innuendos or items that promote, advertise, and/or refer to any violence, alcohol, tobacco, and/or a controlled substance.
- D. Tops are not to be sliced, cut, torn, frayed or include holes of any kind.

III. Bottoms

- A. Pants, shorts, dresses, or skirts cannot be excessively sliced, cut, torn, frayed or include holes.
- B. Bottoms are not to have extra buckles, multiple zippers, chains, straps or safety pins attached to clothing. Manufactures embroidery is acceptable.
- C. Pajama bottoms are not permitted, unless deemed special situation at the discretion of the teacher or administration.
- D. Shorts may be worn no higher than five (5) inches about the knee.
- E. Dresses or skirts may be worn no higher than three (3) inches above the knee.
- F. No writing is permitted on the seat of pants/shorts/skirts/sweatpants. Manufactures tags are permitted.
- G. Bottoms must be worn at waist level (sag look is not permitted).
- H. Excessively tight and/or revealing pants are not permitted. If worn, a layered shirt or skirt must be worn.
- I. Yoga/stretch pants are permitted but may not have any holes or transparent or semi-transparent areas higher than three (3) inches above the knee.

IV. Footwear

- A. Footwear is required at all times.
- B. Shower shoes, flip-flops, beach shoes, or slippers of any design are not permitted.
- C. Due to the active nature of elementary school students, it is encouraged that students wear shoes that offer protection for their feet. High heels and

strapless/flimsy sandals can pose a danger to children throughout the school day, especially at recess or on stairs. Athletic shoes are encouraged.

V. The Following Items Are Not Permissible During the School Day

- A. Chokers, wallet chains, studded collars/bracelets, and any item that can be used as a weapon
- B. Athletic wristbands
- C. Sunglasses, or non-prescription dark glasses, are not permitted unless prescribed by a physician with specific need indicated
- D. Head coverings such as hats, hoods, athletic headbands, and bandanas
- E. Coats are not to be worn during the school day
- F. Apparel that reveals or exposes the midriff/lower back and/or undergarments or sides of the upper body
- G. Translucent and/or see through materials
- H. Face paint and/or excessive make-up
- I. Hairstyles and hair coloring that are deemed a distraction to the educational process
- J. Piercing(s) that pose a safety hazard
- K. Excessive jewelry
- L. Anything that is deemed inappropriate by the administration

School Transportation

The Shenango Area School District has authorized the use of video and audio surveillance cameras on buses and school vans. The purpose is to enhance the safety of students and staff. The presence of cameras alone can be a strong deterrent to violence, bullying, harassment, and other disruptive conduct that can harm students or interfere with safe operation of the vehicle. Video and audio surveillance will be available to administrators for review of problematic situations on the buses.

School buses/vans are extensions of the regular school facilities. Students are expected to follow the same behavior guidelines outlined in the handbook. School bus drivers have the responsibility and authority to ensure safety as well as the enforcement of rules and regulations. Students who violate behavior guidelines while on the bus shall be referred to the principal for disciplinary actions. A bus driver's primary responsibility is for the safety of all students. **Students who misbehave take the driver's attention away from driving and jeopardize the safety of everyone.**

Students on the bus are expected to:

1. **Students are encouraged to ride their assigned bus every day.**
2. Parents should supervise their child at the bus stop. Students must be ready to board the bus five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. Stand in a safe area along the roadway. Walk in front of the bus and within the driver's field of vision when crossing the road.
3. Be seated immediately in the seat assigned by the driver, face the front, and remain in the seat until the bus has reached a complete stop.
4. Demonstrate proper **respect for the driver** and obey all school rules, regulations, and driver instructions. Please do not talk to the driver unless necessary.
5. Maintain voices at a moderate level, make no unnecessary noises or sounds, and use only acceptable language.
6. Keep all materials and parts of the body inside the windows and open windows only when given permission by the driver.
7. Do not litter the inside of the bus.

8. **Have written permission slip using School Dismissal Manager from parent / guardian to ride another bus or get off at a stop different from the assigned location. This information will be reported to the driver, teacher, and office by School Dismissal report. Parent and school permission are required for the use of an alternate bus or bus stop.**

Possible consequences for referral to the principal for misbehavior are outlined in the “Discipline” section on pages 8-10.

First Offense	Warning and Parent Contact
Second Offense	Bus Suspension for One Day
Third Offense	Bus Suspension for Three Days
Fourth Offense	Bus Suspension for Five Days
Fifth Offense	Bus Suspension for the Remainder of the School Year

Certain behaviors such as those labeled Levels II, III, and IV in the Discipline section of the handbook may result in school suspension/expulsion of the student. These serious infractions may also result in an administrative determination to apply any of the offense levels deemed appropriate.

It is the goal of Shenango Elementary School to **safely deliver students** from home to school and from school to home on a daily basis. The above rules have been established to protect the safety and welfare of all students and staff involved. **Orderly behavior is required on the bus.** Infractions of the above rules will be brought to the attention of parents. **Suspension of bus riding privileges may result from repeated infractions or if student safety is jeopardized.**

Students:

Look for these rules on your bus!

On the bus, students should:

1. **Be seated immediately and face the front.**
2. **Obey the driver.**
3. **Talk quietly.**
4. **Use only correct language.**
5. **Keep all materials and body parts safely inside the windows.**
6. **Place any trash in the “trash” can, only when getting off at your stop.**

Definition of Consequences

Partial Restriction-Partial Restriction is the suspension of student privileges. A student may be placed on a list of Restricted Students for a violation of school rules. When a student is placed on the Restricted List, they are denied privileges during the school day. This may include but not be limited to:

1. Removal from recess
2. No written or hall pass privileges
3. Assigned seating in the cafeteria
4. No assemblies
5. Denied field trips

Total Restriction-When a student is placed on Total Restriction, he/she will lose the above privileges during the school day. This would include any events on school property during or after school including the Athletic Association activities on the school premises. He/She will not be permitted to participate in or attend any Shenango activity for the duration of the restriction.

Detention- Detention may be assigned by a teacher or administrator for inappropriate student behavior/violation of school rules. Parents/guardian will be notified in order to make arrangements for transportation. Detentions will be ½ hour in length and either served before or

after the school day. If an assigned detention is not served, it will be doubled and/or other disciplinary measures may be taken.

Saturday Detentions-Saturday Detentions are held from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Saturday mornings. It is the parent's responsibility to arrange transportation to and from Saturday Detention and to follow standard procedures to sign their child in and out of the building using the elementary office entrance. The student should arrive prepared to work and/or read. A student that disrupts or does not attend a Saturday Detention will be subject to further disciplinary action.

In-School Suspensions-In-School Suspension may be assigned by the office for a violation of school rules. When an In-School Suspension occurs the student's home will be notified via mail and or the phone. If a student is absent on the day of an assigned In-School Suspension, the student will serve the In-School Suspension on his/her first day back to school. The student will report directly to the office upon arrival to school. Assignments will be provided from the teachers to keep the student up-to-date with classroom activities. Misbehavior while serving an In-School Suspension will result in further disciplinary action.

Out-of-School Suspensions-Out-of-School Suspensions may be assigned for a violation of school rules. When an Out-of-School Suspension occurs the student's home will be notified via mail and/or the phone. The parents of the student may also be required to attend a conference in the office. Students appearing on any school property during Out-of-School Suspension will be considered trespassing. Students have the right, and must assume the responsibility, of making up missed work because of an Out-of-School Suspension.

School Service- School service hours may be assigned by the building principal as an alternate consequence for students failing to follow school policy. School service hours will be completed on school grounds, outside of school hours, and under the supervision of a district employee. Failure to complete hours will be recorded through outstanding student obligations which can result in a student being excluded from school activities.

Alternative Education-If a student has exhibited behaviors that are consistently not conducive to the educational environment of Shenango Elementary School, that student may be placed in an Alternative Educational Environment.

Charges Filed with Magistrate-The school district may choose to file charges with the local magistrate for the following offenses: truancy, disorderly conduct, harassment, tobacco, alcohol, or drug violations or any other serious offense deemed appropriate by the administration. The magistrate may initiate several consequences that include but are not limited to fines and community service.

Expulsion-The school principal may recommend to the Superintendent and Board of Directors that the student be expelled from the Shenango Schools. This process is explained in detail in the SASD Policy 233 should this action be necessary. Also, refer to Pennsylvania Code 12.6-12.8 on pages 22-24 of this handbook for more information.

Technology

NETWORK ACCESS

Purpose - Shenango Area School District recognizes that technology has become a critical component of student learning. Our goal is to help all students develop into critical thinkers who use data, innovation, and creativity in order to become skilled problem solvers and learners in the 21st century. Technology skills are a necessity for our students for lifelong learning, in the workplace, and in the global community. However, access is a privilege, not a right, and carries with it responsibilities for all involved. Misuse means any violation of this agreement or any other use that is not included in the agreement but has the effect of harming people, infrastructure, or hardware.

For the protection of students, filtering of content, monitoring of the network, and protection of information will be conducted in accordance with Act 197 (Pennsylvania House Bill 2262), The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Despite every effort for supervision and filtering, all users and their parents/guardians are advised that access to the Internet may include the potential for access to inappropriate materials for school-aged students. Every user must take responsibility for his or her use of the network and avoid these sites.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a law that protects the privacy of student education records. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to parties or under the conditions outlined in the law.

Delegation - The Superintendent with the assistance of the Technology Director will develop appropriate written permission agreements for student use of district technology through Shenango Area School District facilities. The Technology Director will conduct training programs with staff members on appropriate use of the technology. All staff members will be responsible for monitoring student use of the data network to ensure that they comply with this policy.

Authority - It shall be the policy of the Board of School Directors of the Shenango Area School District that in order to access Shenango Area School District technology, it will be necessary for students in grades K-12 to agree, in writing, to the following regulations for accessing the data network:

REGULATIONS FOR DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY

Hardware devices and Software: Includes, but not limited to, all computers, laptops, chromebooks, tablets, printers, and all programs installed on said devices.

- Hardware and software shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way. Intentionally altering the files and/or the hardware on district computers will be viewed as vandalism. Each student will be held responsible for the intentional altering of a device that occurs while said device is in his/her possession.
- The user shall be responsible for damages to the District's equipment, systems, and software resulting from deliberate or willful acts. Students, parents, or guardians will be charged for willful damage to hardware.
- Shenango Area School District shall not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.
- Shenango Area School District assumes no responsibility for configuration, installation of software, or support of personal devices.

- Shenango Area School District assumes no responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen devices. Students use their personal devices at their own risk.
- Shenango Area School District assumes no responsibility for content viewed or accessed by students who connect their personal device to the school's network or use their cellular data network.
- Personal devices must be powered off or silenced during the school day unless otherwise permitted by district procedures.
- Personal and District devices with camera and video capability can be used only for educational use when authorized by the building principal, district administration, or designated professional staff member for the purposes of participation in educational activities. The Board prohibits all other photography, audio recording, and/or video recording, via electronic devices by students during the instructional day in district buildings, on district property, and when engaged in a school-sponsored activity. The Board prohibits students from taking, storing, disseminating, transferring, viewing, possessing or sharing obscene, pornographic, lewd, or otherwise illegal images or photographs, whether by electronic data transfer or other means, including, but not limited to, texting and emailing. Because such violations may constitute a crime under local, state and/or federal law, the district shall report such conduct to local, state and/or federal law enforcement agencies.
- Users are not permitted to load or use unauthorized or privately owned content onto any device.
- Users are responsible for backing up information on their district issued devices.

Internet and Intranet: The Shenango Area School District utilizes a local area network, a wireless network and provides access to the internet for academic purposes.

- Users (including guests) of district networks or district-owned equipment shall, prior to being given access or being issued equipment, sign user agreements acknowledging awareness of the provisions of this policy, and awareness that the district uses monitoring systems to monitor and detect inappropriate use and tracking systems to track and recover lost or stolen equipment.
- All district networks (including guest networks) are filtered for content and all traffic is logged. Regardless of what network you are attached to, the acceptable use policy must be followed at all times.
- District devices and student accounts will be content filtered at all times. Removal of the program that governs this is not permitted.
- The internet, network, and computer technology may not be used for illegal activity; transmitting or willfully receiving offensive materials; hate mail; discriminating remarks; or to willfully obtain or send obscene, pornographic, sexist, racist, anarchist, violent or bomb making material. If for any reason such material is received, the material is to be deleted immediately. Saving, forwarding, or printing of said material is strictly prohibited.
- Users shall not intentionally seek information, obtain copies of, or modify data, or passwords belonging to other users or misrepresent other users on the network. Users may not give their password to anyone. Users may not send or receive a message with someone else's name on it.
- All users of the Student Information System (SIS) and Financial Information System will be required to use passwords with syntax requirements and other security measures as specified by the Superintendent or their designee in accordance with the capabilities of the SIS.
- Any unauthorized attempt to access the Shenango Area School District's servers, mainframe, routers, networking equipment, internet filters, or operating systems either from on campus or off campus will be considered an attempt at "hacking" and is prohibited.

- Network accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for an authorized purpose. Attempts to log on to the Internet, network or workstation under an assumed identification will result in cancellation of the user's privileges. Any user identified as a security risk, or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet or other technological services.
- The Shenango Area School District reserves the right to log Internet use and monitor computer activity by remote access while still respecting the privacy of user accounts.
- The Shenango Area School District may terminate the availability of Internet, network, or computer technologies accessibility at its sole discretion.

Shenango School District Chromebook Use

- School District chromebooks will be provided to students in grades kindergarten through twelve. Students are responsible for the general care of the chromebook they have been issued by the school.
- Students leaving the district must return the chromebook and charger to the district. Student, parents, or guardians will be charged the cost of lost chargers.
- Damages to the chromebook will be charged to the student, parents, or guardians. Student, parents, or guardians will be charged the cost of repair or the full cost of replacement.
- Chromebook insurance is offered via a third party by the district at the beginning of each school year to cover accidental damage or theft. Intentional damage or missing chargers/cases are not covered.
- Lost chromebooks are the responsibility of the student. If a chromebook is lost, the student will be charged the replacement cost.
- It is recommended that each student bring their own headphones or earbuds.
- A protective case is provided by the district. The chromebook is to be kept in this case at all times and should not be removed.
- Shenango Area School District utilizes GoGuardian for filtering and classroom management. For this reason, students may only log in with their Shenango account and GoGuardian cannot be disabled. Because it is linked to their school Google account, GoGuardian extensions will self-install on any chrome browser the student logs into. It is recommended they create and use a non-school account on personal devices unless using it for schoolwork.
- At the end of each school year, the chromebook is to be returned to the Shenango Area School District in good working condition (without cracked screens, with working hinges, with working keyboard, etc) and cosmetically correct (free of intentional scratches, with all screw covers, etc). If the chromebook is damaged, the student will be charged the cost of repair or the full cost of replacement

Digital Etiquette

The Shenango Area School District will educate all students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

There can be serious repercussions with the inappropriate use of social and digital media that can affect your future. All users must abide by rules of network etiquette, which include but are not limited to the following:

- Users may not swear, use vulgarities, harass, or use any other inappropriate language. Abusive language will not be tolerated.
 - Do not write anything ANYWHERE you would not want your parents to read or to be read out loud in a court of law.
 - Even though you delete a message, it is backed up on a server somewhere.
 - Speech that is inappropriate for class is not appropriate for use online.
 - What you say and do online should be reflective of who you are.

- o You are representatives of the school when you are online in class.
- Use of the network to create or transmit material likely to be offensive or objectionable to recipients is prohibited.
 - o Even though you may be in a "private" space, nothing online is really private.
- Users are NOT permitted to reveal their personal address or phone number or those of other students and colleagues.
 - o Respect others' privacy and your own.
 - o Don't give out personal information about yourself or someone else.
 - o Instant messages, away messages, and profiles can be copied and pasted.
- All communication should be clearly identifiable as to who created it.
 - o Do not send anonymous messages.
 - o Do not send messages claiming to have been written by someone else.
 - o Having a copy of something doesn't mean you have the right to copy or distribute.
- Respect the ideas of others and if you disagree be constructive, not critical or rude.
- Users are expected to adhere to copyright laws.
 - o Fraudulent or illegal copying, communication, taking or modification of material is prohibited and will be referred to the appropriate authorities.
 - o The illegal use of copyrighted software, files, pictures, music or other electronic information is a violation of federal law and therefore strictly prohibited.
 - o Students may not use plagiarized information to complete assignments. All Internet sources must be cited.
- Cyber Bullying will NOT be tolerated.
- Users may not send documents, images, sound, video or other communications for the purpose of cheating.
- Users may not quote personal communications in a public form without the original author's prior consent.

Limitations of Liability: In no event shall the Shenango Area School District be liable for any damages, whether direct, indirect, special, or consequential, arising out of the use of the Internet. Use of information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk.

The Board requires all users to fully comply with this policy and to immediately report any violations or suspicious activities to the Superintendent or designee.

Failure to follow the procedures listed above will result in suspension or loss of the right to access the Internet, to use Shenango Area School District's technology, and the user may be subject to other disciplinary or legal actions.

Pennsylvania State Regulations - *Special Services*

Chapter 15 / Section 504 Plans

A protected handicapped student is a student who is school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to any aspect of the school program. In compliance with State & Federal Law, the Shenango Area School District will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extra-curricular activities to maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. These services and protections are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs. Services for students who are determined eligible under section 504 are available in each school. Contact the Director of Special Services for information and referral procedures.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

English as a second language is an academic discipline that is designed to teach English Language Learners social and academic language skills as well as the cultural aspects of the English language necessary to succeed in an academic environment and contribute to society. The ESL/Bilingual Program is part of the core curriculum in that it may replace the English planned instruction if deemed necessary.

The Shenango Area School District provides a program for each student whose dominant language is not English for the purpose of facilitating the student's achievement of English proficiency. A home language survey is the first step in determining whether or not a student may be in need of these services. Eligible students receive instruction in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension at appropriate developmental and proficiency levels. The student receives instruction from a PA certified teacher. The teacher uses an assessment system that monitors student progress in learning English. Classroom teachers provide assistance and accommodations so the English Language Learner has academic success while learning English.

Gifted

The Shenango Area School District implements a system to identify students within the district who are thought to be gifted and in need of specially designed instruction. The District's gifted screening process is designed to identify potentially gifted students who may need further evaluation. The Gifted Multidisciplinary Evaluation (GDME) will begin with parental permission when further evaluation is needed.

This process involves a certified school psychologist who gathers additional information that will be used to determine if the child qualifies for gifted education. If so, the types of services and programming based on the child's individual needs will be established by the Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP) team. Gifted programming shall be in the form of enrichment and/or acceleration.

Homeless

To the extent feasible, and in accordance with the student's best interest, a homeless student shall continue to be enrolled in his/her school of origin while he/she remains homeless or until the end of the academic year in which he/she obtains permanent housing.

Upon notification of homelessness, the Shenango Area School District shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment pursuant to district policies. The district liaison may contact the previous school for oral confirmation of immunizations, and the school shall request records from the previous district, pursuant to Board Policy.

Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other district students including, but not limited to, transportation services; school nutrition programs; vocational programs and technical education; preschool programs; programs for students with limited English proficiency; and educational services for which students meet eligibility criteria, such as programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students. Please contact the Director of Special Services with any questions.

Special Education

It is the responsibility of the Shenango Area School District to ensure that all children with disabilities residing in the District, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a federal law called the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The school district is required by the IDEA to provide a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities who need special education and related services. Pennsylvania has adopted state laws which conform with the IDEA and which school districts must follow. In Pennsylvania a school age child with disabilities who needs special education and related services is identified as a child with a disability. Students are exceptional if they need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Autism/Pervasive Development Disorder | Orthopedic Impairment |
| Deaf-Blindness | Other Health Impairment |
| Deafness | Specific Learning Disability |
| Emotional Disturbance | Speech or Language Impairment |
| Hearing Impairment | Traumatic Brain Injury |
| Intellectual Disability | Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| Multiple Disabilities | |

Screening

The Shenango Area School District uses the following procedures for allocating, identifying and evaluating specific needs of school-age students requiring special programs or services as required by law. The district as prescribed by section 1402 of the school code, routinely conducts screening of a child's hearing acuity in the following grades: kindergarten, first, second, third, seventh, and eleventh. Visual acuity is screened in every grade. Speech and language skills are screened in kindergarten and on referral basis. Gross and fine motor skills, academic skills and socialization skills are assessed by teachers on an on-going basis, and may be screened further by Special Service personnel should it be deemed appropriate and with parent/guardian permission. Specified needs from these screening sources may be noted within the student's official file.

Evaluation

When screening indicates that a student may be exceptional, the school district will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. "Evaluation" means procedures used to determine whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that meet the child's needs. The term means procedures used selectively with an individual child and do not mean basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children.

In Pennsylvania, this evaluation is called a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE). It is conducted by a multidisciplinary team (MDT), which must include a school psychologist, a teacher and the

parents. The MDE process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and use procedural safeguard procedures.

The MDE process results in a written evaluation report called an (ER). This report makes recommendations about a student's eligibility for special education based on the presence of a disability and the need for specially designed instruction. The evaluation report also makes recommendations for educational programming regardless of whether or not the team recommends that the student is exceptional. Once parental consent for an evaluation is obtained, the school district has timelines and procedures specified by law, which it must follow.

Parents who think their child is a child with a disability may request, at any time that the school district conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation. This request should be made in writing to the Special Services Coordinator. If a parent makes an oral request for a multidisciplinary evaluation the school district shall provide the parent with a form for written permission.

Intervention Support

The Shenango Area School District is committed to providing needed interventions for individual student needs through a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). MTSS is an evidence-based approach used to provide interventions in areas of academics and behavior. The MTSS process is rooted in the District's school-wide screenings and School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) structures. Student areas of need are identified using a team approach and targeted interventions are designed to address the individual needs. Interventions are based on specific goals and include a wide range of supports such as small group instruction, whole group instruction, connections to outside agencies, and other evidenced-based strategies. Through continual examination of data, student progress is reviewed on an ongoing basis throughout the school year.

Educational Placement

Once a student qualifies for services, educational placement is discussed. The IEP team must include a district representative, the student's teacher, special education teacher and the parents. If the student is determined to be exceptional an IEP will be developed.

An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, and objectives, and the individual programs and services, which the student will receive. IEP's are reviewed on an annual basis. The IEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of intervention and the location of intervention.

Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.

All of the information contained within this section serves only as a summary of the Special Services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to students and their families. For more information, please contact:

Dr. James Janacone
Director of Special Services
Shenango Area School District
2501 Old Pittsburgh Road
New Castle, PA 16101
(724) 658-7287, ext. 6

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Pennsylvania State Code

12.1 Free Education and Attendance

(a) All persons residing in this Commonwealth between the ages of 6 and 21 years are entitled to free and full education in the Commonwealth's public schools.

(b) Parents or guardians of all children between the ages of 8 and 17 are required by the compulsory attendance law to ensure that their children attend an approved education institution, unless legally excused. Students who have not graduated may not be asked to leave school merely because they have reached 17 years of age if they are fulfilling their responsibilities as students. A student may not be excluded from the public school nor from extracurricular activities because:

(1) The student is married. (2) The student is pregnant. (3) The student has a disability as identified by Chapter 15 (relating to protected handicapped students). (4) The student is an eligible student identified under Chapter 14 (relating to special education services and programs).

12.2 Student Responsibilities

(a) Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and homework, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students are responsible to share with the administration and faculty a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.

(b) 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, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.

(c) Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.

(d) It is the responsibility of the student to conform with the following:

(1) Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and to conduct themselves in accordance with them. Students should assume that, until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed in writing, it is in effect

(2) Volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.

(3) Dress and groom themselves so as to meet fair standards of safety, health, and so as not to cause substantial disruption to the educational processes.

(4) Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for the students enrolled therein.

(5) Comply with Commonwealth and local laws.

(6) Exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.

(7) Attend school daily and be on time at all classes and other school functions.

(8) Make up work when absent from school.

(9) Pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by the local school authorities.

(10) Report accurately in student media.

(11) Not use obscene language in student media or on school premises.

12.3 School Rules

(a) The governing board has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules governing the conduct of students in school. The rulemaking power, however, is not unlimited: it must operate within statutory and constitutional restraints. A governing board has only powers that are enumerated in the statutes of the Commonwealth, or that may reasonably be implied or necessary for the orderly operation of the school.

(b) Governing boards may not make rules which are arbitrary, capricious, discriminatory, or outside their grant of authority from the General Assembly. A rule is generally considered reasonable if it uses a rational means of accomplishing some legitimate school purpose.

(c) Each governing board shall adopt a code of student conduct that includes policies governing student discipline and a listing of students' rights and responsibilities as outlined in this chapter. This conduct code shall be published and distributed to students and parents or guardians. Copies of the code shall also be made available in each school library.

12.4 Discrimination

Consistent with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (43 P. S. §§ 951— 963), a student may not be denied access to a free and full public education, nor may a student be subject to disciplinary action on account of race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

12.5 Corporal Punishment

(a) Corporal punishment is defined as physically punishing a student for an infraction of the discipline policy. Use of corporal punishment is prohibited.

(b) Teachers and school authorities may use reasonable force under the following circumstances:

- (1) To quell a disturbance.
- (2) To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects.
- (3) For the purpose of self-defense.
- (4) For the protection of persons or property.

12.6 Exclusions from school

(a) The governing board shall define and publish the types of offenses that would lead to exclusion from school. Exclusions affecting certain students with disabilities shall be governed by § 14.143 (relating to disciplinary placements) and 34 CFR 300.519—300.529 (relating to discipline procedures).

(b) Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion.

- (1) Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from 1 to 10 consecutive school days.
 - (i) Suspensions may be given by the principal or person in charge of the public school.
 - (ii) A student may not be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
 - (iii) The parents or guardians and the superintendent of the district shall be notified immediately in writing when the student is suspended.
 - (iv) When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements in § 12.8(c) (relating to hearings).
 - (v) Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10 school day period.
 - (vi) Students shall have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the governing board.

(2) Expulsion is exclusion from school by the governing board for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. Expulsions require a prior formal hearing under § 12.8.

(c) During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the governing board in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his normal class except as set forth in subsection (d).

(d) If it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days. A student may not be excluded from school for longer than 15 school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by both parties. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.

(e) Students who are under 17 years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled and shall be provided an education.

- (1) The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the district's superintendent.

(2) Within 30 days of action by the governing board, the parents or guardians shall submit to the school district written evidence that the required education is being provided as described in paragraph (1) or that they are unable to do so. If the parents or guardians are unable to provide the required education, the school entity shall, within 10 days of receipt of the notification, make provision for the student's education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. §§ 1400—1482).

(3) If the approved educational program is not complied with, the school entity may take action in accordance with 42 Pa.C.S. Chapter 63 (relating to the Juvenile Act) to ensure that the child will receive a proper education. See § 12.1(b) (relating to free education and attendance).

12.7 Exclusion from classes—in-school suspension.

(a) A student may not receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.

(b) Communication to the parents or guardian shall follow the suspension action taken by the school.

(c) When the in-school suspension exceeds 10 consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the principal shall be offered to the student and the student's parent or guardian prior to the 11th school day in accordance with the procedures in § 12.8 (relating to hearings).

(d) The student's school entity has the responsibility to make provision for the student's education during the period of the in-school suspension.

12.8 Hearing Procedure

(a) *General.* Education is a statutory right, and students shall be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing.

(b) *Formal hearings.* A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions. This hearing may be held before the governing board or an authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the board. When a committee of the board or a hearing examiner conducts the hearing, a majority vote of the entire governing board is required to expel a student. The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing:

(1) Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.

(2) At least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension.

(3) The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.

(4) The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and may have a parent or guardian attend the hearing.

(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 the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.

(7) The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.

(8) A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.

(9) The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:

(i) Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.

(ii) Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. §§ 1400—1482).

(iii) In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.

(10) Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

(c) *Informal hearings.* The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended.

(1) The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and for students, their parents or guardians and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.

(2) The following due process requirements shall be observed in regard to the informal hearing:

(i) Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and to the student.

(ii) Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.

(iii) A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.

(iv) A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.

(v) The school entity shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension.

12.9 Freedom of expression.

(a) The right of public school students to freedom of speech is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

(b) Students shall have the right to express themselves unless the expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens serious harm to the school or community, encourages unlawful activity or interferes with another individual's rights.

(c) Students may use publications, handbills, announcements, assemblies, group meetings, buttons, armbands and any other means of common communication, provided that the use of public school communications facilities shall be in accordance with the regulations of the authority in charge of those facilities.

(1) Students have the responsibility to obey laws governing libel and obscenity and to be aware of the full meaning of their expression.

(2) Students have the responsibility to be aware of the feelings and opinions of others and to give others a fair opportunity to express their views.

(d) Identification of the individual student or at least one responsible person in a student group may be required on posted or distributed materials.

(e) School officials may require students to submit for prior approval a copy of materials to be displayed, posted or distributed on school property.

(f) Bulletin boards must conform to the following:

(1) School authorities may restrict the use of certain bulletin boards.

(2) Bulletin board space should be provided for the use of students and student organizations.

(3) School officials may require that notices or other communications be officially dated before posting, and that the materials be removed after a prescribed reasonable time to assure full access to the bulletin boards.)

(g) School newspapers and publications must conform to the following:

(1) Students have a right and are as free as editors of other newspapers to report the news and to editorialize within the provisions in paragraphs (4) and (5).

(2) School officials shall supervise student newspapers published with school equipment, remove obscene or libelous material and edit other material that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities.

(3) School officials may not censor or restrict material simply because it is critical of the school or its administration.

(4) Prior approval procedures regarding copy for school newspapers must identify the individual to whom the material is to be submitted and establish a limitation on the time required to make a decision. If the prescribed time for approval elapses without a decision, the material shall be considered authorized for distribution.

(5) Students who are not members of the newspaper staff shall have access to its pages.

Written criteria for submission of material by non staff members shall be developed and distributed to all students.

(h) The wearing of buttons, badges or armbands shall be permitted as another form of expression within the restrictions listed in subsection (c).

(i) School officials may set forth the time and place of distribution of materials so that distribution would not materially or substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.

(1) A proper time and place set for distribution is one that would give the students the opportunity to reach fellow students.

(2) The place of the activity may be restricted to permit the normal flow of traffic within the school and at exterior doors.

12.10 Flag Salute and the Pledge of Allegiance.

It is the responsibility of every citizen to show proper respect for his country and its flag.

(1) Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the Flag on the basis of personal belief or religious convictions.

(2) Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

12.11 Hair and dress.

(a) The governing board may establish dress codes or require that students wear school uniforms. Policies may apply to individual school buildings or to all school buildings.

(b) Students have the right to govern the length or style of their hair, including facial hair. Any limitation of this right must include evidence that length or style of hair causes disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health or safety hazard. When length or style of the hair presents a health or safety hazard, some types of covering shall be used.

(c) Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, shops, extracurricular activities or other situations when special attire may be required to insure the health or safety of the student.

(d) Students have the responsibility to keep themselves, their clothes and their hair clean. School officials may impose limitations on student participation in the regular instructional program when there is evidence that the lack of cleanliness constitutes a health hazard.

12.12 Confidential Communications

(a) Use of a student's confidential communications to school personnel in legal proceedings is governed by statutes and regulations appropriate to the proceeding. See, for example, 42 PA C.S. & 5945 (relating to confidential communications to school personnel).

(b) Information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents or guardians, the principal, or other appropriate authority where the health, welfare, or safety of the student or other persons is clearly in jeopardy.

12.14 Searches

(a) The governing board of every school entity shall adopt reasonable policies and procedures regarding student searches. The local education agency shall notify students and their parents or guardians of the policies and procedures regarding student searches.

(b) Illegal or prohibited materials seized during a student search may be used as evidence against the student in a school disciplinary proceeding.

(c) Prior to a locker search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. When school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare or safety of students in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning.

12.16 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

Corporal punishment—A form of physical discipline that is intended to cause pain and fear and in which a student is spanked, paddled or hit on any part of the body with a hand or instrument.

Governing board—The board of school directors of a school district, joint school committee of a joint school or joint vocational school, intermediate unit board of directors, or the board of trustees of a charter school or cyber-charter school.

Prekindergarten – A program operated by a school district or by a community agency under contract from a school district that is open to children who are at least 3 years of age and completed prior to the school district’s entry age for kindergarten, unless individual exceptions to the age requirements are made by the school district.

School entity—A local public education provider (for example—public school, charter school, cyber-charter school, area vocational-technical school or intermediate unit).

Student assistance program—A systematic process designed to assist school personnel to identify issues, including alcohol, drugs and others, which pose a barrier to a student’s learning and school success. Student assistance is a systematic process using effective and accountable professional techniques to mobilize school resources to remove the barriers to learning, and, when the problem is beyond the scope of the school, to assist the parent and the student with information so they may access services within the community.

Student services—Services designed by a school entity to support the instructional program and to help students attain their educational and career goals.

(i) Services may include school guidance counseling, health services (under Article XIV of the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. §§ 14-1401—14-1423) and 28 Pa. Code Chapter 23 (relating to school health)), psychological services, social work and home and school visitor services.

(ii) School entities may supplement, but may not supplant, these services through school-based, school-linked, or coordinated services provided by locally available social and human services agencies.