



Danville Middle School

252 Northumberland Street
Danville, PA 17821
(570) 271-3268 ext.3800
Fax (866) 283-7030

Dear Middle School Students and Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the 2022-23 school year at Danville Middle School (DMS)! We trust that you have had a great summer. Our handbook is a guide to help students recognize the expectations that must be met for our school to operate as a trusting and collaborative community. **Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s)**, please review the handbook with your student then sign and return the signature page. We provide this handbook so that you may use it as a reference for procedures and guidelines.

Our middle school faculty and staff are committed to providing each student with an outstanding educational experience and to serving the whole child. Working in partnership with students, families and the community, we believe that we can accomplish our goals, give students a voice, recognize our accomplishments, and foster pride in our school.

The Danville Middle School continues to be committed to creating an environment of active learning for active minds. The opportunities to achieve and demonstrate excellence in the educational experiences remain paramount at DMS.

Please take advantage of the many positive opportunities we have to offer. The faculty and staff of DMS look forward to sharing a productive and positive school year with you!

Sincerely,

David Snover
Principal
dsnover@danvillesd.org

Jessica Noel
Assistant Principal
jnoel@danvillesd.org

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the student handbook.

Student Name (print)

Grade

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Danville Middle School
252 Northumberland Street
Danville, PA 17821
(570) 271-3268, Option 6, Option 1
Fax (866) 283-7030

District Administration

TBD, Superintendent
TBD, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Technology
Ms. Alyssa Wenrich, Director of Special Education
Mr. Jeffrey Ryan, Director of Network Administration
Ms. Ariel Weidler, Director of Food Services
Mrs. Pam Burrows, Administrative Services Coordinator
Mr. Ken Berkich, Director of Buildings & Grounds

Middle School Administration

Mr. David Snover, Principal
Ms. Jessica Noel, Assistant Principal

dsnover@danvillesd.org
jnoel@danvillesd.org

Middle School Guidance Counselors

Mrs. Tracy Niehoff (counsels students with last names beginning A-L)
Ms. Stephenie Butler (counsels students with last names beginning M-Z)
Ms. Kati Huber, Intervention Specialist

tniehoff@danvillesd.org
sbutler@danvillesd.org
khuber@danvillesd.org

Middle School Office Personnel

Mrs. Nancy Weigle, Principal's Secretary
Mrs. Denise Calvin, Receptionist and Attendance Secretary
Mr. LaRue Brion, School Police Officer
Mr. Matthew Hunter, School Police Officer

nweigle@danvillesd.org
dcalvin@danvillesd.org
lbrion@danvillesd.org
mhunter@danvillesd.org

Mission Statement

The Danville Area School District is an alliance of family, school and community committed to educational excellence and life success. Building the future one learner at a time.

We are proud to serve the students, parents, and greater community of the Danville area. As expectations of what students should know, understand, and be able to do increase due to the escalating demands posed by a global economy and 21st century workforce, we stand committed with a "whatever it takes" mindset to prepare our students for the future that awaits them.

Please contact us if there are questions about the contents of this handbook. It is reviewed and updated each year in order to keep current with the Danville Middle School (DMS) expectations, offerings, and procedures; in addition, it stays current with revised school board policy. Should there be a conflict between board policy and handbook provisions, the most recently approved board policy will prevail.

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Professional Staff Directory

Mrs. Jayme Beierschmitt	jbeierschmitt@danvillesd.org	Autistic Support
Mrs. Kristen Beyer	kbeyer@danvillesd.org	Gifted
Mrs. Meagan Bond	mbond@danvillesd.org	Spanish
Mrs. Shelly Craig	scraig@danvillesd.org	Math
Mrs. Dolores Dunn	ldunn@danvillesd.org	Learning Support
Mr. Todd Egger	tegger@danvillesd.org	Band/Music
Mrs. Jennifer Fisher	jfisher@danvillesd.org	Math
Mr. Jason Foresman	jforesman@danvillesd.org	Emotional Support
Mrs. Jeanne Geise	jgeise@danvillesd.org	Math
Mr. Keith Hampton	khampton@danvillesd.org	Science
Mrs. Megan Heistand	mheistand@danvillesd.org	Art
Mr. Thomas Hiravi	thiravi@danvillesd.org	Band
Mr. Brian Hulley	bhulley@danvillesd.org	Social Studies
Mrs. Maria Inverso	minverso@danvillesd.org	Nurse
Mrs. Marcie Kitka	mkitka@danvillesd.org	Health/Physical Education
Mr. Mark Klein	mklein@danvillesd.org	Health/Physical Education
Mrs. Jessica Knopp	jknopp@danvillesd.org	Language Arts
Mrs. Jeanne Ladner	jladner@danvillesd.org	STEM
Ms. Mandy LaMarca	mlamarca@danvillesd.org	Math
Mrs. Leigh Lehr	llehr@danvillesd.org	Language Arts
Mr. Corey Lombardo	clombardo@danvillesd.org	Language Arts
Ms. Amanda MacTarnaghan	amactarnaghan@danvillesd.org	Math
Mrs. Carla Maize	cmaize@danvillesd.org	Speech
Ms. Lisa McCarthy	lmccarthy@danvillesd.org	Language Arts
Mrs. Kelly Michaels	kmichaels@danvillesd.org	Math
Dr. Julia Myers	jmyers@danvillesd.org	Social Studies
Mrs. Melissa Nugent	mnugent@danvillesd.org	Language Arts
Mr. John Petrus	jpetrus@danvillesd.org	Industrial Technology
Mrs. Rebecca Pritchard	rpritchard@danvillesd.org	Chorus/Music
Mrs. Ashley Reidinger	areidinger@danvillesd.org	Social Studies
Mrs. Stephanie Reilly	sreilly@danvillesd.org	Life Skills
Mrs. Krista Roman	kroman@danvillesd.org	Spanish
Mr. Brent Sample	bsample@danvillesd.org	Cyber
Mrs. Krista Seldomridge	kseldomridge@danvillesd.org	Learning Support
Mr. Mark Shifflet	mshifflet@danvillesd.org	Social Studies
Ms. Samantha Simatos	ssimatos@danvillesd.org	Library
Mr. Richard Smith	rsmith@danvillesd.org	Science
Mrs. Caitlin Swank	cswank@danvillesd.org	Cyber
Ms. Amber Turner	aturner@danvillesd.org	Social Studies
Mrs. Amy Varano	avarano@danvillesd.org	Science
Mrs. Lynda Williams	lwilliams@danvillesd.org	Learning Support
Dr. Christy Worhach	cworhach@danvillesd.org	Science
Mr. Corbin Worley	cworley@danvillesd.org	Social Studies
Mrs. Ann Marie Yost	ayost@danvillesd.org	Science
Mr. David Zerbe	dzerbe@danvillesd.org	Science
Ms. Nancy Zola	nzola@danvillesd.org	Language Arts

2022-2023 Important Dates and Calendar

Chromebook Distribution

August 30th - Grade 6 and New Students 3:00-6:30 PM

Open House

August 30th

Parent Teacher Conferences

November 21st - PM

November 22nd - School Day Only

February 2nd - PM

April 13th - PM

Testing

Keystone

January 9-13

May 15-26

PSSA

ELA - April 24-28

Math - May 1-2

Science - May 3-4

Calendar

September 6th	First Student Day	
September 30th	Act 80 Day	NO STUDENTS
October 28th	Professional Development Day	NO STUDENTS
November 22nd	Act 80 Day	NO STUDENTS
November 23rd	Professional Development Day	NO STUDENTS
November 24th-28th	Holiday Break	NO SCHOOL
December 22nd	Early Dismissal	
December 23rd-January 2nd	Holiday Break	NO SCHOOL
January 16th	Professional Development Day	NO STUDENTS
February 20th	Presidents Day	NO SCHOOL
March 17th	NO SCHOOL (Make-Up Day #1)	
March 20th	NO SCHOOL	
April 6th	Act 80 Day	NO STUDENTS
April 7th-10th	Spring Break	NO SCHOOL
May 29th	Memorial Day	NO SCHOOL
June 9th	Last Day of School (Early Dismissal)	

School Day

The school doors open at 7:35 AM. Students will report to their assigned homeroom upon arrival at school. At 8:05 AM all outside entrances to the school will be secured and students arriving after this time must enter school through the main office.

The student school day begins at 8:05 AM and ends at 2:50 PM. Walkers and students picked up by parents/guardians will be dismissed at 2:50 PM and must exit through the designated exits in each building. Students riding buses will be dismissed from their last period classroom as the arrival of their buses is announced and will exit the building through the gym lobby doors.

Student schedules are distributed at the Middle School approximately two weeks prior to the start of school with a packet of miscellaneous information. Information on the school schedule is provided to parents at 6th Grade Orientation and Open House and is available on the Middle School webpage under FAQ.

Visitors

All visitors to the Middle School must report directly to the office, sign in, and receive a visitor's badge. Requests for student visitors are at the principal's discretion and must be approved prior to the visit. A parent note will be required.

Middle School Property

Students must seek permission from the principal to post notices in or outside of the building. Use of skateboards, rollerblades, or scooters on school property is strictly forbidden at any time. Students who utilize skateboards, roller blades, or scooters as methods of transportation to and from school must store them in designated areas upon arrival to school. Skateboards, roller blades, and scooters must be carried as soon as students reach school property. Students are permitted to ride bicycles to school; they must ride with caution on school property and park them in the bike rack at the auditorium entrance. Students are strongly encouraged to use bike locks; the school district is not responsible for damaged or stolen bicycles. Discipline measures can be taken, and riding privileges revoked, for infractions and may include confiscation of any aforementioned items. Any damage to school property, inside or outside, will incur consequences appropriate to the offense.

Students are assigned school lockers and are responsible for their content at all times. Lockers are for storing backpacks, clothing items, books, and other items associated with school. **Backpacks are not permitted to be carried during the student day.**

Student lockers will be assigned a combination lock. Students are to use only school assigned locks on their lockers. Locks not assigned by the school may be cut off at the discretion of administration. Items of value, such as electronic devices, jewelry, wallets containing money, etc., stored in lockers are the responsibility of the owner. The district is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen items. Students should not share the combination with others. **Students are responsible for the locks assigned to them. Locks are not permitted to be removed from the school. A \$5.00 fee will be assessed for lost combination locks.** Students may go to their lockers at times during the school day as designated by their team or with a pass from staff.

School lockers are the property of the Danville Area School District (DASD) and made available for use by students. No privacy privileges apply. Lockers may be searched at any time without prior student notice by an administrator or designee. Random searches and the use of drug sniffing dogs in the school may occur periodically during the school year to ensure the protection and well-being of all students.

Instructional tools and materials (textbooks, computers, library books, etc.) are provided for student use. Such instructional tools and materials are assigned to/signed out by students and records are kept by staff. In the event that tools and/or materials are lost or damaged, students will be held responsible for their replacement or repair.

Students are not permitted to carry backpacks or similar bags during the school day. All bags must be secured in their assigned locker with the provided combination lock.

Students will be assigned a Chromebook laptop computer for use throughout their time at DMS. It is very important to read and understand the information distributed at that time regarding the care and use of your Chromebook.

Other Student Personal Property - Electronic Devices

Students today have a wide array of electronic devices, including cell phones, AirPods, headphones, smart watches, iPods/MP3 players, electronic games, etc. It is strongly recommended that students not bring such items to school and the district is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen items under any circumstances. **These items are not permitted to be turned on during the official school day (8:05 AM – 2:50 PM), unless they are being used for instructional purposes at the discretion of the teacher. All such devices must be turned off and secured outside of the permitted times. Students may use these devices at lunch, during recess and while waiting in the morning and afternoon. Laser devices are not to be brought to school under any circumstances.** Electronic items turned on or used during the school day without permission of staff will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day. A second offense will result in confiscation and a parent will need to pick up the device. A third offense will result in the student not being permitted to bring the item in question to school for the remainder of the school year.

According to School Board Policy 237, the Board prohibits the use of electronic devices to take photographs, or to record audio or video at any time during the school day or at any school-sponsored event that is not open to the general public, unless the building administrator has authorized the photograph or recording by giving written consent, or unless the use is authorized for educational purposes as outlined.

It is critical that parents support us regarding the inappropriate and unauthorized use of electronic devices during school hours. We respect a parents'/guardians' need and desire to contact their children in emergency situations and vice versa; however, school phones are available for incoming and outgoing calls and the office staff will remain conscientious about delivering messages to students.

Phone contact to parents regarding a student needing to go home due to illness will be made by the school nurse, not the student. If the nurse determines that the student should be sent home, they will notify the parent/guardian to pick up the student. If a parent/guardian receives a notification to pick up his/her student from anyone other than the school nurse, please call the school office to verify. ***Students who call/text or otherwise contact a parent/guardian on their own to go home may be charged with an unexcused absence and may face discipline for unauthorized use of a cell phone.***

Attendance Procedures

Excused absences are defined as those caused by illness, medical or dental appointments, death of an immediate family member, quarantine, impassable roads, and exceptionally urgent reasons. Written excuses must be submitted to the office within five days of the absence; failure to observe the “**5-day rule**” will result in marking the absence “unexcused” even though the reason for the absence may fall in the excused category.

Once a student has accumulated 10 excused absences, doctor's notes must be provided in order for a medical or dental absence to be marked as excused. Without a doctor's note, all subsequent absences for illness will be marked unexcused even if parents send a written note. Parents/guardians are urged to schedule medical and dental appointments outside of the school day whenever possible. **Parents/guardians must call the school office to report a student absence by 8:05 a.m. and send a written excuse upon their return.**

Unexcused absences include any absence not reported at all, those not reported in accordance with the 5-day reporting rule, or absences based on illness in excess of 10 absences for the year. Examples of unexcused

absences also include those due to failure to get up on time, missing the bus, hair appointments, shopping trips, employment, or any other absence that does not fall within the parameters noted as excused absences.

Educational trips or missed days due to activities sponsored by recognized organizations must be approved by the building principal at least **two weeks prior** to the start of the absence and *may* be considered an excused absence. Failure to seek approval in a timely manner, student absences already exceeding 10 days, or current poor student performance will result in trip and/or activity absences not being approved. Non-approved trip and/or activity absences will be recorded as unexcused. ***Educational travel requests will not be approved during any of the PSSA testing windows even if the student opts out of the testing. Please check the calendar before scheduling any trips during this time (typically March and April).***

Virtual Instructional Days may occur during the school year. Such days may be synchronous, meaning they will include live virtual instruction through Google Meet, or they may be asynchronous, meaning there will be recorded video and/or other instructional activities on the teachers Google Classrooms. On *synchronous* days where students are required to attend school virtually, attendance will be determined by participation in the virtual meetings. Students are expected to attend all virtual classes. Students who do not attend 1-3 classes will be marked for a half day of unlawful absence. Students who miss four or more classes will be marked for a full day of unlawful absence. Attendance for *asynchronous* virtual days will be determined by submission of the completed assignments for each class.

Truancy is a failure to attend school without a legitimate excuse or leaving school without permission during the school day; these are considered **illegal absences** and are recorded as **unexcused/unlawful**. These absences will be dealt with in a manner that may incur in-school discipline, outside agency involvement, and/or result in the filing of charges with the District Magistrate. Given that the school is responsible for the safety of students during the school day, it is also at the discretion of the building principal to involve the police if students leave the building without permission. According to School Board Policy 204 regarding Middle School attendance, the following actions occur if unexcused days begin to accumulate:

- After three (3) days of unexcused absences, a letter will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s). At which point a school attendance improvement plan may be initiated. In all cases, students have five (5) school days from the day of absence to return an excuse to the school office.
- After five (5) days of unexcused absences, a criminal complaint may be filed with the District Magistrate. At this point, a fine may be levied against the parent/guardian of the child. The parent/guardian may be given the option of attending a parenting class in lieu of the fine. Children and Youth will be notified.
- After ten (10) days of unexcused absences, and every multiple of five (5) days after that, a complaint shall be filed with the District Magistrate. A fine of up to \$300 per day shall be the recommended consequence for these violations. After twenty (20) days of absences for any reason, students will be required to attend summer programs to make up missed work.

Students with excused absences are given the same number of days to complete **make-up work** as the number of days absent. **Students are not guaranteed the opportunity to make up work for unexcused absences.** Students are also not permitted to participate in any after-school activity on a day during which the student has been absent for all or part of the day for an inexcusable reason. If the student is absent due to illness, a statement of approval for participation in the activity by the student's doctor or parent/guardian may be required at the discretion of the relevant professional staff in charge of the activity.

Tardiness results when a student arrives between **8:05 & 10:00 AM** in the morning after student entrances are locked. Students arriving after this time must report directly to the office with a note explaining the reason for being late. Repeated tardiness (in excess of 3 instances) may result in after-school detention or other sanctions. Chronic tardiness will be addressed with parents and more stringent consequences can be implemented.

Students arriving between **10:01 & 11:15 AM** will be charged with ½ day absence. Students who arrive **after 11:15 AM** without a physician's excuse will be considered absent for the full day. Students who leave the building between **1:00 & 2:50 PM** will be charged with an early dismissal.

Students who present a note from a physician, etc., upon their return to school will be excused. Students who do NOT present a note will be charged with an unexcused early dismissal. **NOTE:** oversleeping is NEVER an acceptable excuse for tardiness.

Student Medication Policy

In keeping with the Pennsylvania Department of Health regulations and the Danville Area School District's medication policy, parents must submit a medication permit form for ALL medications. A physician's signature is required for prescription medications and for all over-the-counter medications to be given for 15 days or more.

All medications must be transported to school by a parent/guardian or an adult designated by the parent/guardian. Additionally, all medications must come to school in the original prescription bottle or packaging. No medications, prescription or over-the-counter, will be accepted if this procedure is not followed.

All medications, prescription and over-the-counter, will be stored in the health office. Except for asthma inhalers, epi-pens, and insulin (with physician order and parent/guardian permission to carry), no medications may be carried by the student or stored in a backpack, lunch or sports bag.

Medications, over-the-counter and prescription, remaining at the end of the school year must be picked up by a parent/guardian or an adult designated by the parent/guardian. Any medications remaining after the end of school on the last day will be destroyed.

Medication permit forms are available from the school nurse and are available on the district website, accessing Health Services at <https://www.danville.k12.pa.us/Page/296>.

The school nurses want to remind parents/guardians that there are very strict laws regarding the administration of medicine in any setting, not just schools. It is not our intent to make the medication situation difficult for the parent/guardian, but rather to ensure the safety of all concerned.

Sunscreen Use

In October of 2018, the PA School Code was amended to include sun protection measures for students. Section 1414.10 (2) of the PA School Code allows for the use of a non aerosol topical sunscreen product by students in school if:

1. The product is approved by the Food and Drug Administration,
2. the parent/guardian must submit a form allowing the student to use the topical sunscreen, and
3. the student must submit a form stating that they are aware of the proper use and safety precautions of the product and will handle it appropriately.

The school entity may rescind or restrict the use of the sunscreen if the student does not follow the school rules and/or the student is unwilling or unable to keep the non aerosol sunscreen product guarded from other students' use. The school entity must provide written notice to the parent/guardian if they rescind or restrict the use of the sunscreen. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has provided two forms for school entity usage that can be adapted to meet a school entity's requirements.

Student Dress and Inappropriate Attire (Dress Code)

The appearance of any young person is primarily the responsibility of the individual and his/her parents. The Middle School administration expects students to maintain the type of dress and grooming that does not interfere with the educational process of the school in accordance with School Board Policy 221.

Danville Middle School shares our culture's concern with the abuse of alcohol and drugs and does not allow students to wear clothing that depicts alcohol or drug use in a positive manner. This would include shirts which advocate through advertising that alcohol and/or drugs can have a positive effect on one's life.

Clothing considered inappropriate and thus prohibited, includes but is not limited to: bare midriffs, low cut shirts, shorts and shirts which expose undergarments or bare skin or an intertriginous area where two skin areas may touch or rub together, or such clothing is not at an appropriate length, spaghetti strap tops, excessively short skirts

or shorts, pajamas, slippers, bandanas, gang related clothing, sharp spiked jewelry and spiked cuffs, bracelets with inappropriate or vulgar language or clothing and accessories deemed inappropriate by administration. Because of safety and health requirements, bare feet are not permitted in school.

Finally, any clothing which has symbolism or words which can be construed as obscene, profane, racially, culturally, or religiously biased, cannot be worn in school. Many messages on clothing carry literal and implied messages. In such cases, the literal message may not be objectionable, but the implied message is, and it is therefore inappropriate to wear clothing with such messages in school. The Danville Middle School makes very clear that clothing with implied objectionable messages is not to be worn.

Types of clothing have become ways to present innuendo concerning sexual and traditional antisocial behavior. We, at Danville Middle School, believe our community's cultural beliefs indicate that school is not a place for sexual and unhealthy social innuendo. Therefore, students may not wear clothing presenting sexual innuendo or unhealthy social ideals.

Some examples of clothing in reference include:

- Liquor distillery product shirts;
- Brewing and distilled spirits companies' advertising clothing which portrays beer and liquor as positive;
- Shirts depicting sexual activity; and
- Shirts with double entendre messages concerning sexual or anti-social activity, or other content inappropriate for the school setting.

Utilizing the criteria listed in this section of the handbook, the school administration will make the final determination as to whether a student is/is not dressed appropriately for school. Students who come to school wearing inappropriate clothing will be directed to change into school appropriate clothing, if possible. If a change of clothing is not available, parents will be notified and asked to bring a change of clothing. If available, a t-shirt or other item of clothing will be provided by the school for the remainder of the school day. One warning will be provided. Second offenses will result in detention. Students will be held in the office until a change of clothing is available. Insubordination and repeated offenses involving dress code violations may result in suspension and revocation of student privileges.

Danville Middle School clearly believes that **head coverings** can be a detriment to the learning environment in the school, especially in the classroom. Hats, caps, bandanas, hooded shirts, visors, kerchiefs, and head coverings are not to be worn in the school building unless the head covering is directly related to one's traditional religious or cultural beliefs, or for a medical reason. Administrative approval should be sought for approval of these situations. All head coverings that do not meet these exceptions are to be placed in the students' lockers upon arrival to school. The wearing of head coverings will fall under the disciplinary measures consistent with dress code violations. From time-to-time, hats may be worn during special events approved by the principal.

*This Dress Code is not all-encompassing and Administration reserves the right to adapt or modify as necessary throughout the school year.

Food Services

The Food Service Department is a critical part of the Wellness program in the Danville Area School District (DASD). Nutritious breakfast and lunches are offered daily. At the secondary level, students can purchase additional items to accompany their lunch such as: milk, water, 100% juice, and nutritious extras. DASD promotes healthy eating habits; we strongly suggest that students do not bring soda to school.

Parents/guardians will be able to view their child's meal account balance and activity on-line as well as make electronic payments to their cafeteria account. Instructions can be found on the school district website under "Parents" and click on "School Cafe", from there either log in or create an account and follow the prompts. Or, money can be placed in the account on a regular basis by sending cash or a check with your child. Checks should be made payable to: DASD Cafeteria Fund. This payment can be made either in the morning prior/during breakfast or as the student goes through the line during lunch.

Students are assigned a PIN (Personal Identification Number) for their cafeteria account. At the end of the breakfast/lunch line, students enter this # and the cost of their purchases is deducted from their account.

Charging meals is not encouraged. However we realize that occasionally students forget their lunch money or lunch. Students in grades 6-12 can charge on their account. Charging of A la Carte items is not permitted.

Students are told at the register if they owe money, and negative balance slips may be sent home with students in grades K-8 for anybody who owes money in the cafeteria. Parents can sign up for email reminders of student balances at myschoolbucks.com.

The school district may pursue collection of negative account balances through appropriate legal measures. When a balance reaches \$25.00, the parent/guardian will receive a certified letter stating the amount of the negative account balance and will be given ten (10) days to remit payment. After that time, the students' account will be turned over to the District Magistrate for collection. All fees incurred by the magistrate in addition to the negative account balance will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

DASD operates under the direction of the National School Lunch/School Breakfast Programs and the USDA. Free and reduced-priced meals are available to families who meet the guidelines. A free/reduced meal application shall be sent home at the start of the school year and may be obtained in your school office or on the district website.

The district participates in the Offer vs. Serve program under which five (5) food items must be offered at lunch in the specified minimum amounts. Students may choose three, four or five items in order for the meal to be complete. If not, each item will be charged separately. The five food components include:

- Meat/Meat Alternate
- Grains/Bread
- Vegetables
- Fruit
- 1 Serving of Milk

Cafeteria menus are available in your school office or on the district website. Additional information can also be found on the district website at <https://www.danville.k12.pa.us/Domain/17>.

Snacks and drinks may be permitted beyond the lunch time on special occasions at the discretion of the classroom teacher or as required due to medical conditions. If the latter is the case, students must bring a verification note to school. Based on our concerns about the potential danger to some students, beverages marketed as “energy” drinks will not be permitted in school. Because of food allergies and sensitivities, parents and students are advised that snacks brought into the school for parties (birthdays, classroom parties, etc.) should come in a prepackaged label. **Chewing gum is not allowed in school; parents are asked to please support us in enforcing these rules.**

Consumption of **water** is encouraged throughout the school day. Students are permitted to carry a **CLEAR OR TRANSPARENT** water bottle with a lid to their classes. There are two bottle filling stations in the school that provide filtered water for student use. Proper hydration is necessary for good health and can be beneficial to the learning process. Additionally, student athletes are encouraged to hydrate throughout the day in preparation for practices and events. No other drinks besides water are permitted to be carried or consumed during regular school hours, with the exception of the scheduled lunchtime.

Grading Policy and Reporting Student Performance

Grading Scale:	A	92-100	Excellent
	B	83-91	Good
	C	74-82	Average
	D	65-73	Poor
	F	0-64	Failure

A report card minimum grade practice is in place at the Middle School. A grade for any class that is 50% or below will be recorded on report cards as a 50%. Progress reports, however, will show the actual grade the student has earned by the midpoint of any marking period. This practice will alert the student and parents of the problem at the midpoint when there is adequate time to turn student performance around. If a student is assigned an INCOMPLETE for a grading period, all work must be submitted to the teacher within 10 school days from the ending of the grading period.

Parents may view grades on our Sapphire Community Portal by accessing the DASD website at <https://www.danville.k12.pa.us/> and selecting "Parents" then "Sapphire Community Web Portal". Login information will be given to parents per their request by the Middle School office staff. Computers and assistance will be available during open house and parent conferences to sign up for the portal. To access, parents must type in their screen name and password; if an account has not yet been activated, a new activation code can be obtained from the office. This system is an excellent way to monitor students' progress. Grades are updated immediately when teachers update their grade books.

Progress reports are available at the midpoint of each marking period and **report cards** are at the end of each marking period. In addition to marking period grades, report cards also provide attendance information and teacher comments or concerns.

Parent/teacher conferences are formally scheduled during the school year (see the calendar on page 5 for dates) to discuss student progress. Parents are encouraged to contact individual teachers or teams to meet at any point in the school year when questions or concerns surface. **When a parent has a question or concern, the relevant teacher should be the first point of contact.** Teachers cannot take calls during their instructional time, but messages can be left at the office or teachers can be emailed (see staff directory on page 4). Arrangements for parent/teacher meetings can also be arranged through the school counselors.

A student must earn an overall average of 93% to be placed on the **honor roll**. All classes that are graded numerically are included in determining honor roll. Incomplete grades will preclude inclusion on the honor roll.

Successful completion of **summer school** will be required for passing to the next grade if students fail two or more core subjects (language arts, math, science, social studies) or if there are significant attendance concerns in combination with failing one core subject. Failure of four core subjects may result in grade retention. Danville's Cyber Program may be utilized as an alternative placement for students who do not successfully complete summer school and have significant behavioral concerns.

National Junior Honor Society

The Danville Middle School National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) is more than an honor roll. Students honored with membership must demonstrate commitment to five key areas: scholarship, service, leadership, citizenship, and character. To qualify for consideration to join NJHS, students must have a 93% or better cumulative grade point average after the third marking period of their 7th or 8th grade year. Students who meet this initial requirement are asked to complete a survey of both school and extracurricular activities. Upon completion of this survey, students are reviewed by the NJHS Faculty Council. This Council takes into consideration a student's completed survey, discipline records, and faculty input. Invitations are extended to those students who demonstrate the ideals held by NJHS and who are good citizens of the DMS school community.

Guidance Services

Students are alphabetically assigned to one of two Middle School counselors. Students can seek counseling on an individual basis and/or may be invited to participate in a group session with other students around a variety of topics that impact young adolescents' academic and social life at school. Parent permission is secured for student participation in group sessions.

In some circumstances there may be a need to change a student's class schedule after the start of a semester. If this change comes as a request from a student or parent/guardian, a written and signed note from the parent/guardian must accompany the request. Schedule changes will not be made if the request comes after the completion of five school days from the start of the semester. Not all requests can or will be honored even if they are submitted within the first five days of the semester.

It is very normal for middle school students to experience major changes in their attitudes and emotions. Students and parents are strongly encouraged to contact the Middle School counselors when/if difficulties arise.

School Police Officer

The Danville Area School District employs school police officers. Working across the entire school district, these officers promote a safe and healthy school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. These individuals are highly visible to the student population and encourage a positive school climate through frequent interaction with students and teachers. The school police officers may be called upon to address behavior that rises to the level of police involvement including violations of school weapons and controlled substances policy as well as violent or disruptive behavior.

Bullying/Harassment

Consistent with School Board Policy 247 and central to the mission of Danville Area School District is the establishment and maintenance of an environment in which the dignity and worth of all individuals is respected. Hazing activities and harassment behavior of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the district and are prohibited at all times.

For purposes of this procedure, hazing is defined as any activity that recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental health, physical health, or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or membership in or affiliation with any organization recognized by the Board.

Per School Board Policy 249, bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which has the effect of any of the following:

1. Substantial interference with a students' education
2. Creation of a threatening environment
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school

The administration at Danville Middle School encourages students who have been bullied or have observed bullying to promptly report all such incidents to a guidance counselor or a principal for investigation. Corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified and no retaliation shall occur as a result of a good faith report of bullying. Retaliation will result immediately in elevated consequences. Consequences for violations include any one or a combination of the following at the discretion of the administration:

- Counseling within the school
- Parental conference
- Loss of school privileges
- Transfer to another classroom or school bus
- Exclusion from school sponsored activities
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Referral to law enforcement official

Anonymous reports of bullying can be submitted through Safe 2 Say Something App accessible through the district's website under "students". All reports are taken seriously and will be investigated. It should be noted that falsely reporting an incident will result in disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment

It is the goal of the Danville Area School District to maintain a working and learning environment free from sexual harassment. Any student in the district, who is subjected to sexual harassment by District employees, agents, students, or by others in the course of his or her employment or as a result of his or her attendance at school, shall have the right to file a complaint under this policy.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title VII and IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. The following behavior constitutes prohibited sexual harassment for purpose of this policy:

1. Unwelcome sexual advance.
2. Requests for sexual favors.
3. Other unwelcome sexual advances or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:
 - a. Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly required of the recipient.
 - b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis of school or work related decisions affecting the recipients.
 - c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the recipient's work or school performance or of creating an intimidating hostile or offensive working or learning environment. Any student of this district who is found to have engaged in conduct constituting sexual harassment will be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion.

In addition, any student found to have violated this policy will be required to participate in educational activities related to sexual harassment as part of any discipline imposed. Determination of the appropriate disciplinary sanctions or educational requirements shall be based upon the circumstances of the individual case. If necessary, a student will be referred to local law enforcement.

Philosophy of Discipline

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (**PBIS**) is a proactive approach to rewarding appropriate behaviors school-wide. Schools that implement school-wide systems of positive behavior support focus on a team-based system approach and **teaching the desired student behaviors to all students in the school**. The benefits to school-wide behavior programs are noted as: increased attendance, student and teacher reporting of a more positive and calm environment, reduction in the proportion of students who engage in behavioral disruptions and reduction in the number of behavioral disruptions.

Schools that have been successful in building school-wide systems develop procedures to accomplish the following:

- Behavioral expectations are defined.
- Behavioral expectations are explicitly taught; it is not assumed that all students have the same understanding of what behaviors are expected and what they look like specific to middle school.
- Appropriate behaviors are acknowledged on a regular basis.
- Behavioral errors are corrected proactively by assisting the student in identifying which of the four rules have been violated and guiding the student in understanding why the behavior is unacceptable.
- Program evaluations and adaptations are made by a team of staff members committed to the improvement of the school as a whole.
- Administrative support and involvement are active and visible.
- Individual student support systems are integrated with school-wide discipline systems. This support is a process for establishing a positive culture in school.

Danville Middle School Rules

We believe in:

- Respect - classmates, staff, & property
- Integrity - honest, trustworthy & positive
- Success - prepared & engaged
- Empathy - helpful, kind, & thoughtful

Positive reinforcements:

1. Verbal praise
2. PBIS/RISE tickets and postcards for individuals
3. Classroom and/or team level rewards

Consequences*:

1. Warning
2. Lunch detention
3. Parent call/after-school detention
4. Student referral to office for Level 2 or 3 offenses

*Teachers exercise discretion about which level consequence to assign; the listing of consequences does not imply that a specific sequence must be followed.

Applications:

Behavioral expectations of students are applicable to activities beyond the school day and in other settings (i.e. school socials, extra-curricular activities, school-sponsored athletic events, school buses, etc.).

Level 1 Violations

Examples of mistakes to learn from (list is not limited to these items):

- Failure to be kind, respectful, responsible, and/or safe
- Failure to respect another's right to learn
- Failure to complete homework
- Unprepared for class
- Food or drink in an inappropriate place
- Hallway misbehavior, running, tripping, pushing, etc.
- In the hallway or bathroom without a pass
- Locker sharing
- Misbehaving for a substitute teacher
- Swearing or profanity
- Tardy to school or to class
- Talking during announcements
- Bus referral

Possible Consequences that will help students achieve success:

- Warning
- Lunch detention
- Parent call/after school detention
- Student referral to office
- Repeated Level 1 offenses will result in Level 2 or 3 consequences.

Level 2 Violations

Major Misbehavior

- This misbehavior generally disrupts the climate of the school and interferes with a student's right to a safe and secure learning environment.

Examples of mistakes to learn from (list is not limited to these items):

- Repeated Level 1 offenses
- Failure to fulfill consequences from Level 1 offense
- Bullying
- Verbal, physical, and/or sexual harassment
- Abuse of school property
- Improper language or gesture directed at others
- "Horse playing"
- Lying to a staff member
- Making a false report
- Skipping school or class
- Circulating defamatory notes
- Defiance
- Fighting (both parties involved in full fight)
- Leaving school property
- Smoking or possession of tobacco products, vape/juul charger, lighter, and/or matches (citation and fine)
- Stealing
- Internet misuse
- Involvement in severe situation (in school or on school bus)

Possible Consequences which will help students achieve success:

- Detention (after school)
- Suspension (In-school, Out-of-school, bus)
- Suspended computer privileges (for internet misuse); duration consistent with offense
- Work on behavior goals and plan with teachers, counselors, principal
- Other consequence option that is suited to the offense

Level 3 Violations

Serious Misconduct

- This misbehavior generally disrupts the climate of the school and interferes with a student's right to a safe and secure learning environment. Additionally, it affects the health and safety of the school community and can be illegal.

Examples of mistakes to learn from (list is not limited to these items):

- Continued Level 2 misbehavior
- Assault (completely one sided fight)
- Creating a dangerous situation, affecting health and safety of others (in school or on school bus)
- Drug and alcohol policy infraction (subject to police involvement)
- Repeated and blatant failure to comply with school rules when explicitly directed
- Inappropriate sexual conduct
- Making a false report that involves an outside source (such as 911 or setting off fire alarm)
- Profanity directed toward staff
- Theft and vandalism
- Threatening a staff member
- Hazing policy infraction
- Weapon policy violation

Possible Consequences which will help students achieve success:

- In-school (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS), or bus suspension
- In-school (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS), or bus suspension with behavior plan and/or action plan developed with student, parents, guidance counselors, and/or principal
- In-school (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS), or bus suspension with behavior plan and/or action plan, and police involvement; notification and recommendation made to the Superintendent
- Expulsion hearing before the school board

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism is the act of taking and using as one's own work, another's published writings or unpublished thoughts, ideas and/or writings. This definition includes computer programs, drawings, artwork and all other types of work, which are not one's own. Consequences will be dealt with at the teacher or office level.

Cheating is taking or giving any information or material which will be used to determine academic credit.

Examples of cheating include but are not limited to:

- Copying from another student's test or homework.
- Allowing another student to copy from your test or homework.
- Using materials such as textbooks, notes, or formula lists during a test without the teacher's permission.
- Collaborating on an in-class or take-home test without permission.
- Having someone else write a paper or assignment for you.

Cheating will be dealt with at the teacher or office level and may result in zero credit for the work as well as additional assigned consequences appropriate to the infraction.

The following serious offenses and consequences are regulated by school board policy:

Tobacco Policy

In accordance with Board Policy 222, the Board prohibits students from **possessing or using tobacco** at any time on school property, including all district buildings, grounds, athletic facilities, school vehicles and at all school activities. Tobacco is defined as a lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, and/or pipe, e-cigarettes, other lighted smoking product, and smokeless tobacco in any form including devices used for vaping. The carrying or possession of tobacco products is considered as serious as actual use. In accordance with state law, the district will cite students violating the tobacco policy, and upon conviction before the District Magistrate, the student will be fined and pay court costs. In addition, violation of this policy will result in a suspension from school and school activities on suspended days. The possession of matches and/or lighters is also prohibited and may result in school consequences.

Controlled Substances Policy

The Board prohibits students from **possessing or using controlled substances** at any time on school property, including all district buildings, grounds, athletic facilities, vehicles and at all school activities. Controlled substances are defined as:

- All dangerous controlled substances prohibited by law
- All alcoholic or malt beverages
- Any substance being represented as a drug or controlled substance
- "Look alike" drugs or non-controlled substances which have a stimulant or depressant effect on humans and/or which have a physical appearance substantially similar to that of a controlled substance
- Drug paraphernalia
- Any substance intended to alter mood
- Anabolic steroids
- Any prescription or patent drug, except those for which permission to use in school has been granted pursuant to Board Policy

In accordance with Board Policy 227, violation of the controlled substance policy will result in a suspension from school and school activities. In addition, participation in drug counseling, rehabilitation, testing or other programs may be required as a condition of reinstatement into the school's educational, extracurricular or athletic programs. Violation of this policy will incur police involvement.

Weapons Policy

The Board prohibits any student from **possessing, handling, or transporting any objects that can reasonably be considered a weapon or dangerous instrument (including look-alike weapons)** in any school building, on school premises, on any school bus, off the school grounds at any school activity, event, or function before, during, or after school hours. For the purposes of this policy, a weapon or dangerous instrument shall mean: any weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, and under the circumstances in which it is used is readily capable of causing death or serious physical injury or any items in the possession of a student which could do bodily injury or could be used to threaten bodily injury to another. Violation of the weapons policy will result in suspension or expulsion from school in accordance with Board Policy 218.1.

Suspensions and Expulsions

Suspensions and expulsions are permitted as necessary sanctions in addressing behavior that disrupts the climate of the school and interferes with a student's rights to a safe and secure learning environment, as well as behavior that affects the health and safety of the school community. Suspension and expulsion are defined and implemented in accordance with Board Policy 233.

Bus Transportation and Safety

Bus transportation is provided for the convenience of students and their families in accordance with School Board Policy 810. The bus driver is responsible for the safety of all students riding the bus, as well as other vehicles on the highway. It is imperative that students demonstrate respectful and responsible behavior when riding on the school bus. All rules that apply to students in the school building also apply to students on school buses. In addition, the following rules must be followed to ensure student safety:

- Buses are to be kept clean; there is to be no eating, drinking or chewing gum on buses.
- Students are not to throw anything on the bus or out of the bus windows.
- Students must remain seated when the bus is moving.
- All body parts are to remain inside the bus when windows are open.
- Students are to talk in quiet voices.
- Students exit the bus in single file from front to back.
- *Disruptive* use of electronic devices will result in confiscation.
- The rear door of the bus is to be kept locked except in the case of an emergency or at the direction of the driver.

Bus rule violations will be dealt with in the same manner and degree as in-school behavior violations. The same possible consequences apply. In addition, students can be suspended from the bus temporarily or permanently, depending on the number and severity of infractions. Parents are urged to support us in our effort to teach and maintain appropriate behavior on buses to ensure the safety of our students and drivers, as well as other vehicles on the highways and roads.

All requests to ride a bus other than the assigned route must be completed by submitting a "student transportation change form" located on the district website. This form can be accessed through the district homepage by clicking on "offices" and then selecting the "transportation" option. Send the completed form to the Middle School office prior to the requested date.

Student Support Mission Statement

The Danville Area School District (DASD) believes that all students can learn when given a strong foundation of educational excellence in cooperation with our surrounding community. Safe and stimulating teaching and learning environments have been created to provide students with the skills to become lifelong learners who are prepared for daily life in a constantly changing society. We believe our future depends on the mutual cooperation of the school, family, and community while providing equal opportunities for all individuals regardless of their exceptional needs. Every attempt is made to work as equal team members to encourage students to reach their full potential.

The Department of Student Support Services at DASD provides a wide range of educational experiences while providing equal opportunities to learn in order to meet each student's individual needs. Students with disabilities are included in regular education to the greatest extent possible. If special education services are necessary, the district makes every attempt to provide programming within DASD schools. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call your child's counselor or principal.

Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletics Association Rules and Eligibility

The Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletics Association (PIAA) governs school sports at middle and high school levels. Grades are checked for student athletes every Thursday. Students who are failing two or more core subjects are deemed ineligible to participate in athletic contests from Sunday to Saturday, the week after they are deemed ineligible. Students deemed ineligible are ineligible for the entire week. Rules and eligibility requirements are posted on the DASD web.

Danville Middle School Website

The DMS website will be updated regularly. Parents will be able to review the calendar of events, read about Home and School activities, and access relevant resources. Go to <https://www.danville.k12.pa.us/> and select Middle School.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records. The law applies to all schools which receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student, or former student, who has reached the age of 18 or is attending any school beyond the high school level. Students and former students to whom the rights have transferred are called eligible students.

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review all of the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of materials in education records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to inspect the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents and eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record commenting on the contested information in the record.

- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student before releasing any information from a student's record. However, the law allows schools to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties:
 - School employees who have a need to know;
 - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
 - Certain government officials in order to carry out lawful functions;
 - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - Individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas;
 - Persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may also disclose, without consent, "directory" type information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

Student Assistance Team and Privacy

The middle school Student Assistance Team (SAP) meets on a bi-weekly basis to review student academic performance on a case by case basis. The purpose of the team is to identify the various barriers to student learning that may be present in a student's situation, such as mental health concerns or substance abuse. The SAP team works directly with parents to identify potential community based supports that can be put in place to achieve student success. If you have a concern about your student's success and potential issues he or she may be facing and would like to make a referral to the SAP team, please contact your student's school counselor directly.

The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents certain rights with respect to educational records maintained by a public school entity. Information, which is collected and maintained by the school's Student Assistance Team (SAP), falls under FERPA's definition of education records. That law requires a public school entity to provide parents with an annual notice regarding their rights. The full text of the law and regulations is available in the Desk Reference Manual for Student Assistance Program Team Members: The Privacy Rights of Parents and Students.

A public school entity needs to take the following items into consideration when it is drafting its educational policies and procedures and the annual notice. These items which are adapted for SAP and presented for the SAP team's consideration, were abstracted from the Model Notification of Rights for Elementary and Secondary Institutions published in the November 21, 1996 Federal Register, effective December 23, 1996.

The education record, including SAP information, is available to the parent for review. The local policy may require the parent to submit the request in writing. The public school entity needs to spell out the procedures for parents and the parent has a right to expect that the access to information will occur within forty-five days, thirty days in the case of special education students. The school should do its part to make the records expeditiously available and provide parents with an explanation, if requested.

A parent who believes that any information in the education record is inaccurate or misleading may request that the information be changed. The parent simply needs to identify the information to be changed and specify why they believe the information is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to change the information as requested, the parent will be notified of the decision and the school is required to provide a hearing regarding the request to change the information. Details regarding the hearing procedures, which are outlined in FERPA, must be provided to the parent by the school.

No information in the SAP record may be released without the parent's specific written consent to anyone in the school except members of the student assistance team and other school officials who have a legitimate educational interest. School officials include teachers and other school staff determined by the school to have a legitimate educational interest. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. In the case of the SAP team process, liaisons from community drug and alcohol and mental health agencies who are not school employees, but who sit on the team and perform SAP responsibilities, have access to information as part of their responsibilities as team members consistent with a signed agreement with the public school entity and their agencies. The liaisons' role is to provide their expertise to other team members engaged in the student assistance process. The liaisons may not share any information discussed in the student assistance process to anyone, with the exception of other team members and school officials with a legitimate educational interest, without the parent's specific written consent.

Release of the education record, including SAP information, to other elementary and secondary schools is dependent upon the public school entity's board adopted policies and procedures which must be consistent with the conditions outlined in the FERPA regulations.

The parent also has the right under the law to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures of the school district to comply with the requirements for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The name and address of the federal office is: Family Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.

Special Education Services

The Danville Area School District is required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to ensure educational services are provided to students with disabilities. Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), or 504 plans, will be accommodated at all buildings. Parents who believe their child may be eligible for special education should contact the Danville Area School District Director of Special Education for further assistance.

PUBLIC NOTICE – EDUCATION RIGHTS OF HOMELESS CHILDREN & YOUTH

The Danville Area School District is actively seeking to enroll children and youth who are homeless. If you are homeless or know of a child or youth that is homeless and not attending school, please contact the building principal who will provide information and assistance during the enrollment process.

Who is considered homeless? Any child or youth not attending school who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence is considered homeless and includes those who are sharing housing with others due to loss of housing or economic hardship. It also includes children and youth who are living in hotels, campgrounds, emergency shelters, cars, bus stations, or other similar settings. If you are not sure, please call.

What are the education rights of homeless children and youth? Our schools provide equal and comparable access to all students regardless of their home living situation. Homeless children and youth have specific rights that include:

1. Immediate enrollment in school and, when desired or feasible, at the school of origin.
2. Prompt provision of necessary services such as transportation and meal programs.
3. Appropriate support services and programs for which they are eligible, such as programs for gifted, children with disabilities, vocational education, preschool, etc.
4. Academic assistance through the district's federally funded Title I program.
5. Parent or guardian involvement in school activities.

What is the school of origin? The term “school origin” means the school the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled. It is the district’s responsibility to consider the best interests of the child or youth when making a decision regarding what school he or she should attend. Consideration must be given to placement at the school of origin unless doing so is so contrary to the wishes of the parent or guardian.

What if there is a disagreement regarding school placement? The parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth (a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) may appeal the placement decision if the district makes a placement in a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth. The student will be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment was requested by the student or parent while an appeal is pending. The person indicated above will provide information and assistance regarding such an appeal.

No child or youth should be denied access to a free and appropriate public education.