



# Tredyffrin/Easttown Middle School Staff Handbook 2015-2016



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Mascot – Bulldogs  
Colors – Garnet & Gray

## **Tredyffrin/Easttown Middle School Mission Statement**

To educate and challenge students to fulfill their potential within a community where children are valued, empowering these emergent adolescents to discover and appreciate who they are, what they have become, and what they can contribute to others.

## **Tredyffrin/Easttown School District Mission Statement**

To inspire a passion for learning, personal integrity, the pursuit of excellence, and social responsibility in each student.

## **Tredyffrin/Easttown School District Consensus Belief Statements**

- We believe that every individual has intrinsic value.
- We believe that each individual has potential.
- We believe that individuals are responsible for their choices and actions.
- We believe that external and internal expectations strongly influence personal growth and achievement.
- We believe that individuals and communities are strengthened by a culture of participation, contribution and support.
- We believe that lifelong learning is essential for one to flourish in a continually changing world.
- We believe that meaningful growth comes from building on successes, experiencing challenges and overcoming adversity.

## TEMS Staff Handbook Table Of Contents

<b>The Principal</b> .....	<b>3</b>
General Responsibilities.....	3
Evaluative and Supervisory Responsibilities.....	3
Responsibilities to Students and Parents.....	4
<b>Assistant Principals</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>School Counselors</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Duties.....	6
<b>Team Facilitators</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Duties.....	7
<b>Teachers</b> .....	<b>8</b>
General Information.....	8
Absences.....	8
Accidents.....	9
Assemblies.....	9
Bus Duty.....	10
Conferences.....	10
District Policies and Regulations.....	10
Emergency Drills.....	10
Extracurricular Opportunities.....	10
Field Trips.....	10
Grading Practices.....	11
Hall Passes.....	11
Homework.....	11
Internal Coverage.....	12
Keys.....	12
Requisition Procedures.....	13
Room Reservation.....	13
Room Sharing.....	13
Student Discipline.....	14
Supervision.....	14
Telephone and Email Use.....	15
Textbooks.....	15

## **The Principal**

The principal is the administrative and supervisory head of the school. He is responsible to the Superintendent for the educational program in all its aspects. He is responsible to the students and teachers for a well-rounded program conducted under the best possible conditions for learning and general well-being.

### ***General Responsibilities***

- Assume responsibility for supervision of all areas of the school
- Make all administrative decisions in matters of school policy and practice within the structure of the policies, regulations, and philosophy of the school district
- Supervise the preparation of all necessary scheduling
- Coordinate all aspects of the total educational program of the school and assure maximum student involvement and educational benefit
- Coordinate the Special and Gifted Education programs
- Develop meaningful in-service programs in concert with district plans
- Cooperate with elementary, senior high, vocational-technical, and other appropriate personnel to assure a smooth transition of students between the schools
- Assume responsibility that the physical plant and its immediate environs are in the best possible condition to foster maximum total educational benefit to the student body
- Prepare necessary budgeting data relative to the educational program and monitor in supervisory form all selections and ordering of supplies, materials and equipment
- Act as a representative of the school or school district in local, county, state and nationwide organizations and serve on committees at the discretion of the Superintendent of schools
- Keep TESD administration apprised of the total school program including special areas of excellence and special areas of concern

### ***Evaluative and Supervisory Responsibilities***

- Continually evaluate all aspects of the total school program—making, initiating, or coordinating necessary changes to improve student educational programming
- Hire and assign all personnel employed in the school to assure maximum educational benefit for the entire student body
- Orient all personnel new to the school including instructional and non-instructional personnel
- Visit teacher classrooms frequently for the purpose of teacher observations, supervision and evaluation

- Directly assist and carry forth the implementation of all curricular development including district courses of study, special directives, etc
- Guide all personnel in school morale and encourage individual performance and/or professional growth
- Maintain a file of pertinent factual records of school personnel, making such records available to personnel upon request
- Assist first level supervisors in the evaluation, supervision and alleviation of grievances or personnel concerns relative to the non-instructional staff
- Act as a liaison between building personnel and central office personnel and/or the board of School Directors relative to the concerns and needs of individual personnel
- Interpret all district policies and regulations as applied to the individual school setting, school personnel and school program

### ***Responsibilities to Students and Parents***

- Assume responsibility for the welfare of all students in regular attendance and in special school related programs outside the confines of the regular school building
- Plan and administer a varied activity involvement program, including the PIAA regulated interscholastic athletics program available to 7th and 8th graders
- Assume final responsibility for decisions in academic affairs related to student promotion and retention
- Assume final responsibility for decisions in relation to student detention, suspension, probation or recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion
- Maintain adequate organizational patterns to foster communication and student involvement in decision making relevant to their own school and its educational program
- Provide publications and various other means for publishing and interpreting school policies and procedures to resolve grievances for parents and students.
- Initiate and assist all personnel in supporting a general public school relations program which accurately and fairly represents the true nature of the total educational program of the school
- Work directly with the Parent Teacher Organization, always fostering its continual existence and strengthening its effective positive contribution to the support of the educational program for the student body
- Act as a liaison between school personnel and parents, other school personnel and students in order to resolve grievances or initiate corrective action

## **Assistant Principals**

The assistant principals are to:

- Assume responsibility of the school in the absence of the principal
- Assist in the supervision and evaluation of staff as assigned by the principal
- Direct the student discipline functions of the school
- Assist in developing student and teacher schedules
- Supervise student activities and arrange assembly programs
- Supervise and coordinate field trips
- Coordinate the collection of all monies owed the school by students
- Assist Parent Teacher Organization activities
- Conduct fire drills monthly
- Supervise the student cafeteria
- Attend team meetings
- Direct student health services in the absence of the school nurse
- Supervise inter-school activities, including the lunch/activity program
- Manage the function of the school store
- Supervise the school's athletic program

## **School Counselors**

The primary job of the school counselors is to counsel students both individually and in small groups. This counseling relationship should assist the individual in defining problems and reaching satisfactory solutions not only by offering advice, but by also helping to focus the student's own resources upon the matter at hand. Guiding students' program of study and course selection is a significant part of this process. In addition to this, counselors also serve as a focal point of resources and information for students, parents and staff, acting as a source of information about opportunities and programs available.

A further responsibility of the school counselors is to keep abreast of and, when needed, help students gain access to a wide variety of services and agencies which specialize in helping students who are experiencing difficulties with the academic and social demands of school. These services may include psychological services and vocational education as well as a wide variety of other alternative educational programs. Guidance counselors also play an important role as consultants to teachers, employers, parents, administrators and other people who have significant relationships with students. Having this important role, part of their job involves organizing team meetings, serving on committees, jointly planning programs with other professionals, and providing a resource to students.

A final responsibility of school counselors is to meaningfully interpret for students the results of various school-wide tests so that students can intelligently use those results as a factor in their decision making process. They also handle student records as a whole.

## ***Duties***

- Meet with each student each year to introduce guidance services and establish relationships
- Counsel individual students, as well as groups of students, on issues such as academics, peer and/or family relations, behavioral issues and goal setting as requested by students, parents or teachers and as the counselor deems necessary
- Orient new students to the middle school whether they are new because they are fifth graders or because their family has recently moved into the district
- Provide course selection information and registration materials to fifth grade students and parents as well as families new to the district
- Conduct orientation programs for students in classrooms and for parents in evening meetings
- Hold course selection conferences for students. For eighth graders this involves contacting high school counselors and teachers. For students interested in vocational education, this involves organizing conferences with representatives from Technical College High School
- Coordinate meetings with high school staff for eighth grade students and parents, and process individual course selection materials
- Assist students by providing information on activities and volunteer opportunities in the area
- Conduct weekly team meetings with teachers to identify students in need of support. Gather necessary information to write accurate referrals to psychologists, IU staff, etc as needed
- Act as an intermediary between teachers, parents, community agencies and the administration regarding special needs of students. Coordinate parent conferences
- Inform students and parents about special programs and services that are available in the school and community, coordinate the delivery of such services and programs to students and parents, and inform parents of observed special needs that their children may have
- Administer information on the unmet needs of students. Participate in Child Study Team meetings with the administration
- Provide parents with information on pupil progress and teachers with information on individual students as needed
- Work with the PTO to inform parents of school programs and activities through coffees and newsletters
- Organize and conduct parenting workshops

- Administer and interpret standardized test programs, such as the ERB
- Maintain and transfer student records
- Provide interpretation of pupil progress to teachers, parents and students
- Provide pupil data to the administration and staff for program evaluation and improvement
- Inform students, parents and administrators of academic awards and deficiencies

## **Team Facilitators**

Team facilitators have three primary functions. First, they lead and coordinate their team's efforts to maintain and improve the educational program that they deliver to their students. Second, they serve as an effective communications link between the team members and the principal. Third, they help insure effective communication within the team so that the team functions as a true team of people working together to effectively achieve common goals.

The team facilitator position is a non-supervisory leadership position. While team facilitators are to lead, they are, nevertheless, expected to use appropriate group processes while working cooperatively with all the staff on their team. Team decisions are expressly to be made by the entire staff of the team and not to be unilaterally imposed on the team by the facilitator.

Consistent with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Section 2.06, team (or department) leaders are determined by the building principal annually and evaluated by him annually.

## ***Duties***

- Construct and distribute agendas for team meetings and provide a written summary of each meeting
- Chair team meetings
- Participate in regular planning meetings with the principal
- Coordinate team schedules and the use of school facilities
- Coordinate the involvement of other teams in the planning and implementation of interdisciplinary units
- Coordinate the team's involvement in the selection, ordering, distribution, inventory and care of textbooks, instructional materials and supplies
- Coordinate the development of the annual team budget and act as a liaison in assuring the purchase of items approved by the principal
- Act as a team representative in school and district meetings
- Act as a spokesperson for the team when communicating the mutually adopted specific positions, views, and/or needs of that team

- Perform any other assigned facilitative function wherein the professional judgment of the individual member of the team (as traditionally and customarily exercised) is not abridged by the team leader or which would place the team leader in an immediate supervisory role over other team members.

## **Teachers**

### ***General Information***

The school day for staff members is from 7:15 AM to 2:50 PM. Rooms are to be unlocked and available to students by 7:30 AM. After 2:40 PM, teachers are to be available in their rooms for any student assistance until 2:50 PM. Any teacher who has to leave the building prior to 2:50 PM is to consult with the principal or assistant principal before leaving.

In Addition To This:

- Never leave students in your room unsupervised.
- Always lock your room if you leave it empty. If another teacher is to use it, wait until he/she arrives or lock it.
- Check the condition of the furniture in your room on a regular basis. Report damage to the assistant principal for custodial maintenance.
- Each evening when you leave, please see that the surfaces and floors are as uncluttered as possible so that custodial services can be maximized
- Close all windows at the end of the day.
- Make every effort to maintain a neat and attractive classroom: bulletin boards should reflect units of study where appropriate, materials should be stored or stacked neatly and surfaces should be free of clutter. Remember, we set an example of order and organization for our students.
- Permanent alterations of a classroom must have the approval of the building principal.
- Emphasize with students the care of school property. The law provides for the punishment of those who destroy, deface or mar school buildings and furniture.

### ***Absences***

All teacher absences (sick day, conferences, district meetings, etc.) should be recorded through the AESOP program ([www.aesoponline.com](http://www.aesoponline.com) or 1-800-942-3767). Entries to the system should be made as far in advance as possible in order to best plan for your absence. Entries should be made no later than 6:30 AM for a same-day absence. Please refer additional questions to the main office secretary or to the district human resources department.



Teachers are to leave plan books, etc. in their middle desk drawer every afternoon before leaving the building. The team facilitator should also be notified in case the substitute needs assistance. Emergency lesson plans, telephone access code and seating charts should be left in the substitute file in the main office.

## ***Accidents***

The school may be held liable for negligence which results in injury to a student. Therefore, report all accidents to the main office immediately and follow the procedure outlines below:

- If the student is able, direct him/her to the school nurse.
- If the student is unable to go to the nurse's office, notify the main office to tell them that the nurse must be sent to the scene of the accident.
- When the nurse is on duty, she will fill out an accident report and refer to a doctor or hospital as necessary.

If the school or nurse's office is closed:

- Render first aid at the scene.
- Notify the school office or the parent, if the school office is closed.
- Follow the wishes of the parent for medical care. Enlist the aid of the parent for transportation when possible.
- If a parent cannot be contacted, it is the responsibility of the person in charge to insure that the student has transportation to the doctor or hospital.
- The person in charge must fill out an accident report for each injury, no matter how minor.
- Report all injuries to the school nurse so that insurance forms can be completed.
- Instruct students to inform the school nurse within twenty-four hours when medical attention has been given to injuries sustained while participating in school sponsored activities.
- Call the principal immediately to report all that you have done.

## ***Assemblies***

Assemblies are designed to be an integral part of the total school program and will be announced at least one week in advance in the weekly bulletin. Assigned teachers must accompany their classes to the auditorium and sit with them during the assembly. Teachers are to ensure that students proceed to the auditorium in an orderly fashion.

## ***Bus Duty***

Each teacher will be assigned to bus duty at least the equivalent of 2 weeks per academic year. When you have bus duty, please be at the small gym by 2:35 PM and remain there until the last bus is loaded. Students should remain in the gym and seated until their bus is called. Their behavior in the gym must conform to behavioral guidelines. If you cannot attend an assigned duty, please arrange for substitute coverage.

## ***Conferences***

Teachers are permitted to attend conferences, conventions and meetings upon invitation by building or district administration.

## ***District Policies and Regulations***

It is each staff member's responsibility to keep informed about and adhere to District Policies and Regulations which are accessible through the District's website.

## ***Emergency Drills***

Refer to the red clipboard in each classroom for all emergency drill instructions. Update the red clipboard with drill updates and class lists when needed.

## ***Extracurricular Opportunities***

We want to encourage our students to participate in extra-curricular activities – particularly at school. A very real incentive for this to occur is for you to attend these functions and let the students see our interest in their growth and development. Watching a few games, a concert at night or chaperoning a dance or other activity is an excellent way to show your support for the student's efforts. It also provides you with a way to see the student in a less formal setting – which could give you more insight into their classroom performance. Remember that your interest in the total school program reflects your commitment to our profession.

## ***Field Trips***

When planning a field trip you must secure field trip forms from the mail room or the intranet and submit it for approval to the assistant principal at least one month prior to the trip date. The teacher is then responsible for notifying the following people/places:

- The main office secretary, so that the trip can be posted on the calendar/Weekly Bulletin. Please submit a list of names of students going at that time.
- If you need transportation - complete a "Request for Transportation" form and submit to 1) Assistant Principal for approval and then to 2) TEMS Business Office for department coding and 3) Transportation Dept. A photocopy of the request should be submitted to the main office and one for your records.
- The Nurse's Office and Cafeteria should be notified **TWO WEEKS IN ADVANCE** of the day of the trip.

Please refer to the appropriate section in your handbook for disciplinary policies for field trips. Make certain that students are aware of appropriate behavior.

## ***Food***

All food brought into school for consumption by students must be pre-packaged with ingredients listed or be very obvious (e.g. pizza). If it is home-made, a parent must specify what ingredients were included. Ingredients that may cause a medical situation to known allergies (e.g. nuts) will not be allowed. When in doubt, please err on the side of the safety of all of our students. Clear and consistent communication of these guidelines on the part of teachers to parents will help ensure the safety and well-being of all of our students.

## ***Grading Practices***

Teachers must submit their plan for grading to the principal by the designated date in the beginning of each school year. A variety of factors should be considered in grading practices including, but not limited to, homework, participation, individual and group projects, presentations, quizzes, and tests. Grading practices should be clearly communicated to students and parents. Courses taught by two or more teachers are to have similar, if not identical, grading practices.

## ***Hall Passes***

All students must have hall passes when in the hallways while classes are in session. Students should also sign out and in of your classroom.

## ***Homework***

Homework must be meaningful and directly related to the curriculum. Homework sheets should be used sparingly; these are usually seen as “busy work” and are seldom challenging enough for our students. Be creative in assigning homework and challenge the creativity of our students.

Teachers must coordinate the assigning of homework with other teachers on the team. No single teacher operates without impacting the work of others, including the students. A team should discuss the assignments daily, making sure students do not have too much work each night and making sure long range assignments from more than one teacher do not come due at the same time. Team facilitators should check with the special and support teachers and have your team work with their assignment schedules.

This coordination must include the coordination of testing. No more than two tests should be given on one day, per team, or per student.

Please stress the importance of homework with your students. The amount of homework on a daily basis should be consistent with your demands of the program and with students’ ability level. If a student does not complete an assignment, a teacher detention may be assigned.

Refer to the student section for guidelines regarding homework policies and make up assignments.

## ***Internal Coverage***

Internal coverage, arranged and provided by TEMS, is for school and/or district business. Internal Coverage may also be provided in emergency situations. Please schedule medical, dental, legal and other routine appointments outside the school day. If medical appointments cannot be scheduled after school hours, either a half or full day of sick leave may be taken at the discretion of the employee. Voluntary coverage arranged between faculty members must also be approved in advance by Principal or his designee.

The word “emergency” in the above statement refers to a situation that develops during the school day when the coverage is needed.

The reference to “voluntary coverage” refers to coverage for a period or two arranged between colleagues in order to handle an important but unforeseen situation. As the teacher who will be covering voluntarily is identified, the main office needs to be informed so administrators will be aware of the plans. If the faculty member will be out

of the building for three or more periods, the option of a half or full day of sick leave must be exercised and coverage arranged with the main office and/or AESOP.

## **Keys**

A system which accounts for every key has been established. Classroom keys are to be signed out and picked up at the main office from the principal's secretary at the beginning of the school year. They must then be turned in at the end of the school year. Duplication of keys is prohibited. If you lose your keys, please notify the principal immediately.

## **Lockers**

The school provides hall lockers for student use during the school year. Please communicate that at no time should a student consider the locker to be his/her own personal property. Lockers are to be kept clean inside and out. To facilitate this, teachers should schedule general locker clean-outs from time to time so that lockers can be inspected for orderliness and general condition. In addition, the administration reserves the right to inspect lockers of students for whom evidence indicates the possible presence of inappropriate, illegal or dangerous items according to District Policy #5412.

Book bags are to be kept in the student's locker from the time he/she arrives in the morning until he/she goes home in the afternoon. They are not to be carried to class. Students are permitted to go to their lockers before school, between classes, before and after lunch and after school.

Inform students that lockers are not to be shared, and locker combinations are not to be shared with other students. In the event of a locker malfunction, direct students to report locker issues to the main office as soon as possible. Students that share lockers or locker combinations may receive disciplinary action.

Some students like to decorate a friend's locker to celebrate the friend's birthday. This is permitted providing the decorations are temporary and easily removed. Students should remove all decorations of this type one week following the birthday. Decorations inside the locker are permitted. All decorations should be in good taste and temporary in nature. These must be removed before the end of the school year.

## **Requisition Procedures**

Written requisitions are to be made on the appropriate forms available in the main office. Please see the business manager if you have any questions, and return completed forms to that mailbox.

## ***Room Reservation***

- Building reservations for after school hours or weekends: see Business Manager
- Large Group Room and Conference Room: use sign up book in Main Office
- Auditorium: check with main office and music department

## ***Room Sharing***

The following guidelines were created from staff member input:

Open communication is critical:

- Introduce yourself and share your goals for your classes.
- Let them know the times and days you will be using their classroom and remind them of any special activities when you will not be in the classroom.
- Assure them you will listen to their concerns and suggestions.

Make sure the room is put back at least the way it was found.

- Students will need to know from day one the rules of classroom use: do not touch any of the teachers' or students' belongings, do not write on the desks, etc.
- Do not forget to log off of the teacher computer, move desks back to their original location, clean an instructional area on the board, etc.
- If anything is broken, do not throw it away! Communicate with teacher explaining how it happened and, if possible replace it, as soon as possible.
- At the conclusion of a school day, close the windows, turn off the lights, and lock the door.

Offering to share resources can lead to better relationships between teachers.

Veteran space-sharers remind us that the best way to create a partnership is to work together in meeting student-centered goals. We hope teachers will want to share space. We want them to support each other and work together to help provide a safe, clean, productive learning environment for TEMS students.

## ***Student Discipline***

The first line of discipline is the inherent responsibility of the classroom teacher. Teachers are expected to attend to situations themselves or refer students to the discipline office as the need arises. Good classroom management is essential if students are to benefit.

As you face discipline situations, do not forget the assistance available from the administration, guidance personnel, your team members, the school psychologist, the CARE team, Peer Mediation, and other district resources. The responsibility for classroom management, however, rests with the classroom teacher. Your best approach to students is to be positive, have as few rules as possible and consistently apply the rules you do have, making sure that the consequences for breaking them are reasonable. Pro-social skills and positively stated class rules can be a very effective basis for your classroom management plan.

When discipline is needed, you have a variety of options available to you including calling the student's parents, holding conferences with them, sending letters to them, holding conferences with the student, implementing teacher or team developed behavior management plans, consulting with resource personnel, issuing teacher detentions, referring the student to the discipline office, and so forth.

When considering discipline options, it is important to remember that good communication with students and parents is essential. As a result, your first attempt at remediation should be to communicate with the student and/or his/her parents. If that fails or proves insufficient, a wise next step would be to consult with your colleagues and/or hold a team conference to discuss various approaches to the situation. Only if and after that proves insufficient should the student be referred to the office for discipline.

Our goal is to help students develop self-discipline. We must help students learn how to make good decisions and to internalize the values of respect for themselves and others. Our management practices should reflect this positive approach to students.

Please refer to the student discipline section for additional information.

## ***Supervision***

**Lunch Duty:** Teachers assigned to lunch duty should report promptly. Students are to behave according to normal school standards. If a student's behavior is unacceptable, a School Detention may be assigned.

**Area Supervision:** Teachers are expected to be at their assigned areas on time. Teachers assigned to area duty are responsible for monitoring negative behavior, checking on restrooms and for keeping traffic moving.

**Hallway Supervision:** Teachers are expected to be at their doorway when their classes are in the halls.

## ***Telephone and Email Use***

Phone calls coming into the main office will not be forwarded to teachers during class. A secretary will forward a message into the teacher's voicemail. Teachers are responsible for checking their voicemail at least once per day. Each teacher is responsible for checking their e-mail at least twice per day. Please be considerate and professional when making personal phone calls and writing personal emails.

## ***Textbooks***

At the beginning of the year:

- Issue textbooks to students by number, noting the general condition of the book when issued.
- Remind students that they are responsible for fines incurred due to careless handling or loss of textbooks.
- Check to see that textbooks are protected by covers. Covers can be made or purchased in the school store. A teacher detention may be assigned when textbooks (school property) are not appropriately protected.

At the end of the year:

- Check textbooks against assigned numbers as they are returned.
- Impose fines for textbooks which are damaged or lost.
- Report all financial obligations to the business manager.