

VALLEY FORGE ELEMENTARY

Family Handbook
2019-20



Valley Forge Elementary
99 Walker Road
Wayne, PA 19087
(610) 240-1600
Website: www.tesd.net/vfe
Emergency Closing Number - 854

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TABLE of CONTENTS

General Information.....	3
Health Services.....	5
Cafeteria/Food Guidelines.....	6
Home/School Communication.....	8
Instructional Program.....	9
Support Programs.....	15
Student Activities.....	18
Parent/Teacher Organization (P.T.O.).....	18
Code of Conduct.....	20
School Climate.....	24
District Policies/Regulations.....	25
Index.....	41

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GENERAL INFORMATION

HOURS

Grades 1-4 - School begins at **9:10 am** and ends at **3:45 pm** for children in **Grades 1-4**. Students arriving after 9:10 am must report to the lobby desk with a written explanation for the tardiness. Please do not transport children to school before 9:05 am since there is no supervision of children before that time.

AM Kindergarten begins at 9:10 am and ends at 12:05 am. Bus transportation is provided to school and parents provide transportation home with pick-up at 12:05 am.

PM Kindergarten begins at 12:50 pm and ends at 3:45 pm. Parents provide transportation to school and children may begin arriving in the lobby after 12:40 pm. Bus transportation is provided at dismissal time.

Half-Day Sessions During Parent-Teacher Conferences - When school is in session for a half day because of parent/teacher conferences, grades 1-4 dismiss at 12:45 pm. Kindergarten sessions are not held on these days.

EMERGENCY DELAYED OPENINGS AND CLOSINGS

TE All-Call

The T/E School District uses TE All-Call, an automated phone notification system. TE All-Call allows the School District to send important messages quickly via phone to parents and guardians. This calling service will be used in the event of weather-related closings, late openings, early dismissals, and any other unscheduled closings, cancellations, or emergency situations.

In order to provide this service effectively, you will be asked in to provide three phone numbers that will be used as the contact numbers in the TE All-Call system. The system will call three numbers per child. For a list of

frequently asked questions on TE All-Call, please visit the T/E School District website at www.tesd.net.

Announcements about Delayed Openings or Closings

In addition to TE All-Call, closing information will also be broadcast on major television networks, displayed on TETV Comcast Channel 14 and Verizon Channel 20, and recorded on the Information Hotline at 610-240-1970. For announcements on KYW radio, our School District Emergency Number is **Chester County 854**.

Early Dismissal Due to Emergency/Weather

The automated message sent by TE All-Call on early dismissal days will instruct parents to press "1" to confirm that the message was heard. It is important that parents listen to the entire automated message and then press "1" when the message is complete. The school office will use the information from TE All-Call to track parents who may not have heard the automated message. If parents do not press "1" when they receive the call on at least one of their three contact numbers, they will receive an additional call from Valley Forge Elementary School confirming that they are aware of the early dismissal. **Parents are encouraged to make appropriate arrangements and review emergency procedures with their children prior to an early dismissal.** The school office is extremely busy on early dismissal days so, if possible, please refrain from calling the main office on these days.

Delayed Opening for Grades 1-4

In the event of a two-hour delayed opening, school begins at 10:45 am. Classes will follow a revised two-hour delayed opening schedule with special attention to instruction in reading and math.

Modified Kindergarten

When there is a late opening due to weather, modified sessions are scheduled for kindergarten:

AM Kdg: 11:10- 1:05 (Children may be picked up at 1:05 pm)
PM Kdg: 1:50-3:45 (Children may be dropped off after 1:40 pm)

DISMISSAL

At the conclusion of the school day, children who are walkers or parent pick-up and those going to A Child's Place are dismissed first. **A child must have a note sent to both their teacher and VFE Attendance if they are going home any way other than the usual way.**

Parents who wish to have children dismissed early or excused from school for doctor appointments or other urgent reasons should send a note to the child's teacher and VFE Attendance. Your child will be dismissed through the office at the designated time. Please inform your child of the pick-up times.

Children taking the bus will be dismissed from their classrooms. Bus passes are required for those wishing to take a bus other than their own. Bus passes may be obtained in the morning by writing a note to both the teacher and to VFE Attendance requesting alternative transportation for that day.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Parents are notified of their child's bus number and stop at the beginning of the school year in the back-to-school mailing. Bus routes and schedules are also posted on the district's website. Children may not ride a bus other than their own bus without a bus pass. Written parental permission to take another bus or to exit the bus at a different stop is required. Bus passes are contingent upon available seating. Long-term bus change requests may be made on a form, *Request for Long-Term Alternate Bus Assignment*, which is available in the school office or on the VFE website - www.tesd.net/vfe.

Questions or concerns about bus routes, stops, and other bus information should be directed to the Transportation Department at **610-240-1680**.

CAR TRANSPORTATION

Arrival

School starts at 9:10 am and students should be in class by that time. Students arriving to class after 9:10 am are late. As you enter the school driveway from Walker Road, form a single line in the far right side of the driveway and proceed to the front entrance of the school. Do not enter the bus circle area. The bus circle is for buses only. Please wait in a single line until you can safely drop off students at the front entrance.

Pull all the way forward to the sidewalk at the front entrance in a single line and discharge passengers from the right side of your vehicle onto the sidewalk. At no time should children be in the driveway. Several cars can easily pull up to the curb in a single file. Please pull forward and do not park in front of the school or leave your vehicle.

Dismissal

School is dismissed at 3:45 pm. As you enter the driveway from Walker Road, form a single line on the far right side of the driveway. Please do not enter the bus circle area. The bus circle is for buses only. Students are dismissed from the Second Grade Lobby but please pull forward to the front entrance to allow room for several cars. Place the designated parent pick-up sign in your front window with the family name of the student(s) to be picked up. School personnel will record the names and inform other personnel to send the appropriate child out to his/her vehicle. If your child is not at the pick-up area and there are other parents waiting behind you, pull forward and we will call for your child. After your passengers have boarded, check that they have their seat belts fastened and proceed carefully (10 mph).

TRANSPORTATION CHANGE

When your child will not be going home by the usual way, please send a note to both the teacher and VFE Attendance stating how your child will be going home. If a pass for another bus is requested, please include the following information: child's name, student with whom your child will be going home, and the number of the bus your child will be riding. If there is a need to change your child's dismissal procedures once the school day has begun, please do so by calling and sending an e-mail to our attendance office at vfeattendance@tesd.net and 610-240-1600, option 5. You may also wish to include your child's core teacher on the e-mail but the communication should be directed to our attendance office since the classroom teachers do not always check e-mail throughout the day. It is helpful to have changes in dismissal communicated as early as possible.

ABSENCES

An e-mail is required stating the reason for the absence. The e-mail for this is vfeattendance@tesd.net. If e-mail is not available to you, please call the School Attendance line at **610-240-1600 Option 5** by 9:20 am of the morning when their child will be absent. After attendance is taken in

the classroom, the office verifies all student absences. If a parent has not e-mailed with a reason for the absence by 10:25 am, the district will send out an e-mail and make phone calls to the parents.

Absences are considered lawfully excused when a student is prevented from attendance for reasons such as illness, family emergency, death of a family member, medical or dental appointments, authorized school activities, educational travel with prior approval, pre-approved religious instruction (limit 36 hours per year), or a bona fide religious holiday.

Parents/guardians must provide the school with a written excuse explaining why their child was absent within three calendar days of an absence. Handwritten notes, e-mails from parents'/guardians' designated e-mail address, or faxes created and sent by parents/guardians are acceptable forms of written notes. E-mail notes should be sent to vfeattendance@tesd.net. Phoning in does not take the place of a written note.

If a child will be out of school **for more than one day**, homework can be requested by calling the office. The teacher will prepare homework that will be available for pickup in the office 24 hours later.

Legal absences for student educational travel must be requested at least two weeks in advance of the travel. A form requesting legal absence may be obtained in the office or on our website at www.tesd.net/vfe. The Superintendent must approve trips greater than 5 days in length.

The full District Attendance **Policy and Regulation 5113** are provided on the district's website at www.tesd.net. Frequent or prolonged absence without satisfactory reason or in willful violation of the compulsory attendance laws shall be handled in conformity with the procedures in the District's Administrative Regulation R5113 and applicable law.

TARDINESS

Students arriving after 9:10 am are considered tardy. (PM kindergarten students are tardy after 12:50 pm.) When students arrive late, they must report to the lobby desk to receive a tardy pass that admits them to class. Parents are required to send a written note to explain the tardiness. Tardiness is considered excused due to illness or a doctor's appointment.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and Found is located in the main lobby or cafeteria. Parents and children are encouraged to check the Lost and Found whenever jackets, sweaters, or other items are missing. Periodically the contents of the Lost and Found are donated to a local charity.

A CHILD'S PLACE

An extended care enrichment program provides before and after school care for students through "A Child's Place".

Before School Care:	7:00 am to 9:10 pm
After School Care:	3:45 pm to 6:00 pm
Kindergarten Enrichment:	
AM Session	9:10 am to 12:05 am
PM Session	12:05 am to 3:45 pm

For information on pricing and registration, please call **610-687-1263**.

HEALTH SERVICES

HEALTH SCREENINGS AND VACCINATIONS

The state-mandated health program guides the T/E program. Under this program, students are required to have medical examinations upon their original entry into school and for all students entering 6th and 11th grades. These exams are also required for any students who transfer into the school district. The physical examination form is available on the district website (www.tesd.net). Dental exams are suggested upon original entry into school and for all transfer students. The law provides for medical or religious exemptions.

Screening procedures are done regularly by the school nurse for vision, hearing, height, weight, and basal metabolic index (BMI).

Written verification of the following immunizations are required:

- 4 doses of tetanus (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of diphtheria (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 3 doses of polio
- 2 doses of measles (given after 1st birthday)

- 2 doses of mumps (given after 1st birthday)
- 1 dose of rubella (German measles - given after 1st birthday)
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine or history of disease

Please contact the school nurse for addition details regarding immunizations or visit our website at www.tesd.net.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Children suspected of having a communicable disease are excluded from school and may not attend until their condition is no longer contagious. To protect the health of each student, their classmates, and the school staff, all children should remain home for at least 24 hours after they have had any illness accompanied by vomiting, diarrhea, or fever. Children excluded because of the following infectious diseases may not return to school until the child is under treatment or has recovered.

PA Department of Health Communicable Disease Exclusion Regulations

- Chickenpox---Six days from the last crop of vesicles.
- Contagious Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) ---24 hours after start of appropriate treatment
- Diphtheria ---Two weeks from the onset or until negative culture
- Fifth Disease ---No Exclusion
- Impetigo ---Until judged not contagious by the nurse or physician
- Measles ---4 days from the onset of rash
- Mumps ---9 days from the onset or until subsidence of swelling
- Pediculosis (Lice) ---Until judged not contagious by the nurse/physician
- Pertussis ---4 weeks from onset or 7 days from start of antimicrobial therapy
- Pinworms ---Until first dose of treatment is given
- Respiratory Streptococcal Infections (including scarlet fever) --- Not less than seven days from the onset or 24 hours after start of appropriate therapy
- Ringworm ---Until judged not contagious by the nurse/physician
- Rubella ---4 days from onset of rash
- Scabies ---Until judged not contagious by the nurse/physician
- Tonsillitis ---24 hours from start of appropriate therapy
- Trachoma ---24 hours from start of appropriate therapy

Undiagnosed skin eruption, sore throat, cough, or eye condition --- Until medically evaluated and determined not communicable

First Aid is given in school for pupils who are injured or who become ill while attending school. The school doctor recommends standard orders for first aid. Parents are expected to give information to the school to cover emergency situations and to make transportation available when needed. The school is not responsible for treating injuries that happen at home.

USE OF MEDICATION

See Policy/Regulation Section of the handbook.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARDS

Emergency Medical Cards are filled out by parents at the beginning of each school year. The information on this card is critically important in the event of illness or accident. Please fill out this card on the first day of school and return it to school the following day. Any updates or change of information can be made by contacting the school nurse or school secretary.

CAFETERIA FOOD GUIDELINES

Our School Cafeteria operates under the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Menus are published and posted on the school website www.tesd.net/vfe.

BREAKFAST

The cafeteria operates a School Breakfast Program that consists of (1) ½ pint of milk, (2) ½ cup servings of fruit or full strength vegetable or fruit juice, and (2) 2oz of protein or 2oz of bread or cereal or 1oz each of protein and bread or cereal. Under the “offer vs. serve” option, a student may decline one item.

LUNCH

TESD cafeteria meals are planned according to federal regulations to provide 1/3 of the students' Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) and contain no more than 30 percent calories from fat and 10 percent calories from saturated fat averaged over the week. Our cafeteria operates under the National School Lunch Program. Lunch consists of five components: (1) a serving of high protein food, (2) ½ pint of milk, (3 & 4) two servings totaling ¾ cup of fruits and/or vegetables, and (5) grain. Under the “offer vs. serve” option, students may choose to take three, four, or five of the components. In addition, milk, juice, snacks, desserts, and other a la carte items may be purchased in the cafeteria.

Menus and prices are on the district website (www.tesd.net) under Departments - Food and Nutrition Services.

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

Each student has a Personal Identification Number (PIN) for the cafeteria. Parents may send in a check in any amount payable to the Valley Forge Elementary Cafeteria for each child's account. This account is a debit account and each time a student purchases food from the cafeteria, the account is debited. Parents can restrict the number of snacks the child is permitted to buy by writing a note to the cafeteria. Allergy information can also be linked to the students account by writing to the cafeteria. The PIN number remains the same for each child from year to year. When a student does not have money in his/her account for lunch, he/she may charge lunch or milk only. If your child charges, please try to repay this debt the next day.

Information regarding free and reduced-price lunch applications is available either in the school guidance office or the Food Service Office at 610-240-1955. Students approved for these meals use the same type of account as the other students to prevent any overt identification.

FOOD FROM HOME

(Regulation 5402): Wellness Policy Implementation

No food of any kind is permitted to be brought to school to be shared with students in connection with recognition of birthdays, celebrations such as Halloween, holidays, Valentine's day, cultural events, and end-of-the-year festivities.

SNACKS

All grade levels have a snack break during the school day. For children in K-1, snacks are provided from home. For children in grades 2-4, snacks are provided from home or can be purchased from the school cafeteria. For snacks from home, please do not include any foods that include peanuts, tree nuts, peanut or tree nut oils, peanut butter, or any peanut or tree nut products.

If you are providing a snack for your child, please make every effort to assure that it is healthy and nutritious.

QUESTIONS

Any questions concerning the cafeteria may be directed to the cafeteria manager or the Supervisor of T/E Food Services (610-240-1955).

CELEBRATIONS

Classroom Parties

During the school year there are four classroom celebrations: Halloween, Winter, Valentine's, and End-of-the-Year parties. Homeroom parents work with classroom teachers to organize the parties. No food of any kind is permitted to be brought to school to be shared with students in connection with recognition of birthdays, celebrations such as Halloween, holidays, Valentine's day, cultural events, and end-of-the-year festivities.

Student Birthday

Students who choose to celebrate their birthdays in school may do so with a non-food item (pencil, sticker etc). No food of any kind is permitted to be brought to school to be shared with students in connection with recognition of birthdays.

Please communicate with your child's teacher before sending any non-food item into the classroom for a celebration or birthday at least one week in advance.

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Communication between home and school is an essential component of our school. Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher when they have a concern or a question. If a teacher receives a note or phone call that requires a response, teachers will make every effort to answer within 24 hours. All teachers have voicemail. We do not interrupt class time with phone calls but teachers do check their voicemail daily and will respond to parent messages.

VALLEY FORGE ELEMENTARY WEBSITE

The TESD and VFE website are great resources for parents and community members to learn more about the various facets of our school such as grade-level curriculum, PTO information, and upcoming events. Please take the opportunity to periodically visit our site: www.tesd.net.

E-MAIL GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

A professional staff directory listing names and voicemail extensions can be found on the T/E website, www.tesd.net. If you choose to send an e-mail message to a member of our professional staff, you may not get an immediate reply as staff members will determine how best to contact you: by e-mail, phone, or scheduling a personal conference.

When using e-mail we ask that you follow these guidelines:

- Please do not send vital timely messages by this medium. Use the telephone to be sure your message is received and clearly understood. For example, do not use e-mail to inform a teacher that your child is not to go home on the bus.
- Please do not share confidential information in an e-mail message.
- E-mail is not the best way to fully discuss the details of a student's academic progress or behavior. These topics are best addressed through a phone conversation or by scheduling a conference.
- Please keep all contacts professional. Do not forward jokes, amusing or special stories, chain letters, or commercial solicitations.

NEWSLETTER

The VFE *Falcon* is published bi-weekly by the PTO. It is sent to all families via e-mail and is also available on the VFES PTO website <http://vfespto.org>. This newsletter contains information about upcoming events, community programs, and PTO-sponsored events. The **Falcon** contains information about current curriculum and programs at each grade level as well. Please inform the school office if you cannot retrieve the newsletter electronically and require a "hard paper copy" of it.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

Parents are encouraged to visit our school particularly for special activities and events. All visitors and volunteers must sign in with the lobby greeter when entering the building. A Visitor Pass will be provided at the time of sign-in. This pass must be worn during the building visit and returned when the visitor leaves the building. Although it takes an extra minute to sign in, this procedure is an important safety measure in our school. When visiting a classroom or volunteering, we ask that parent-teacher conferences not be held so that our teachers can give their full attention to the children in their class. During the school year, members of the school district's administrative staff may also visit classrooms.

The school program is greatly enriched by the volunteer services of many parents. Volunteers play an important role in the quality of life in our school. The following guidelines have been developed to assist you in serving in this unique function. Offering to volunteer in our school assumes your understanding of these guidelines.

- Confidentiality: Information you see or hear can affect the lives and future of individual students. Volunteers must respect the privacy of this information and maintain the same in strict confidence.
- Attendance: School personnel depend upon and plan for the assistance of volunteers when scheduled. Volunteers are encouraged to notify the staff with whom they work as far in advance as possible if they are unable to help during their scheduled time.
- Cell Phones: When volunteering, please silence your cell phones to prevent distractions.

Please contact your child's teacher or the PTO Volunteer Chairperson if you would like additional information about volunteering.

* Notice Regarding Volunteer Clearance Requirements

Amendments to the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) enacted on July 1, 2015 state that school volunteers with regular and repeated contact with students and who are responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or control of children will need background clearances. As of July 1, 2016, clearances must be received and processed by the School District prior to volunteering for activities requiring clearances. There is a wide variety of volunteer opportunities, some of which require clearances and some of which may not. You can view the summary of opportunities on the District website at www.tesd.net/volunteers. Teachers and principals will work together to determine whether or not clearances are required as volunteers are called upon for each specific event. For that reason, we recommend and encourage all parents get the clearances. The three clearances required are the (1) PA Criminal Background Check, (2) PA Child Abuse Clearance, and (3) FBI (federal criminal background check). Directions for completing these forms can be found at www.tesd.net/volunteers. There is no cost for the two PA clearances and the cost of the FBI check is \$27. If you have lived in PA for the entirety of the previous ten years, you may submit an affidavit form in lieu of the FBI check. The affidavit form, which must be signed and witnessed, is also available on the District website. All clearance forms should be sent to the TESD Human Resources Office, 940 West Valley Road, Suite 1700, Wayne, PA 19087. They may also be e-mailed to volunteerclearances@tesd.net. Renewal of clearances will be required every five (5) years.

DROPPING OFF MATERIALS FOR STUDENTS

Materials that need to be dropped off for students should be left at the lobby desk and will be delivered to or picked up by students. We value instructional time and ask that parents and visitors respect our teachers' need to focus on the children in their classroom without interruption.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES (Policy 5414)

Except where the use of electronic devices has been prohibited by law, students may possess electronic devices within all of the buildings owned by the District, on school grounds, in school vehicles, and/or while participating in school-sponsored activities on or off school premises. The administration shall have the right to regulate the use and possession of all electronic devices. In addition to limitations on use and possession imposed by the school administration, possession of electronic devices is subject to the following restrictions:

- Students may not use electronic devices to conduct any activities which violate state and/or federal law, Board Policy, District Administrative Regulations, or school rules.
- Students may not use electronic devices in any manner which interferes with, or is disruptive to, educational or extracurricular activities or events.
- Students may not use electronic devices or have them readily accessible when they are in restrooms or other areas where individuals would have a similar expectation of privacy.

Notwithstanding the rules set forth above, electronic devices may be used:

- At any time to respond to or report an emergency situation; and
- When and as required pursuant to a student's Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Service Agreement.

Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion.

At the elementary level we recommend that students do not bring electronic devices to school. In unusual circumstances when a student's family feels the need to have their child bring an electronic device (i.e. cell phone), the device must be turned off during the school day so that it does not cause any disruption to the education program. Individual teacher discretion is used to plan for the use of electronic devices. If families choose to send an electronic device, the school cannot be responsible for missing or damaged items.

(Policy 4344) (Electronic Communication Between Employees and Students) – All electronic communications conducted by an employee with a student must relate to educational or extra-curricular programs or activities.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

T/E MISSION STATEMENT

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

CONSENSUS BELIEFS

- 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.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The purpose of education in the District is both to challenge and to assist each student toward becoming a constructive member of our changing society. By providing experiences that develop intellectual excellence and promote a positive understanding of one's self, the school can effectively help each student to appreciate the contributions of our nation's heritage, the interdependence of individuals, and the dignity of all.

The focus of the educational program, therefore, is to help students to develop to their maximum potential and to acquire skills in ways that stimulate curiosity and foster creativity.

The responsibility of the District, in conjunction with families and the community, is to motivate and to assist each student:

- To acquire the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to be productive in a global society;
- To develop critical thinking skills;
- To develop self-discipline;
- To accept responsibility, acquire self-reliance, and develop leadership skills;
- To formulate social and ethical values consistent with living in a democratic society;
- To appreciate the value of individual effort;
- To learn to adapt to change;
- To learn to collaborate with others;

- To gain a fundamental knowledge that will serve as a basis for further development.

The goal of the schools is to prepare students to be self-directed, creative, life-long learners and responsible, involved citizens.

The elementary program focuses on the education of the whole child while preparing students to become productive members of a diverse community. Using current research and best practices as well as state and national standards as regulatory guidelines, the program strives to differentiate instruction to meet each student's individual needs. Critical thinking and intellectual curiosity are developed as students are encouraged to access, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information from various resources and points of view.

The goal is to foster a resilient and culturally competent student body by cultivating learning habits and tools for independent, life-long learning. In order to meet the needs of the global community, the elementary school practices will continuously evolve as influenced by technological and societal demands.

The elementary school program recognizes the importance of promoting healthy academic, social, physical, and emotional growth in all students. The elementary school program upholds the District's strategic planning mission statement, "To inspire a passion for learning, personal integrity, the pursuit of excellence, and social responsibility in each student." The students, staff, families, and community work together to support a caring and nurturing learning environment."

Grouping students for instruction at the elementary level places an emphasis on individual student progress leading to the development of the maximum potential for learning. In order to accomplish this goal, it is essential that children have opportunities to be intellectually challenged in skill areas and given opportunities to learn and share with children of varying abilities. In the process of grouping students, consideration is given to formation of groups that will enhance and foster interdependence among learners, promote independent thinking, build positive self-concept, and provide a stimulating learning environment for each student.

TEAMS

Our elementary school is organized into teams so that the collaborative efforts of teachers can best serve the learning and developmental needs of each child. Each elementary school is comprised of five grade-level teams (Kindergarten through Fourth Grade), a Special Area Team (Art, Music, Physical Education, Library), and a Support Team (Guidance, Reading, Math Support, Learning Support, ESL, Nurse, Speech, and other support personnel). Joint planning allows teachers to meet daily before school to discuss individual student needs, to plan curriculum, to integrate subject areas, to share ideas, and to plan for the grouping and regrouping of students for instruction.

CORE CLASS

Students in Grades 1 through 4 are assigned to a Core class. Core time is the majority of a student's day in which all subjects other than math are taught. In this setting, subject areas are meaningfully integrated. The design of integration can include independent, small group, whole classroom, or grade level instructional activities. Core classes are designed to include students of more than one achievement level. Language Arts instruction will occur in the core classroom.

HOMEWORK

The District believes that homework consists of any instructional requirement assigned by a teacher to be completed by the student as a continuation or extension of classroom instruction. Homework is a necessary part of the curriculum and vital to the learning process. Homework assigned should be suited by amount and task to the age and ability of students and should be consistent with instructional objectives. Homework provides the necessary practice of skills, enriches and enlarges upon classroom experiences, and utilizes school and community resources. In addition, carefully planned assignments foster responsibility, help students work independently, and require the development of good study skills and work habits. Homework can also provide an opportunity for the teacher, parent, and student to work together in the learning process.

The length of time spent on homework can vary from child to child. Generally, time spent on homework each night would be as follows:

First grade: 10-15 minutes

Second grade: 15-20 minutes

Third grade: 25-30 minutes

Fourth grade 30-40 minutes

Homework assignments reinforce the skills and concepts taught in the classroom. Additional time should be spent reading nightly and routinely practicing basic math facts. Reading to children, at every age, is highly beneficial and valued.

RECESS

Recess is an important part of the school day. It affords the children a time for recreation and social interaction in an unstructured, supervised setting. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather.

CURRICULUM

Language Arts

The District's Language Arts Learning Competencies provide the framework for language arts learning in eight key areas. Using these competencies as a foundation for spiraling skills development, teachers enrich the reading program with the most valuable aspects of a balanced literacy approach. This balanced approach accommodates the individual learning needs of each student and stimulates teacher creativity while providing a strong, consistent level of reading instruction across the District.

Language Arts Learning Competencies:

- Reading comprehension: Learning strategies (Example: main idea, sequence)
- Reading comprehension: Thinking skills (Example: inference, compare/contrast)
- Reading: Investigating language patterns (Example: word analysis, decoding, phonics)
- Speaking and writing (Example: writing process, grammar, spelling)
- Study skills
- Research skills
- Response to various genres (Example: fiction, biography, poetry)
- Lifelong reading

Language Arts - Kindergarten

Students in kindergarten are grouped heterogeneously for Language Arts. Literacy instruction includes both whole class and small group opportunities. Language Arts instruction consists of a one-hour block divided into two half-hour segments. One half-hour segment of the Language Arts block is dedicated to whole class instruction by the core teacher. During the other half-hour segment of the Language Arts block, the class is divided into small groups according to the children's needs. The goal of the program is to meet the needs of the students; therefore, the number and makeup of groups may vary based on those needs. Guided by on-going assessments, use of multi-level instructional groups provides teachers the flexibility to move students between groups as necessary.

Language Arts – Grades 1-4

Language Arts instruction occurs in the core classroom. Classes are designed to include students of more than one reading achievement level. Neither the highest nor the lowest achievement group on a team by itself constitutes a total class. Typically, the goal of core grouping is to have 2-3 instructional levels per class. However, the goal of the Language Arts program is to meet the needs of the students; therefore, the number and make-up of groups may vary based on those needs.

Literacy instruction includes whole group and small group opportunities as well as time for independent practice. A single class on a grade-level team will include students with a range of reading achievement levels. Guided by on-going assessment, use of these multi-leveled instructional groups provides teachers the flexibility to move students between groups as necessary.

An overarching consideration when constructing core classes is to create well-balanced groupings that meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

Writing

Writing begins with the student's initial school experience. The use of the writing and reflecting process (brainstorming, pre-writing, drafting, revising, conferencing, editing, and publishing) continues throughout the grades. Writing is not an isolated experience but is integrated throughout the school day in various curricular areas. Teachers introduce and reinforce the components of good writing at each grade level. Students

and teachers use the portfolio as a vehicle for the development of skills in composing, revising, and reflecting on writing throughout the grades.

Listening/Speaking

Communication skills are an integral part of the learning experience. Early modes of learning center on kinesthetic and visual activities. Listening and speaking skills develop as the child progresses through school. Learning these skills enables the student to become an active participant in the learning process.

Spelling

Beginning in kindergarten, students experiment with letters and sounds and learn how those letters build words. Emergent writers may have difficulty spelling words within their oral vocabularies. Rather than interrupt the flow of thought, invented spelling is encouraged. As students progress in their writing abilities, the purpose of the spelling curriculum is to help students master conventional spelling. The formal spelling program focuses on spelling patterns and words student frequently misspell. Students also learn to use tools such as the dictionary, collaboration with peers, and technological devices.

Handwriting

In the early elementary grades, students learn the strokes which form the basis of manuscript letters. Handwriting instruction focuses on the development of letter formation skills and the application of these skills throughout the curriculum. Cursive handwriting is introduced in the third grade and refined in fourth. Students work with keyboarding and word processing, progressing in efficiency on an individual basis.

Study Skills

The development of good organizational and study skills is an essential part of schooling. Such topics as how to manage time, plan for long- and short-term assignments, organize workspace and materials, and study for tests are taught and reinforced at the appropriate team levels.

Mathematics

The T/E mathematics curriculum is based on a set of clearly defined learning objectives. Major concepts include: numbers and numerals, measurement, rational numbers, geometry, decimals, graphing, number

theory, and probability. These concepts are developed through a balanced use of manipulative materials, various text-based instruction, and technology. Students are grouped for instruction beginning in first grade. This approach to teaching and learning accommodates the needs of students and provides students with appropriate challenge. Some factors that may be considered when grouping students by achievement include teacher recommendation from the previous year, district-developed placement tests, standardized testing data, on-going classroom assessment, and teacher monitoring. *Math in Focus*, *Singapore Math* is used across the district to provide a consistent foundation for each child to develop strong mathematical skills. This series emphasizes a balance for concrete, pictorial, and abstract instructional strategies.

Mathematics is an important subject and T/E's teachers are dedicated to preparing every student to meet the challenges and demands of the future.

Science

Science is best learned when students are engaged in practicing Science. Hands-on activities encourage students to experience for themselves, through direct observation and experimentation, the process, joy, and fascination of science. Through scientific experimentation, students answer their own questions and develop patience, persistence, and confidence. T/E's elementary Science curriculum in kindergarten is a hands-on, theme-based program.

Grades first through fourth have adopted *Science and Technology for Children* which was developed by the National Academy of Science in cooperation with the Smithsonian Institute. Each elementary school provides both hands-on Science instruction in a Science lab and classroom Science instruction where reading and writing are tools for learning. A full-time Science aide assists and supports the classroom teacher in the preparation and implementation of lessons.

The units of study are as follows:

- Kindergarten** Senses/Properties, Weather, Insects, Seeds/Plants, Energy, Agriculture
- Grade 1** Comparing and Measuring, Weather, Rain Forests or Oceans, Organisms, Magnetism, Solar System, Sustainability

- Grade 2** Life Cycle of Butterflies, Balancing and Weighing, Changes, Soil, Sound, Solar System, Sustainability
- Grade 3** Chemical Tests, Rocks and Minerals, Plant Growth and Development, Land and Water
- Grade 4** Ecosystems or Animal Studies, Food Chemistry, Electric Circuits, Motion and Design

Social Studies

The T/E Social Studies curriculum is designed to help students understand cultural diversity and their place in a global community.

Grade one focuses on the concept of "Our Global Village" and in addition to units on Japan and Africa, includes a unit on communities, maps, and geography.

Grade two concentrates on exploring the concept of time and the use of a historical timeline.

The cultures, geography, and history of the United States are the thrust of the third and fourth grade programs.

Throughout the curriculum, students are encouraged to explore the following questions:

- Grade 1** Who Am I in the World? Units of Study: Our Global Village, Japan, Africa (Nigeria and Kenya)
- Grade 2** Who Am I in Time? Age of Dinosaurs and Early Man, Ancient China, Exploration and Immigration, Space
- Grade 3** Who Am I in My State? Units of Study: Native Americans, Chester County, Pennsylvania, Elections
- Grade 4** Who Am I in My Country? U.S. History: Geography, Early Settlers and Settlements/Colonies, American Revolution, America Grows

Health

K-4 health is divided into four basic areas of study incorporating both factual knowledge and the development of positive attitudes and lifelong healthy behaviors.

- Safety** Includes personal and group safety concerns involving, but not limited to, bus, bicycle, fire, playground, and other grade-appropriate issues.

Drugs and Alcohol Incorporates Officer Friendly, Guidance, and REACH (Responsible Adolescents Concerned and Helping) to encourage the child to make appropriate decisions based on factual information.

Family Life Focuses on information, self-concept, interpersonal relationships, and positive decision making. Please note: An alternate to the Family Life curriculum is available upon parental request.

Care of the Body Provides children with activities that enable them to understand the value of maintaining good health through acquiring information and encouraging supportive health habits.

Art

Students have a regularly scheduled art class with an art teacher in Kindergarten and in grades 1, 3, and 4 once per cycle. In grade 2, students have two scheduled art classes per cycle. The classes range from 35 minutes in Kindergarten to 45 minutes in grades 1-4. All levels of the program include experiences designed to exercise and strengthen the pupil's ability to perceive, appreciate, perform, and criticize. Provisions are made for each student to be involved with a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional materials and to gain understanding of our visual arts heritage. The activities are planned to promote the development of independent thinking and self-evaluation. The Art curriculum follows a developmental scope and sequence and is a discipline-based approach to Art education. Lessons are designed to provide instances for integration with elements of the core educational program.

Music

Classroom Music

The goals of the Music program are to provide the opportunity for every child to learn the basic skills of singing and reading music, to develop song repertoire, and to broaden listening skills. Once per cycle in grades K, 2, 3 and 4, every class meets with the music teacher for a period of thirty to forty-five minutes for musical activities that include listening, singing, performing, moving, reading, and creating. In grade 1, students have two scheduled music classes per cycle. Through these activities,

the students learn concepts dealing with the major elements of music which are rhythm, melody, form and harmony, tone, color, style, and expressive qualities. In third grade, students are introduced to the "recorder" as an adjunct to the music reading program.

Instrumental Music

When students reach the third grade, they have the opportunity to study a string instrument. At the fourth grade level, they may begin instruction on suitable band or orchestra instruments. Group instrumental lessons are scheduled for thirty minutes once per cycle and rotate from cycle to cycle so that the same subject is not missed in the regular classroom. Students are invited to join a string orchestra and/or band that meets before school for forty minutes each week. In this setting, students are provided with the opportunity to further develop performance skills and produce both winter and spring concerts for the school and surrounding community. The students rent an instrument from an outside source. The district will continue the practice of providing rental-free instruments for deserving students from families with a financial hardship. Please contact the school counselor if there is a need.

Performance Groups

Students are provided with a variety of performing opportunities. All elementary schools provide three music performance organizations: string orchestra, beginning band, and chorus. These groups rehearse before school once each week. Parents are responsible for providing transportation to rehearsals.

Physical Education

Physical education contributes to the well-being of students through participation in activities designed to meet their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs. It is a tool used to develop individual values of good citizenship and sportsmanship for real-life situations. As students move through the elementary grades, there is an increased degree of difficulty in skills and a greater emphasis on team play. The program is designed to provide equal opportunities for all students to participate in physical activities that promote self-confidence and the ability to work in coeducational groups. Our physical education program includes:

Kindergarten and Grade 1

- Locomotive skills

- Eye hand coordination
- Ball handling skills
- Stunts
- Game-type activities
- Movement and posture education

Grades 2, 3, and 4

- Physical fitness, testing
- Start of formal exercise
- Stunts, tumbling, apparatus
- Rhythmics and dance
- Game program
- Sports program
- Individual/dual activities
- Citizenship/sportsmanship

Library

The library is a warm, friendly, and inviting place where we encourage children to become lifelong readers. Books may be checked out and taken home to enjoy. We do send home reminder notices on a regular basis if books are late. Children of all grade levels come to the library to enjoy rich literature and to receive direct instruction in the workings of the library and its many technological resources. Research has demonstrated that students who are exposed to a print-rich environment, engage in voluntary reading, and read at home tend to develop the habit of reading. We encourage families to take advantage of the resources of our library and share the joys of reading together. We strongly encourage all parents to spend time reading with their child each day.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

BRIDGE

The “BRIDGE” program is designed to provide early intervention and/or supplemental reading instruction to kindergarten and first grade students who require additional literacy support.

In kindergarten, eligible students receive intensive small group instruction four to five times a week. The objective of the program is to enhance language development, concepts about print, and reading readiness skills. The evaluation for eligibility in the kindergarten program begins with the fall Kindergarten Screening that is administered to all

kindergarten students. A team made up of the reading specialist, speech/language therapist, and BRIDGE teacher uses the results to select children for further assessment, including a language evaluation and teacher recommendation.

In first grade, one-on-one instruction is provided daily. The objectives of the program are to teach successful strategies in approaching print and to develop sight vocabulary. Core teachers, the reading specialist, and the speech/language therapist collaborate to select students for evaluation with the Early Literacy Assessment and the Test of Auditory Analysis Skills. On-going communication with parents takes place throughout the year.

READING SUPPORT

This program is designed to provide supplemental reading instruction for students in need of additional support in grades one through four. Instruction for eligible students occurs 3-5 times per week.

ESL (ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE)

The goal of the ESL program is to increase proficiency levels for English language learners in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. Students acquire the academic language necessary to function comfortably in the American classroom. The ESL teacher acts as a liaison between school and home. Recognizing the diversity of T/E students, the ESL teachers foster each child’s participation in the T/E schools while preserving the child’s own language and cultural heritage.

COUNSELING

The elementary guidance program serves children through counseling, consultation, and coordination of services. The school counselor delivers the developmental guidance program. This program provides experiences that will assist each child in the development of a positive self-concept and an understanding of sound human relationships. The counselor works with children individually or in large and small group settings.

The counselor consults with parents, teachers, and community resource personnel to ensure that the needs of individual children are met. Acting as a coordinator, the counselor helps to plan meetings, share information, and facilitate the process of accessing help for the child.

MATH SUPPORT

The Math support teacher provides supplemental help in Mathematics. Assessment for eligibility includes classroom observations by the regular Mathematics teacher, progress monitoring within the Math class, and performance on standardized tests. To receive this support, children may meet in small groups and/or individually with the Math support teacher either inside or outside of the regular mathematics class time.

SCHOOL INTERVENTION TEAM

The purpose of the School Intervention Team (S.I.T.) is to help children who are experiencing social or academic problems. The team consists of the principal, psychologist, counselor, Math support teacher, Reading specialist, classroom teacher, other teachers, and parents. The team works together to suggest and implement changes to help the child in the classroom setting. A child may be recommended for the SIT process by the principal, a teacher, or the child's parents. Parents who wish to initiate the process should contact the classroom teacher, school counselor, or principal. After a request is received, a member of the team notifies parents, collects data, observes the child, and provides interventions targeted for the child. There will be periodic review of the student's response to intervention and ongoing communication with parents.

The goals of SIT are:

- to provide initial screening and direct intervention for students for whom instructional or behavioral support is needed;
- to provide peer support for teachers and staff;
- to enhance home/school communication;
- to coordinate the delivery of support services to the child;
- to monitor and evaluate the child's progress.

LEARNING SUPPORT

The District provides a range of special education supports and services for eligible students. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed to specify the type of support and instruction that enables the student to participate in regular education to the fullest extent possible. The Learning Support program provides students with academic and/or behavior support to ensure that each child has the opportunity to be a successful learner. Students who participate in this program require

specially designed instruction. This instruction is described in the child's Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.). Parents and teachers, working together, create this plan for the individual child.

At the elementary level, the District operates programs of learning support, emotional support, autistic support, life skills support, and speech and language support. In addition, related services such as occupational, physical, vision, or hearing therapies are provided by qualified personnel when the student requires these services. The IEP is reviewed at least annually. Any team member may request a meeting at any time during the school year to review the program.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SUPPORT

Identification of children who may have articulation, voice, fluency, and/or language problems occurs through referrals by parents, classroom teachers, other school professional staff, the family doctor, or the child. Any parent with a question, concern, or whose child has had previous speech therapy is encouraged to contact the Speech and Language teacher or the counselor. Support services are provided once a child is determined to be in need of specially designed instruction. The plan for this support is developed in the child's IEP. Speech support services may be provided in the classroom, in small groups, or individually both formally and informally.

CHALLENGE

The Challenge program is an enrichment program for mentally gifted students. Students are identified on the basis of multiple criteria including standardized scores on aptitude and achievement tests, teacher and parent recommendations, academic achievement, and psycho-educational testing. Students in this program are involved in a variety of activities directed toward the goals of developing creative thought processes, higher level thinking skills, communication skills, group processes, decision-making skills, problem solving, vocational and avocational interests, and self-awareness/self-concept.

A Gifted Individualized Educational Plan (GIEP) is developed that specifies the type of support and instruction that meets the students' needs. Options may include direct instruction by the gifted support teacher, small group enrichment, curriculum and instruction differentiation, and collaboration with the classroom teacher.

DENTAL PROGRAM

A dental hygienist is employed part-time by the T/E School District for an educationally-based, state-mandated program in kindergarten through fourth grade. Local dentists act as resource persons and consultants to the program. The Children's Dental Clinic is a community organization that provides dental treatment for eligible students. The Clinic, which is open one day per week, is a non-profit, charitable organization supported by fund-raising events and contributions.

CLASSROOM FIELD TRIPS

(Policy and Regulation 6153) Students may have the opportunity to participate in supervised, school-sponsored field trips. Students are reminded that all rules and regulations of the District remain in effect. In the event that a trip is cancelled for any reason, the District shall not be responsible for monetary deposits lost due to such cancellation. Financial assistance is available for deserving families. Please contact the school counselors for assistance. No student will be denied the opportunity of participating in school-sponsored curricular activities including field trips because of an inability to pay necessary fees. For additional information, see **Policy 5312: Participation of Financially Disadvantaged Pupils in Curricular Activities.**

PROGRESS REPORTS AND STUDENT RECORDS

(Policy 5221) The school issues progress reports three times each year. Each special area teacher assigns grades for two of the three marking periods. There are also two parent conferences per year. Check the school calendar and newsletter for dates.

Kindergarten progress reports are issued three times a year with a format more specifically designed to match the program.

For more information please see Policy 5221: Evaluation of Pupil Progress.

(Policy and Regulation 5225) "Student Records" refer to those documents directly related to students and maintained by the school/District which are necessary for the educational development of students and for the orderly functioning of the school. The District has developed guidelines for maintaining such student information and for providing access to student records by parents. Any release or

dissemination of student records shall be made in compliance with the Pennsylvania Public School Code and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act.

RECESS

As part of a well-balanced school day, a period of outside play is planned for each day. We attempt to take the children outside for recess in all but rainy weather or if the temperature is below 20 degrees. Parents are encouraged to have students wear the appropriate clothing for outdoor recess throughout the year including a warm coat, gloves, boots, and hat. Except in the most unusual circumstances, pupils who are not able to go outside during recess are considered too ill to attend school. If you do not want your child to go outside for an extended period of time, a doctor's excuse may be requested.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

CHORUS

Students in fourth grade who enjoy singing may join the Chorus. The Chorus rehearses before the school day begins. During the spring, the Chorus presents a concert along with the Valley Forge Elementary School Band and Orchestra.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Third and fourth grade students may elect to receive instruction on the violin, viola, or cello. Fourth grade students may elect to receive instruction on string, woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. The orchestra and band rehearse before school. Students have the opportunity to perform in a concert during the school year.

SCHOOL STORE

The school store is operated by fourth grade parents on Friday mornings during snack time outside the cafeteria. Proceeds from the School Store support the Annual 4th Grade End-of-Year Party.

CLUBS AND AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The PTO sponsors a variety of after-school clubs during the course of the school year. In the past, there have been clubs for a variety of topics such as: LEGO Club, Computer Club, Foreign Languages, Tennis, Drama, Science, Kids Fit, and Yoga Club. The District funds an After-School Sports program for children in grades 2 through 4.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Parent Teacher Organization is a vital part of Valley Forge Elementary School. Volunteers are active every day of the school year. Among other things, they serve as homeroom parents, media center volunteers, classroom volunteers, and field trip chaperones. The PTO raises funds to benefit the children of Valley Forge Elementary School.

PTO COMMITTEES

The purpose of the Parent-Teacher Organization is to support the educational process. This is accomplished by promoting a closer relationship among administration, students, parents, and faculty. Parents can become personally involved through a large number of volunteer opportunities. Listed below is a partial list of volunteer opportunities at our school. For a complete listing, please visit the "Volunteer" page on the PTO website (www.vfespto.org). If you can help, contact one of the Executive Board members listed or sign up on the website Volunteer page.

Art Goes To School

Art Goes to School is a non-profit community program. Parent volunteers assist an AGTS representative with age-appropriate presentations that provide the children with enriching experiences in art appreciation. The program began in 1962 under the auspices of the Junior League of Philadelphia and has been conducted in our school district for the past 25 years. Parent volunteers do not need teaching or art experience - just a genuine interest in art and in working with children.

Clubs (Before and After School)

The PTO organizes optional, supervised activities for students for a small fee. The offerings vary each year depending on student interest. Parent volunteers coordinate registration for the club and assist the instructor if needed. Students on club rosters will attend before or after school clubs as scheduled. If a student will not be attending a scheduled club, please send a note in the child's red folder about the change.

Book Fair

Our annual Book Fair fundraiser is sponsored by the PTO each fall in conjunction with Scary Gym. The Book Fair offers a wide variety of books to the children in order to encourage them to read. Parent chairpersons plan and organize the event. Parent volunteers sign up for shifts to help with classes as they visit the book fair.

Cultural Arts

The TESD Cultural Arts Group is called DELTA. This group includes parent representatives from the five elementary and two middle schools in the district. It is a non-profit organization that strives to provide affordable professional entertainment for the entire community with two evening programs open to the public during the year.

Additionally VFE has an internal Cultural Arts committee that coordinates a series of programs that are funded by the PTO. The goal is to enrich our children's educational experience with exposure to various dance, music, drama, and science performances and workshops. Parents are always welcome to attend these programs. Parents can volunteer to serve on the committee as a grade-level representative or assist at one of the programs.

Dental Clinic

Our school district provides a free dental clinic for children who otherwise would not receive regular dental care. The PTOs in the district help fund this project. Volunteers drive the children to and from the clinic which is located at the T/E Middle School. The VFE coordinator of the Dental Clinic distributes fundraising materials once per year.

Homeroom Parents

Homeroom parents coordinate class parties and schedule volunteers from their class for the Spring Fair.

Inter-School Council

InterSchool Council serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information among parent/teacher organizations in the District. The goals are to continue to improve education for children and provide a forum for discussion and possible resolution of areas of concern. Each school has a representative from its parent group. Topics discussed include (but are not limited to) the educational process, legislation, student behavior, and activities. Meetings are generally held monthly, September through May. A parent representative from each school is present at all meetings but all parents are invited to attend these informative gatherings.

Library Volunteers

Parents support the librarian and library staff performing a variety of tasks during their assigned library shift.

Newsletter - The Falcon

The VFE Newsletter is published every other week and sent to each household via email. Two parent volunteers share responsibility as co-editors of the newsletter which results in a commitment every 4 weeks during the school year.

Publishing Center

The Valley Forge Elementary Publishing Center provides a way to showcase students' original writing. Children write, revise, and edit their work in the classroom with the help of their teachers. The pieces are then submitted to the Publishing Center where a coordinator and volunteers create the final product. Students take the text and covers home to illustrate. All parents are asked to help in this step by encouraging children to complete their illustrations by the specified due date and by making sure the portfolios are returned to the Publishing Center. One copy of the book is placed in the library collection and the second copy of the book is given to the child to take home. Publishing books helps our young authors develop a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Parent volunteers perform various tasks which include typing, proofreading, and editing as well as the binding and assembly of the books. The Publishing Center Coordinator is available to train all new volunteers.

Scary Gym

In late October, parent volunteers organize and construct a "not-so-scary" maze in the gym that is appropriate for elementary age children. Optional participation by VFE students in this event is broken down by grade for the students so "scary effects" are appropriate for the various K-4 grades. Parent volunteers are needed for maze construction, student organization, treat baking, and "scaring".

School Board Representative

The School Board Representative attends monthly meetings and acts as the "eyes and ears" of the Valley Forge Elementary community. Reports from our representative presented at PTO meetings or through *The Falcon* help our community stay informed. All parents are encouraged to attend school board meetings and register for school district updates at www.tesd.net.

School Store

Two fourth grade parents coordinate a weekly school store. Parent volunteers work at the store which offers school supplies and novelty items. All proceeds are used to pay for an end-of-year party for all 4th grade students.

Social Events for the Families

The PTO sponsors a variety of social events throughout the year. In past years, the PTO has sponsored Pizza Bingo Night, the Bowling Party, Family Fun Night, the Ice Cream Social, and the Back to School Picnic. Parent coordinators organize these events and general parent volunteers serve on the committee and work shifts during the event as needed.

Falcon 5K and Spring Fair

The major events at VFE are the Falcon 5K in the Fall and the Spring Fair in May. The idea is to have a fun, family event to start and finish off the year. The Falcon 5 K and Spring Fair Chairpersons work with a

committee of chairpersons to plan the events. Many volunteers are needed on the days of the events to make it safe and fun for everyone.

Teacher Appreciation Luncheons

The PTO hosts three luncheons each year: "A Welcome Back" luncheon in August, a pre-holiday luncheon in December, and an "End of the Year Appreciation" lunch in June. Each event has a parent coordinator and much help is needed from parent volunteers with food preparation, hosting, and clean-up in order to make these events a success.

Spirit Sale

The PTO sponsors the sale of various "Spirit" items with the Valley Forge Elementary School name. A parent coordinator organizes all communication to the families, interacts with the vendor, processes orders, and submits all financial paperwork.

CODE OF CONDUCT

PHILOSOPHY/MISSION

- The development and maintenance of self-discipline is an integral aspect of learning.
- Each professional staff member, as a part of the normal teacher-learning process, shall develop and emphasize self-disciplinary procedures with students.
- Each staff member is responsible for contributing to the maintenance of these standards of behavior which are conducive to learning not only in the classroom but in corridors, the cafeteria, and throughout the school site.

(From TE District Regulation 5401)

The goal of each elementary school in the Tredyffrin/Easttown School District is to provide the highest quality of educational programs for our students. The cornerstone of school discipline lies in the development of responsible behavior in each child. All five schools utilize the Batsche "Pro Social Skills" model which emphasizes the responsibility of students to make proper choices for their behavior. When a choice is made, a student must reflect and evaluate it with an awareness of direct consequences. To facilitate these skills, guidelines are established which

are consistent at all grade levels. All school staff members are trained to employ this model if and when a confrontation occurs.

Student behavior on buses, in hallways, cafeteria, and recess areas is expected to comply with established guidelines. In addition, rules for behavior are in effect at school-sponsored events during or after school hours and both on or off the building premises.

We believe that a climate conducive to learning is established through the consistent application of disciplinary guidelines, staff expectations and parent support. The Elementary School Code of Conduct reflects a strong sense of community and partnership exemplified through the responsible behavior and academic excellence of our elementary students.

PRO-SOCIAL SKILLS OVERVIEW

The Pro-Social Skills Program includes a five-step system that provides language to help children control impulses and make constructive choices. The following is a list of the five steps and the rationale for each.

1. STOP AND THINK

Teachers say "Stop and think" to students behaving inappropriately. This message interrupts negative and impulsive behaviors. This prompt also aids self-control as students internalize and apply it themselves. For adults, "Stop and think" is calm, rational, consistent response to challenging behaviors. It serves as an alternative to emotional responses such as yelling or being drawn into arguments with children.

2. GOOD CHOICE OR BAD CHOICE

Teachers ask, "Are you going to make a good choice or bad choice?" This question places responsibility for decisions squarely upon children. Power struggles and win-or-lose situations that are generated by child defiance are defused. It is made clear that consequences are derived from choices made by children.

3. CHOICE OR STEPS

Implementation of this part of the sequence varies according to need. Some children are helped to explore alternative choices. In other cases, children are taught social skills essential for school and interpersonal success. These steps are concrete and specific. For example, steps for ignoring are Break (the gaze),

Turn (your body), and Move (out of the area). These steps are verbalized to reinforce the controlling capacity of language.

4. JUST DO IT!

Teachers say, "Just do it!" This message is intended to activate children and eliminate excessive verbiage regarding events and behavioral expectations.

5. HOW DID I DO?

This step is used for self-monitoring and self-evaluation. Children reflect upon the results of their choices and consider behavioral alternatives when needed.

Based on the work of Dr. George Batsche; Adapted by Jerry McMullen, Ph.D.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

All five schools hold discipline expectations for students which are consistent among all staff members regardless of the location or grade level in the building. A primary goal of the school is to nurture the concept of self-discipline and respect for others. The following guidelines are to be reviewed by students and their parents annually at the beginning of school and referenced frequently throughout the year:

Hallways

1. Students should always walk when traveling to and from classes.
2. Quiet voices are to be used.
3. Students must keep their hands to themselves.
4. Students are not to linger in bathrooms.

Office Area

1. Students should be considerate of those working and wait their turn to speak.
2. The office telephones are not to be used unless it is an emergency.

Cafeteria

1. Students should enter and exit quietly.
2. Students should remain seated unless following routines of trash disposal, snack, or bathroom use.

3. Students shall demonstrate appropriate table manners.
4. Nothing should ever be thrown in the cafeteria.
5. Running is not permitted at any time.
6. Students should respect others' space.
7. When finished eating, students should leave the area clean.
8. Students should not lend or borrow money from each other.
9. Students must be silent for announcements and follow directions of the cafeteria monitor.

Playground

While each grade level constructs specific rules for recess behavior, the following are common in all schools:

1. Students must play safely only in designated areas and remain within playground boundaries.
2. Fighting or games involving body contact are not permitted at any time.
3. Students should use equipment and supplies in a safe and appropriate manner.
4. Any serious problem involving equipment or injury should be reported to the teacher on duty immediately.
5. Students may not play on ice or throw snowballs.
6. When hearing the bell or whistle, students should line up quickly and quietly.
7. A request not to participate in outdoor recess due to health reasons requires a note from a parent for one day or from a physician for an extended amount of time.

Indoor Recess

1. Students must remain in the classroom unless given permission by the teacher on duty to leave the room.
2. Activities and equipment should be appropriate for an indoor setting and approved by each grade level team.

Bus

1. The same conduct that is expected in the classroom should be observed on the bus.
2. Students should walk on and off the bus.
3. Quiet voices should be used.

4. Students must remain seated and keep their hands to themselves. Head, hands, and feet must be kept inside the bus.
5. Students should not eat or drink while riding the bus. Nothing is to be thrown out of windows.
6. No profane language is permitted at any time. The bus should be kept clean and students should not tamper with any equipment.
7. Students should ride only on the assigned bus and disembark at the assigned stop unless given prior approval through the principal's office.

2. The use of, distribution of or possession of, any substance subject to Policy 5405. Aiding and abetting any of the above shall be treated in the same way.
3. Carrying of any item which could be considered a weapon or which is dangerous in nature in accordance with State Law
4. Consistent lateness to or cutting of class or detentions
5. Willful destruction or defacing of school property
6. Chronic infraction of building rules
7. Conduct adversely affecting the school routine or otherwise endangering the safety, morals, health or welfare of others.
8. Physical or verbal threats or attacks or retaliatory conduct directed at school staff members, their property, or their families.
9. Chronic insubordination

(Policy 5413): Student Conduct on Buses

No student shall be permitted to engage in conduct that could endanger that student's safety or the safety of others. Discipline will be imposed as the situation warrants, in accordance with Board Policy, applicable Administrative Regulations, this Student Handbook, and the Code of Student Conduct.

(Policy 8070): Video Monitoring in Schools and on School Buses

In order to provide a safe environment for students, school personnel, and contracted personnel, schools may be equipped with audio and video monitoring devices in public areas such as hallways and classrooms, and school buses may be equipped with video recording devices that provide video surveillance of passengers. Students and, when applicable, school bus passengers will be notified as to the presence and possible activation of any video recording devices.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

In order to maintain a safe school climate that encourages learning for all students, teachers and administrators shall respond to actions or situations that disrupt this learning process. Discipline measures may include warnings, detentions, suspensions, expulsions or other appropriate responses to the circumstances.

Offenses that are considered to be of an extremely serious nature, including but not limited to the following, may result in either suspension or expulsion:

1. Inappropriate physical contact, verbal threats or attacks, hazing, bullying or fighting on school grounds, in school vehicles and/or while participating in school-sponsored activities on or off school premises.

When a suspendable offense occurs, the principal will meet with the student at which time the student will have the opportunity to offer an explanation of the infraction. After that meeting the principal may suspend the student from school for a period of up to three school days. Parents will be notified in writing.

When a suspension exceeding three (3) school days is under consideration, the principal will offer the student and student's parents a hearing as required by law. After such hearing the principal may extend the suspension for a period of up to ten (10) school days. The Superintendent must approve suspensions in excess of five (5) days. Parents will be notified in writing.

When discipline is to be imposed upon a student with disabilities, School District employees are required to follow the additional procedures outlined in the District's Administrative Regulation (R5401) and applicable law.

To ensure the rights, privileges, and safety of all elementary students, the following guidelines are in place to some degree in each school. The listing is not inclusive but meant to be a guide for fair and equitable treatment of students. The administration will exercise its discretion in making judgments regarding behavioral issues not listed within these guidelines. (The complete T/E School District Student Discipline **Policy and Regulation #5401** are available on-line.)

The Elementary Code of Conduct, General Behavior Guidelines, and Disciplinary Measures exist to ensure the safety of each child in our schools. These protective measures are in effect during school hours,

field trips, on bus routes, at after-hours school, and PTO-sponsored events.

OFFENSE	MINIMUM RESPONSE
1 Disruptive behavior in the classroom, in the library, at assemblies, during fire drill, field trips, at social events, or other school-sponsored events	1 Warning Given 2 Time Out 3 Parent Contact 4 Suspension
2 Physical injury caused by fighting	1 Parent Contact 2 Detention 3 Suspension
3 Possession of weapons	1 See Policy & Regulation #5401
4 Unlawful Harassment	1 See Policy & Regulation #5420
5 Destruction of student or school property	1 Parent Contact 2 Restitution in some manner 3 Possible Suspension
6 Bus Offenses	1 Warning 2 Written Notification 3 Parent Contact 4 Bus Dismissal 3 Days 5 Bus Dismissal 5 Days by Approval of the Superintendent
6 Threats (See Policy & Regulation #5401)	1 Parent Contact 2 Report to Administration 3 Possible Suspension 4 See Policy/Regulation #5401 Protocol for Risk Assessment

OFFENSE	MINIMUM RESPONSE
7 Bullying (See Policy & Regulation #5401)	1 Warning 2 Parent Contact 3 Loss of Privilege 4 Possible Suspension
8 Hazing	1 See Policy & Regulation #5421

PROTOCOL FOR RISK ASSESSMENT (Policy & Regulation 5401)

The Tredyffrin/Easttown School District is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all students and staff. The administrators, with Board support, have developed a protocol for responding to threatening student behaviors. The purpose of the protocol is to assess whether a student, who demonstrates threatening behaviors, poses a serious risk to self or others. The protocol is included as a section of District Regulation 5401: Student Discipline. The complete Policy and Regulation are available at www.tesd.net under Our District/Policies and Regulations or through District administrative offices.

Our teachers and administrators review student conduct and expectations with students in a developmentally appropriate manner. We remind students that their safety is our priority and that, where their safety is concerned, we take what they do and say very seriously.

It is important for parents to be aware of how school personnel respond to behaviors that may pose a threat. It is often difficult to distinguish between behaviors that do not pose a threat and those that do. When a student makes a verbal or written comment or gesture that could suggest a threat, our initial response is to assure safety for all, and the student is removed to a safe location in school and out of the classroom. Pending an initial investigation by the building administrator or designee, a clinical interview may be completed by a District mental health specialist. Parents are notified. The student may be suspended from school and/or subsequently participate in a mental health risk assessment arranged by

the District and conducted by a licensed and/or certified mental health professional. The majority of mental health risk assessments are conducted within 72 hours, at District expense, by one of our local contracted service providers. See Protocol for Risk Assessment (Policy & regulation 5401) for additional details.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

Our Valley Forge School community is committed to fostering a positive, warm, safe, and caring environment where children are encouraged to learn and develop their potential. This is accomplished through several avenues:

- The VFES Pledge, song, and Superhero Character Traits
- PATHS: Promoting Alternative Thinking Skills
- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
- Developmental Guidance

VFE PLEDGE

I pledge to try to do my best
Every single day.
Listening, learning, and being fair
When I work and play.

Keeping hands and feet to myself,
Treating others with respect,
Making sure our things are neat
Is what we should expect.
I'll listen when my teacher speaks
And follow every rule.
I pledge I'll be a good citizen
In my classroom and my school.

PATHS PROGRAM

PATHS, which stands for Promoting Alternative THINKING Strategies, is designed to help elementary children to develop better thinking skills, more mature and responsible ways of behaving, and improved academic performance. PATHS lessons are taught on a weekly basis in all grades.

The goals of the PATHS program include:

- Increase children's abilities to think and solve problems for themselves;
- Increase children's abilities to use their thinking skills to act responsibly and maturely;
- Improve children's understanding of themselves and others;
- Improve children's feelings about themselves and others;
- Increase children's abilities to learn more effectively in the classroom environment.

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM

- The developmental guidance program introduces "I-Care" Rules in kindergarten and these are reinforced through the grades. The program reinforces getting along with others and teaches resiliency.
- I-Care Rules:
 1. We listen to each other.
 2. Hands are for helping, not hurting.
 3. We use I-Care language.
 4. We care about each other's feelings.
 5. We are responsible for what we say and do

OLWEUS BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and positive learning environment free from bullying behaviors. Bullying occurs when a student or a group of students **intentionally** and **repeatedly** uses hurtful or intimidating words, actions or other behaviors against another student. A detailed description of bullying behaviors is posted in each classroom for student access. If a student thinks that someone is bullying him/her during the school day, on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, the student should tell an adult at school immediately so the school can begin the process of investigating the issue. Following the investigation, school officials may apply a range of consequences as listed above under Disciplinary Offenses.

Our elementary schools use the research based Olweus Bullying Prevention Program as the foundation for creating a safe environment for children. This program presents a clear definition of the term "bullying".

“A person is bullied when he/she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more persons.”

This program provides a structured approach to the prevention of bullying. It promotes increased understanding of the issues involved with “bullying” behaviors and provides a coordinated plan for addressing these issues. It also includes strategies for bystanders to use when they observe bullying behaviors. The goals of the program are:

- To reduce (and ideally eliminate) existing bully/victim problems among children
- To prevent the development of new problems
- To achieve better peer relations at school

There are four essential rules that we teach:

We will:

1. Not bully others;
2. Help students who are bullied;
3. Include all students who are left out;
4. Tell an adult at school and home when someone is bullied.

DISTRICT POLICIES & REGULATIONS

MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES WITH STUDENTS (P5461 and R5461)

All District Adults shall be expected to maintain professional, moral, and ethical relationships with District students that are conducive to an effective, safe learning environment. “District Adults” means all District employees, coaches of recognized club sports, volunteers, student teachers, and independent contractors, including the employees of independent contractors who interact with District students or are present on District grounds.

A copy of School Board Policy 5461 and Administrative Regulation 5461 is available at tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/P5461.pdf and tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/R5461.pdf respectively. Select excerpts and summary information from this Policy and Administrative Regulation are also presented below.

In order to maintain professional boundaries, District Adults shall ensure that their interactions with students are appropriate. Social interactions and electronic communications by District Adults with students shall be for legitimate educational reasons only unless an exception applies as outlined in Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5461. District Adults shall be prohibited from entering into or attempting to form romantic or sexual interactions with any student enrolled in the District, regardless of the student's age. Students of any age are not legally capable of consenting to romantic or sexual interactions with District Adults. All electronic communications conducted by District Adults with a student must relate to educational or extra-curricular programs or activities. Authorized methods of electronic communication are the following:

1. District-provided email;
2. District-sponsored web site (including school and teacher web pages);
3. Telephones (not including texting, unless otherwise permitted under number 4 below); and
4. Other electronic communication methods that are authorized by the administration in support of educational or extra-curricular programs or activities.

When available, all employees including extra-duty employees such as coaches and activity sponsors shall use District-provided email or other District-provided communication devices when communicating electronically with students. The use of District-provided email or other District-provided communication devices shall be in accordance with District policies and procedures. District employees are prohibited from using personal email, text messaging, instant messaging, and social-networking accounts, websites, and any other applications for communicating with parents and students that are not specifically authorized. District employees shall not follow or accept requests for current students to be friends or connections on personal social networking sites and shall not create any networking site for communication with students other than those provided by the District for this purpose without the prior written approval of the building principal. An example of allowable communications in this context includes where the adult is a family relative of the student.

If an employee plans to communicate electronically with students through the use of text messages, the employee must obtain permission to do so from their building principal using the form attached as Attachment A to

R5461. Also, if permission from the building principal is received, the employee must also obtain written parental/guardian permission to do so. Policy 5461 applies to conduct committed on or off school property and extends beyond the workday. However, this Policy is not intended to interfere with appropriate personal relationships between District Adults and students and their families that exist independently of the District or to interfere with participation in civic, religious, or other outside organizations that include District students.

An emergency situation or a legitimate educational reason may justify deviation from professional boundaries set out in Regulation 5461. The District Adult shall be prepared to articulate the reason for any deviation from the requirements of this Regulation and must demonstrate that they have maintained an appropriate relationship with the student.

Administrative Regulation 5461 includes examples of conduct that could or may violate District Policy regarding maintaining professional boundaries with students. District Adults shall be informed of conduct that is prohibited and the disciplinary actions that may be applied for violation of Board Policies, Administrative Regulations, rules, and procedures.

Any person, including a student, who has concerns about or is uncomfortable with a relationship or interaction between a District Adult and a student, shall immediately notify the Superintendent, principal, or other administrator. Individuals who make good faith reports of potential or actual violations of Policy or Regulation 5461 shall not be subject to retaliation, discipline, or other adverse action. Allegations of inappropriate conduct shall be promptly investigated in accordance with the procedures utilized for complaints of prohibited harassment of students.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE (P5401 and R5401)

In order to maintain a safe school climate that encourages learning for all students, teachers and administrators shall respond to actions or situations that disrupt this learning process. Discipline measures may include warnings, detentions, suspensions, expulsions, or other appropriate responses to the circumstances.

Offenses committed on school grounds, in school vehicles, or while participating in school-sponsored activities on or off school premises or that have some other legally recognized nexus to the school that are considered to be of an extremely serious nature and may result in either suspension or expulsion include but are not limited to the following:

1. Inappropriate physical contact, attack, fighting, bullying, hazing, harassment, or threatening behavior;
2. The use of, distribution of, or possession of any substance subject to Policy 5405 (Student Substance Abuse) or 5411 (Tobacco, Smoking Products and Electronic Smoking Products). Aiding or abetting any of the above actions regarding substances subject to Policy 5405 or 5411 shall be treated in the same way;
3. The use, possession, or transfer of any item which could be considered a weapon or which is dangerous in nature as outlined in Policy 5410 or in accordance with applicable law;
4. Destruction or defacing of school property;
5. Infraction of school rules that carries the consequence of suspension or expulsion as outlined in the applicable Student Handbook, Code of Conduct, or otherwise in Board Policy or an accompanying Administrative Regulation;
6. Conduct adversely affecting the school routine or otherwise endangering the safety, morals, health, or welfare of others;
7. Inappropriate physical contact, attack, threatening behavior, or other retaliatory conduct directed at school staff members, their property, or their families.

When a suspendable offense occurs, the principal or designee will meet with the student, at which time the student will have the opportunity to offer an explanation of the infraction. After that meeting the principal or designee may suspend the student from school. Parents/guardians will be notified.

When a suspension exceeding three (3) school days is under consideration, the principal or designee shall offer the student and student's parents/guardians an informal hearing as required by law. After such hearing the principal or designee may extend the suspension for a period of up to ten (10) total school days. Parents/guardians will be notified.

When discipline is to be imposed upon a student with disabilities, District employees are required to follow the additional procedures outlined in the District's Administrative Regulation (R5401) and applicable law.

HAZING/BULLYING/HARASSMENT (P5401 and R5401)

Bullying shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts which meet the following criteria:

1. directed at another student or students;
2. occurs in a school setting;
3. is severe, persistent, or pervasive; and
4. has the effect of doing any of the following:
 - a. substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - b. creating a threatening environment; or
 - c. substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

School setting shall mean in school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the District.

Hazing occurs any time a person intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly for the purpose of initiating, admitting, or affiliating a student into or with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or enhancing a student's membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces, or forces a student to do any of the following:

1. Violate Federal or State criminal law.
2. Consume any food, liquid, alcoholic liquid, drug, or other substance which subjects the student to a risk of emotional or physical harm.
3. Endure brutality of a physical nature including whipping, beating, branding, calisthenics, or exposure to the elements.
4. Endure brutality of a mental nature including activity adversely affecting the mental health or dignity of the individual, sleep deprivation, exclusion from social contact, or conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment.
5. Endure brutality of a sexual nature.
6. Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the student.

Aggravated hazing occurs when a person commits an act of hazing which results in serious bodily injury or death to the student and:

1. The person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the student; or

2. The person causes, coerces, or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the student.

Organizational hazing occurs when an organization intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly promotes or facilitates hazing.

Student activity or organization means any activity, society, corps, team, club, or service, social, or similar group, operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by the District whose members are primarily students or alumni of the District.

Bodily injury shall mean impairment of physical condition or substantial pain.

Serious bodily injury shall mean bodily injury which creates a substantial risk of death or which causes serious, permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ.

Harassment means verbal, written, electronic, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or religion when such conduct:

1. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's educational performance or creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment; and/or
2. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's educational performance; and/or
3. Adversely affects a student's educational opportunities.

Harassment includes but is not limited to slurs, jokes, bullying, hazing, or other verbal, written, electronic, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or religion. Harassment also includes sexual harassment, as defined below.

Sexual harassment is a specific form of harassment which means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, gestures of a sexual nature, or display of materials which evoke responses not in keeping with the atmosphere intended for the classroom or the school environment.

Threatening behavior shall mean a physical, verbal, or written threat to (1) commit violence with intent to terrorize, injure, or damage another or others, (2) cause evacuation of a building, place of assembly or facility of transportation, or (3) otherwise cause serious public inconvenience with reckless disregard of the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience.

Transient threat is a broad category including all threats that do not reflect a genuine intent to harm others.

Substantive threat means behaviors or statements that represent a serious risk of harm to others.

Behaviors targeting others means bullying, hazing, harassment, and threatening behaviors collectively. It is the Policy of the Board to maintain a safe, positive, and respectful environment for students and staff that is free from bullying, hazing, harassment, and threatening behavior. Any form of bullying, hazing, harassment, or threatening behavior that is a part of a school sponsored or student activity or organization is prohibited.

No student, coach, activity sponsor, volunteer, District employee, administrator, representative, agent, or contractor shall plan, direct, encourage, assist, engage in, tolerate, condone, ignore, or fail to properly report any known instances of bullying, hazing, harassment, or threatening behavior.

Students who believe they or others have been subjected to bullying, hazing, harassment or threatening behavior are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to a building administrator, teacher, and/or school counselor.

Students, administrators, coaches, activity sponsors, volunteers, District employees, representatives, agents, and contractors shall be alert to incidents of bullying, hazing, harassment, and threatening behavior and shall promptly report such conduct to their supervisor or the building principal.

Complaints of bullying, hazing, harassment, and threatening behavior shall be promptly investigated and appropriate discipline shall be administered to any individual who violates the District's prohibitions against bullying, hazing, harassment, and threatening behavior in accordance with applicable Board Policies, Administrative Regulations, and any applicable Code of Conduct. Appropriate corrective and preventative action shall be taken when allegations are substantiated.

Reports of alleged bullying or hazing that could be interpreted to also constitute discrimination and/or unlawful harassment shall be handled in coordination with the appropriate Title IX coordinator. Complaints of bullying, hazing, harassment, and threatening behavior may also be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation, as required by law or as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of bullying, hazing, harassment, or threatening behavior. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained consistent with the District's legal and investigative obligations.

HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS BY NON-STUDENTS (P5420 and R5420)

The District's policy is to maintain a positive learning environment and to prohibit any form of unlawful harassment. "Unlawful harassment" means verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or religion. The term unlawful harassment includes but is not limited to slurs, jokes, bullying, hazing, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or religion. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, gestures of a sexual nature, or display of materials which evoke responses not in keeping with the atmosphere intended for the classroom. It shall be a violation of the District's policy for any student or staff member to harass any student or staff member. The administration shall report the circumstances of the unlawful harassment to law enforcement officials and the district attorney's office as required by law. Complaints of harassment by a student against another student shall be handled in the same manner as other student disciplinary investigations.

Any student or parent who alleges sexual harassment by any staff member or student may complain directly to a teacher, a guidance counselor, or a building administrator. Students who believe that they have been subjected to harassment by an employee or any other adult member of the school community have the right and are encouraged to file a complaint in accordance with the formal and informal complaint procedures in R5420. The allegations will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. If any student or staff member is found after appropriate

investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment, he or she shall be subject to disciplinary action. Detailed procedures for resolving complaints involving sexual harassment will be distributed on a periodic basis to students and staff and will be posted in prominent locations in each school building.

NONDISCRIMINATION OF STUDENTS IN SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES (P6141 and R6141)

It is the policy of the District to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in the school regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ancestry, national origin, or handicap/disability. The District shall provide to all students without discrimination course offerings, counseling assistance, employment, athletics, and extracurricular activities. The District shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute disabilities consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

Students who believe they have been subjected to discrimination and students who become aware of discrimination against a student or students are encouraged to promptly report such alleged incidents to a counselor or administrator. The District takes complaints of discrimination very seriously. Such complaints shall be investigated expediently and appropriate corrective action will be taken when allegations are substantiated. To the extent permitted by the District's legal and investigative obligations, confidentiality of all parties affected by the investigation will be maintained. There shall be no reprisals or retaliation as a result of good faith charges of discrimination.

POSSESSION OF WEAPONS IN THE SCHOOLS (P5410)

Possession of a weapon or weapons on District property (as defined in this policy) or at school-sponsored activities is specifically prohibited. In addition, with very limited exceptions Pennsylvania law *requires* public schools to report to police and expel, for a minimum of one year, any student found in possession of any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting bodily injury on District property.

SEARCHES (P5412 and R5412)

Authorized school officials are permitted to conduct searches of students including their persons, lockers, motor vehicles, and other possessions, when there is a reasonable suspicion that such a search will uncover evidence of a violation of Board Policy, Administrative Regulations, school rules, or local, state, or federal law on the part of the student. In order for the requisite level of reasonable suspicion to exist, the school official must be able to point to a "particularized suspicion" for conducting a search. Searches that arise out of generalized concerns or merely suspicious behavior where the school official is not looking for any object in particular have been struck down as illegal. The scope of any search must be reasonable under the circumstances taking into consideration the student's age, the intrusiveness of the search, and the immediacy of any threat prompting the search.

A copy of School Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5412 is available at tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/P5412.pdf and tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/r5412.pdf respectively and contain additional information and procedures for the various types of searches (including, but not limited to, systematic suspicionless testing) to which student may be subjected. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this information and procedures.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON BUSES (P5413 and R5413)

No student shall be permitted to engage in conduct that could endanger that student's safety or the safety of others. Discipline will be imposed as the situation warrants in accordance with Board Policy, applicable Administrative Regulations, this Student Handbook, and the Code of Student Conduct.

VIDEO MONITORING IN SCHOOLS AND ON SCHOOL BUSES (P8070 and R8070)

In order to provide a safe environment for students, school personnel, and contracted personnel, schools may be equipped with audio and video monitoring devices in public areas such as hallways and classrooms and school buses may be equipped with video recording devices that provide video surveillance of passengers. Students and,

when applicable, school bus passengers will be notified as to the presence and possible activation of any video recording devices.

STUDENTS' FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (P5400 and R5400)

Freedom of expression is a right guaranteed by the United States Constitution. Students have the right to express themselves in accordance with law; however, expression that 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 is prohibited.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS (P5332 and R5332)

Student publications published, funded, or otherwise formally sponsored by the District represent the students, the staff, and the District to the community at large and, as such, shall be created and published under the auspices of the District. Student publications shall not be printed or distributed should they contain printed or graphic representation that would cause a substantial disruption or interference with school activities.

PARTICIPATION OF FINANCIALLY DISADVANTAGED PUPILS IN CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (P5312 and R5312)

No student shall be denied the opportunity of participating in curricular programs and activities including field trips because of an inability to pay necessary fees for participation or costs of materials. For students wishing to participate in extracurricular programs and activities who are unable to pay the necessary fees or costs to participate, the District will make a good faith effort to identify funds to cover the fees or costs for such students but cannot guarantee that such funds will always be available in all cases.

DRESS AND APPEARANCE (P5415 and R5415)

Students have the right to determine their dress and appearance as long as it conforms to norms of decency as set forth below and does not substantially and directly endanger physical health or safety, damage property, or substantially disrupt activities.

Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes or in activities such as music performances and athletics. A student may not be disciplined or excluded from regular instruction because of his or her appearance if style, fashion, or taste is the sole criterion for such action.

Students are expected to dress appropriately for weather conditions and in accordance with Board Policy.

Student attire or appearance that materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens the school or community, depicts or encourages unlawful or otherwise prohibited activity, or interferes with another student's rights is not permitted.

Clothing bearing or depicting messages, images, or advertisements relating to drugs, alcohol tobacco is not permitted. Clothing depicting violent or sexually explicit messages or images is also prohibited.

Absent an administrative exception to the contrary, students are expected to dress in accordance with Board Policy and the guidelines established in the applicable Student Handbook during school hours and at school-sponsored events.

Each school's dress code policy shall be gender-neutral. Schools cannot enforce specific attire based on gender. Students have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity within the constraints of the dress codes adopted by the school. Gender-neutral dress code guidelines apply to regular school days as well as any school sponsored activities.

Students whose attire does not conform to the applicable standards will be asked to put on appropriate clothing. Students may be asked to change into appropriate clothing if available at school or the student's parent/guardian will be called and asked to bring appropriate clothing to school.

Students with questions about the applicable dress code or the appropriateness of particular attire/appearance shall direct such questions to the building principal or assistant principal.

Serious or repeated violations of the dress code will be subject to disciplinary action.

STUDENT ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES – TREATMENT AND REPORTING (P5422 and R5422)

The Board has created procedures for students who suffer injuries at school or during school events including students who suffer brain injuries or cardiac arrest. The Board requires that brain injuries or symptoms of sudden cardiac arrest to student-athletes be taken extremely seriously and with the short- term and long-term health of the student-athlete kept uppermost in mind. Regulations which have been established with regard to this policy are available in the Athletic Office at CHS and in the Athletic Handbook.

STUDENT RECORDS (P5225 and R5225)

The Board recognizes its responsibility for the collection, retention, disposition and security of student records. The Board further recognizes its duty to maintain the confidentiality of such records as required by law.

Parents/Guardians and eligible students, as defined in the accompanying Administrative Regulation, shall be notified upon initial enrollment and annually thereafter of their rights concerning student records. The notice shall be modified to accommodate the needs of the disabled or those whose primary language is other than English. Notice of the rights of parents/guardians and eligible students with respect to student records as well as other District guidelines governing the collection, retention, disposition, and disclosure of student records is available for review in Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5225, which are available at www.tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/P5225.pdf and www.tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/R5225.pdf, respectively.

FIELD TRIPS (P6153 and R6153)

Students may have the opportunity to participate in supervised, school-sponsored field trips. Students are reminded that all rules and regulations of the District remain in effect. In the event that a trip is cancelled for any reason, the District shall not be responsible for monetary deposits lost due to such cancellation.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (P8012)

When pesticide applications are planned and scheduled in school buildings and/or on school grounds, the District will provide notification including: (1) posting a pest control sign in an appropriate visible area, (2) providing the pest control information sheet to all individuals working in the school building, and (3) providing required notice to all parents and guardians of students or to a list of parents or guardians who have requested notification of applications of pesticides. Records of the Districts' chemical pest control treatments for the past three (3) years are available to the public at the Districts' administrative office.

COMPLAINTS REGARDING THE DISTRICT (P1122 and R1122)

Complaints concerning the District's programs or operations should be directed to the staff member or the administrator immediately in charge of the area in which the complaint arises. Complaints received anonymously by the District, by the Board, or by its members will not be recognized as formal correspondence and therefore typically will not be given a response.

The Superintendent shall promulgate Administrative Regulations detailing the process and procedures District personnel will follow for handling complaints received by the District. Special procedures provided by law or other District Policy for handling complaints in certain areas such as discrimination, sexual harassment, and resolving issues of concern for non-contract staff shall supersede the provisions of this Policy and its accompanying Regulation.

STUDENT WELLNESS (P5402 AND R5402)

A copy of the District's Student Wellness and Nutrition Policy and Administrative Regulation are available for review on the District's website at tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/P5402.pdf and tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14R5402.pdf respectively. Students and their parents/guardians are encouraged to review this Policy and Regulation carefully as they contain important information about fundraisers in school involving the sale of food and regulations regarding bringing outside food into school.

Safeguards for Students with Food Allergies

No food of any kind is permitted to be brought to school to be shared with students in connection with recognition of birthdays, celebrations such as Halloween, holidays, Valentine's Day, cultural events, and end-of-the-year festivities at the grades K-4 level.

TOBACCO, SMOKING PRODUCTS, AND ELECTRONIC SMOKING PRODUCTS – POSSESSION AND USE (P5411 and R5411)

The possession and/or use of tobacco by students is prohibited within all of the buildings owned by the District, on school grounds, in school vehicles and/or while participating in school-sponsored activities on or off school premises. Use of tobacco shall mean all uses of tobacco including possession of lighted or unlighted cigars, cigarettes, pipes or other smoking products or material, smokeless tobacco in any form, and electronic smoking products. "Electronic smoking products" mean electronic products designed to deliver nicotine, flavor, and/or other potentially harmful chemicals. Students who violate this Policy and Administrative Regulation will be subject to school-based discipline.

STUDENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE (P5405 and R5405)

Detected evidence of use of, distribution of, possession of, or being under the influence of prohibited items within any of the buildings owned by the District, on school grounds, in school vehicles and/or while participating in school-sponsored activities on or off District premises shall cause the student or students to be placed on immediate suspension and delivered into the custody of their parents or legal guardian. Aiding or abetting any of the above shall be treated in the same manner. The proper law enforcement authorities will be notified of such action. Expulsion proceedings may be initiated as warranted.

It is generally agreed that the most meaningful approaches to substance abuse involve a cooperative effort on the part of students, parents, the school, and community social agencies. Furthermore, the best contribution schools can make is to provide a positive, meaningful learning environment and an educational program of value for each student. Students attend school so that they may develop to their fullest potential. In order to create and maintain an academic environment, the school with the support of the students and parents must strive to

eliminate substance abuse. The following regulations define practices intended to meet this goal.

I. STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

The District, recognizing the need to manage and treat the problem of substance abuse on a District-wide basis and to take appropriate measures to prevent the problem of such abuse, supports the maintenance of a Student Assistance Program. The purpose of the Student Assistance Program is three-fold: (1) to identify students who are having problems because of substance abuse or due to mental health problems, (2) to intervene when appropriate either by personal contact or through support groups, and (3) with the involvement and approval of parents, to refer those students for appropriate help.

The Student Assistance Program is not a treatment program. It seeks to improve identification of students who exhibit "at risk" behavior, such as suicidal intent, depression, and substance abuse. It also provides for intervention by alerting parents or guardians to behavioral changes or related school problems and by making referrals to outside agencies or school support services.

II. STUDENTS SEEKING HELP

Any student who is self-referred or who is voluntarily referred by anyone else and who seeks help with a drug, alcohol, or substance abuse problem, and who is not under the immediate influence or in possession of a substance governed by Policy 5405 is not subject to the disciplinary provisions outlined in Administrative Regulation R5405. In such instances, an intervention plan will be developed and implemented at the principal's direction in conjunction with the Student Assistance Team.

- School personnel to whom a student reports and from whom he or she seeks help should consult with the student and make an appropriate referral to the Student Assistance Team, counselor, or administrator.
- The Student Assistance Team will make an appropriate assessment and referral for psychological, medical, or other types of help as indicated. If assessment or treatment appears necessary, the consent of the parent or legal guardian of the student shall not be necessary to refer the student for treatment

although the District will notify the parent or legal guardian of any such referral.

- Follow-up will be conducted by a member of the Student Assistance Team and the agency to which the student was referred.
- In accord with the Pennsylvania Drug and Alcohol Abuse Control Act, a student in the District who suffers from the effects of substance abuse may consent to counseling or medical care related to its diagnosis and treatment.

III. VIOLATION OF POLICY 5405

Policy 5405 is violated when any student, employee, visitor, guest, or any other person manufactures, uses, abuses, possesses, is under the influence of, distributes or attempts to distribute substances subject to Policy 5405 or paraphernalia associated with substances subject to Policy 5405 on school premises, or at any school-sponsored activity anywhere, or while traveling to and from school or school-related activities, or who conspires, aids, or abets the use, abuse, active possession, constructive possession, or distribution of substances subject to Policy 5405.

- A. Under the influence” means noticeable impairment of ability to ambulate, converse, comprehend or perform motoric tasks as a result of consumption of substance subject to policy 5405.
- B. Simulated ("look alike") medication is prohibited and its possession is a violation of this regulation. This would include sale, distribution, or possession of substances which look like controlled pills, alcohol, marijuana or other substances which alter behavior or judgment.
- C. The principal or designee is authorized to prevent any person from entering District premises, who possesses or attempts to distribute, or is under the influence of substances subject to Policy 5405.
- D. Students who are on field trips or are participating in school-sponsored activities at or away from school are subject to Policy 5405 and these regulations. Any students covered by the rules in the *Coaches Handbook* or by agreements governing participation in non-athletic extracurricular activities shall also be subject to these regulations. Students who violate these regulations may be returned home, if warranted, before completion of the activity and the appropriate authorities shall be

notified as indicated elsewhere in Administrative Regulation R5405.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS TO STUDENTS (P5406 and R5406)

Unless specifically authorized otherwise by Board Policy, the administration of medication to a student during school, at any school-sponsored activity, or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activity, will be permitted only upon prior consent of the student's parent/guardian and at the direction of a licensed healthcare provider in the following circumstances:

1. Where failure to take or make available such medication would jeopardize the health of the student or would prevent the student from attending school or participating in a school-sponsored activity; or
2. Where the administration of medication is part of a student's accommodation plan, service agreement, or Individualized Education Program (IEP), in accordance with applicable law.

A copy of the District's Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5406 is available for review on the District's website at tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/P5406.pdf and tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/R5406.pdf respectively. Students and their parents/guardians are encouraged to review this Policy and Regulation carefully.

PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE (P5113 and R5113)

Students of compulsory school age are required to attend school. Regular, timely attendance will ensure every student has the opportunity to achieve. Many of the rules and procedures governing tardiness, absences, and truancy are mandated by Pennsylvania law and school code. The District's Board Policy and Administrative Regulation governing student attendance are available on the District's website at tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/P5113.pdf and tesd.net/cms/lib/PA01001259/Centricity/Domain/14/R5113.pdf respectively. It is important that students and their parents/guardians review these documents and familiarize themselves with the District's procedures.

INTERNET AND COMPUTER NETWORK SAFETY AND USE (P6190 AND R6190)

Individual student access will be offered to all students only after students have submitted the completed Network Acceptable Use Agreement. Individual users of the District computer networks are responsible for their behavior and communications over these networks. In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, the District will educate minors about appropriate online behavior including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Blocking software will be used on the Internet in an attempt to protect minor students from obscene material, all pornography including but not limited to child pornography, other visual depictions deemed harmful to minors (as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act), and other categories deemed necessary by the administration (see Regulation 6190). Other Internet users will also have these categories blocked. An administrator, supervisor, or person authorized by the Board may disable the technology protection measure if needed for bona fide research or other lawful purpose.

The Information Services Department monitors its network for unauthorized access or unlawful activity on District network computers and servers. Inappropriate, unauthorized, or illegal use (including hacking or attempted hacking) may result in the cancellation of the offender's privileges. Appropriate legal and disciplinary action may be taken. Information placed on any District computer or server is subject to review and may be deleted without notice.

The network is provided for students and staff to conduct research and communicate with others. Access is a privilege and entails responsibility. Students and staff are expected to act in a responsible ethical and legal manner in accordance with the District Policy 6190, acceptable rules of network etiquette, and Federal and State law. Specifically, the following are prohibited:

1. Use of the network to facilitate illegal activity.
2. Use of the network for commercial or for-profit purposes.
3. Use of the network for fundraising purposes except for links approved by the principal to websites of school-related organizations/clubs.
4. Use of the network for non-school related work on more than an incidental basis.

5. Use of the network for product advertisement or political lobbying.
6. Use of the network to transmit hate mail/speech, discriminatory remarks, and objectionable, offensive, or inflammatory communication.
7. Unauthorized or illegal installation, distribution, reproduction, or use of copyrighted materials.
8. Use of the network to access obscene or pornographic material.
9. Use of inappropriate language or profanity on the network.
10. Use of the network to intentionally obtain or modify files, passwords, and data belonging to other users.
11. Use of the network to disrupt the work of other users.
12. Impersonation of another user.
13. Sharing District password with or allowing password to be used by anyone else.
14. Loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media.
15. Destruction, modification, or abuse of network hardware and software.
16. Quoting personal communications in a public forum without the original author's prior consent.

Since the network and network storage areas are District property or otherwise constitute District-leased storage capacity, network administrators may review and delete files, web browsing history, and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly and in accordance with acceptable network use guidelines. Users should not expect that files or other electronic information stored on or available from District servers will always be private or secure.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES (P5414 and R5414)

Except where the use of electronic devices has been prohibited by law, students may possess electronic devices within all of the buildings owned by the District, on school grounds, in school vehicles, and/or while participating in school-sponsored activities on or off school premises. The administration shall have the right to regulate the use and possession of all electronic devices. In addition to limitations on use and possession imposed by the school administration, possession of electronic devices is subject to the following restrictions:

1. Students may not use electronic devices to conduct any activities which violate state and/or federal law, Board Policy, District Administrative Regulations, or school rules.
2. Students may not use electronic devices in any manner which interferes with or is disruptive to educational or extracurricular activities or events.
3. Students may not use electronic devices or have them readily accessible when they are in restrooms, locker rooms, and in other areas where individuals would have a similar expectation of privacy.

Notwithstanding the rules set forth above, electronic devices may be used:

1. At any time to respond to or report an emergency situation; and
2. When and as required pursuant to a student's Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Service Agreement.

Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion.

TREDYFFRIN/EASTTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

The T/E educational network and resources are used for educational purposes that construct knowledge, advance critical thinking, and encourage communicating and collaborating in a connected world. Access to this network is a privilege, not a right and requires safe and responsible use. The network and its resources should be used for school-related work as directed by your teacher. School computer files are not private and your teacher or principal may see them at any time.

While using the Tredyffrin/Easttown Network,

I will respect the privacy and safety of others and myself. I must:

1. Use only teacher approved network folders and locations.
2. Keep passwords private and secure.
3. Not pretend to be another person or share private information about others or myself online.
4. Have teacher permission to take and share photos, audio, or video of others or myself.

I will respect our T/E educational community. I must:

1. Communicate, search, and work in ways that are polite, safe, and appropriate.
2. Report inappropriate or hurtful materials to a teacher or principal.
3. Access, create, save, and share only appropriate educational materials or games with teacher approval.

I will respect and protect the intellectual property of others. I must:

1. Follow copyright laws by citing sources and giving credit when using information including but not limited to images and video.
2. Create my own product and not copy another's work.

I will respect and protect network and technology resources. I must:

1. Not intentionally damage or destroy equipment that belongs to the school or others.
2. Not intentionally enter, change, or move files, apps, or folders that have not been created by me unless directed by the teacher.
3. Obtain teacher permission for printing.

I have read or have had read to me the T/E School District Elementary School Student Network Acceptable Use Agreement. I agree to follow these guidelines. I understand that if I do not follow these guidelines, I may not be allowed to use the school's computers and network. I will have a consequence for making a bad choice.

Student Name: _____

Date: _____ Grade: _____

Room Number: _____

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICES – STUDENT MEAL CHARGE POLICY (R8120)

School Meal Account Procedures / Meal Charging Policy

A student's meal status is always kept confidential. All students have accounts to purchase their meals and are treated the same at the register.

Parents/guardians are responsible for their student's cafeteria food purchases and are expected to maintain payments on any outstanding

account balance for cafeteria food purchases. Parents/guardians may request in writing that the District restrict their child's purchase of a la carte food items and/or meals at any time.

The procedures for notifying parents/guardians of low and negative balances and collecting negative balances are detailed below. However, students will be permitted to charge meals (breakfast and/or lunch) and will not be denied a meal because of the insufficient funds in their student meal accounts. In addition to purchasing a meal, students are permitted to charge a la carte food items even if their individual student meal accounts lack sufficient funds as long as their balance is not negative \$50 or more. In any event, the District will initiate procedures to restrict a la carte purchases when the student's negative meal account balance exceeds \$50 and the student will only be permitted to purchase a breakfast and lunch meal.

Students may not be publicly identified or stigmatized or be required to perform chores or other work when they cannot pay or have a negative student meal account balance. Schools will not require a student to discard a school meal after it has been served to the student even if the student is unable to pay for the meal or has a negative student meal account balance.

Low & Negative Account Balance Notification

If a student has an account balance of \$5.00 or less, the parent/guardian will be notified at least weekly by email or a notice distributed in homeroom or in student folders that are brought home to the parent/guardian. The envelope containing this notice should be marked "confidential – to be opened by addressee only." If the student's outstanding account balance due reaches or exceeds five (5) school meals including breakfasts and/or lunches, a request for payment letter will be mailed or emailed to the student's parent/guardian which shall also include a request that the parent/guardian apply to participate in the school food program. In addition, a school official will contact the parent/guardian to resolve the outstanding account balance due by one or more of the following methods: telephone, electronic communication, certified letter, and again request that the parent/guardian apply to participate in the school food program. These contacts will continue until the outstanding account balance due is satisfied or has been determined to be uncollectible.

If the student's outstanding account balance due is in excess of \$50.00 and remains unpaid for more than 30 days, the parent/guardian may

incur additional collection charges on the outstanding balance. If a good faith effort is not made towards payment of the outstanding balance due then a referral to an outside authority or agency may be made.

Parents/guardians experiencing economic hardships may request payment arrangements from the District.

Additional Information

The Principal or designee shall notify Food and Nutrition Services regarding departing students so that account balances can be rectified prior to their departure. Information on meal prices, menus, how to apply for free or reduced priced meals, how to check a school meal account balance or add funds to such accounts can be found on the District's Food and Nutrition Services webpage.

Delinquent School Meal Account Debt

After taking reasonable steps to collect delinquent school meal debt which shall include at least two written correspondences as outlined above to the student's parent/guardian unrecovered/delinquent debt at the end of each school year shall be referred to the Business Manager for appropriate action. Such unrecovered/delinquent debt shall be considered bad debt and non-federal funding sources must repay the Food Service Fund for the total amount of such unrecovered/delinquent debt. Delinquent school meal debt shall not be classified as bad debt for write off purposes until after reasonable steps have been taken to collect such delinquent school meal debt.

From time to time, parents/guardians or other individuals may choose to donate funds to the District. Donated funds may not be co-mingled with food service funds from federal or state sources or food sales. Instead, donations must be made to the District's General Fund and transferred to the Food Service Fund at the appropriate time to offset unrecovered/delinquent student meal debt. Donated funds will not be applied to individual student meal account balances, but instead as an overall reduction of the amount of funds that would otherwise need to be transferred from the General Fund to the Food Service Fund at the end of the school year to repay the Food Service Fund for unrecovered/delinquent debt.

Distribution

This Administrative Regulation, detailing the District's local meal charge policy, shall be provided in writing to each household at the beginning of the school year and during the school year to households who transfer to the District during the school year.

INDEX

A Child's Place	5
Absences	4
Accidents & Injuries	31
Announcements: Delayed Openings/Closings	3
Attendance	33
Behavior	21
Breakfast	6
Bullying	27
Bus Transportation	4
Cafeteria / Food Guidelines	6
Car Transportation	4
Cell Phones and Electronic Devices	9
Celebrations	7
Challenge	17
Chorus	18
Clubs and After School Activities	18
Code of Conduct	20
Communicable Diseases	6
Complaints	31
Contacting Teachers	8
Core Class	11
Counseling	16
Curriculum	11
Delayed Opening for Grades 1-4	3
Dental Program	17/19
Developmental Guidance Program	25
Disciplinary Measures	22/26
Dismissal	4
District Policies & Regulations	25
Dress Code & Appearance	30
Dropping Off Materials For Students	9
Early Dismissal Due To Emergency/Weather	3
Electronic Devices	34
Elementary Network Acceptable Use Agreement	35
Email Guidelines for Parents	8
Emergency Delayed Openings And Closings	3

Emergency Medical Cards	6
ESL (English as a Second Language)	15
Financially Disadvantaged	30
Field Trips	17/31
Food From Home	7
Food and Nutrition Services/Meal Charge Policy	35
Freedom of Expression	30
General Information	3
Harassment	27
Hazing	27
Health Services	5
Health Screenings And Vaccinations	5
Home/School Communication	8
Homework	11
Hours	3
Instructional Program	9
Instrumental Music	18
Integrated Pest Management	31
Internet/Computer Network Safety and Use	34
Learning Support	16
Lost and Found	5
Lunch	7
Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries	25
Math Support	16
Modified Kindergarten	3
Newsletter	8
Non-discrimination	29
Olweus Bullying Prevention Program	25
Parent/Teacher Organization (P.T.O.)	18
PATHS Program	24
Personal Identification Numbers	7
Philosophy of Education	10
Possession of Weapons	29
Progress Reports and Student Records	17
Pro-Social Skills Overview	21
Protocol for Risk Assessment	24
PTO Committees	18
Reading Support and Bridge	15

Recess	11/17
School Climate	24
School Intervention Team (SIT)	16
School Store	18
Searches	29
Snacks	7
Speech And Language Support	16
Student Activities	18
Student Conduct on Buses	22/29
Student Publications	30
Student Records	18/31
Student Wellness	31
Substance Abuse	32
Support Programs	15
Tardiness	5
TE All-Call	3
Teams	11
T/E Mission Statement and Consensus Beliefs	9/10
Transportation Change	4
Use of Medication	6/33
Valley Forge Elementary Website	8
VFE Pledge	24
Video Monitoring	29
Visitors/Volunteers	8