

MONTOURSVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Elementary Student/Parent Handbook

Loyalsock Valley Elementary
3970 State Route 87
Montoursville, PA 17754
(570) 435-0446
(570) 435-3214 (FAX)

Lyter Elementary
900 Spruce Street
Montoursville, PA 17754
(570) 368-2614
(570) 368-3535 (FAX)

www.montoursville.k12.pa.us

2024-2025



August 22, 2024

Dear Parent or Guardian,

We would like to take this opportunity to wish students and their families a successful 2024-25 school year. Please know that we will make every attempt to keep your child (ren) safe and healthy, while continuing to provide them with a quality education. Your patience, understanding, and cooperation in achieving these goals is invaluable.

We hope this handbook provides you with useful information about our elementary program and our school district. Your individual elementary school will keep you up to date through teacher websites, school newsletters, text/email alerts, and parent fliers.

Should you have questions about our program, do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher, the school counselor or the building administrator.

Sincerely,

Mr. Darrin Feerrar, Principal (Lyter Elementary)

Mr. Tyler Blaise, Principal (Loyalsock Valley Elementary)

Quick Reference List

Website: <http://www.montoursville.k12.pa.us>

School Telephone Numbers:

- Loyalsock Valley Elementary School(570) 435-0446/Fax 570-435-3214
- Lyter Elementary School.....(570) 368-2614/Fax 570-368-3535
 - Please call the school offices before 12:00 PM with homework requests due to absences.

District Offices – Superintendent570-368-2491/ Fax 570-368-3501

Transportation570-368-2491 ext. 6200

Special Education Office570-368-2491 ext. 6400

Food Service Director.....570-368-2491 ext.4801

Special Note: Many of the rules and regulations included in the handbook directly reflect current Montoursville Area School Board Policy. The Montoursville Area Board of School Directors and administration review, revise and develop policies on a regular basis. Once approved, policy changes supersede those noted in the district calendar and building handbooks. All policies are posted on the district website at www.montoursville.k12.pa.us.

INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Montoursville Area School District is to provide comprehensive programs that emphasize the Pennsylvania and National Academic Standards. This will empower all students to use their individual abilities and capabilities to be lifelong learners and successful contributors to a global society.

Our Vision: Pride – Excellence – Tradition

STUDENT RIGHTS

A “right” is something which belongs to you and cannot be taken away by anyone. Your classmates and teachers have the same rights.

Here are some of your important rights:

- You have a right to be yourself at school. This means that you should not be treated unfairly based on how you look or because it takes you a little longer to get the right answer.
- You have a right to be respected and treated with kindness at school. This means that others should not laugh at, make fun of, or intentionally hurt your feelings.
- You have a right to be safe and secure at school. This means that no one should make you afraid to come to school. They should not hurt you or threaten to hurt you.
- You have a right to learn about yourself at school. This means you may talk about your ideas and feelings as long as it does not take away the rights of others.
- You have a right to be protected against sexual harassment. The law is clear that school districts have a duty to protect students from sexual abuse and harassment. It is the policy of the MASD to prohibit improper conduct of whatever kind, including sexual abuse and harassment of students, by fellow students, school employees, others who come in contact with students during school or through school activities. Students and school employees at our elementary schools should report any suspected violations of this policy to Mrs. Jenny Krepschaw or Mrs. Vanessa Lorson, our counselors. (School Board Policy 103)

We must be mindful that with these rights come responsibilities. We must assume the responsibility for our own behavior. Because we live in a democratic society, we must also assume the responsibility for protecting the rights of others.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTER NETWORK (POLICY 815)

Montoursville Area School District supports use of the Internet, electronic mail (email) for some grades, and other computer networks in the district’s instructional program as an integral part of learning and teaching process. **Refer to the district acceptable use of technology board policy for appropriate usage and consequences for inappropriate usage.**

Please note: Parents/guardians will need to sign a “Acceptable Use of Technology and Device Form” in order for a student to be issued and use a district student device. This form will be available for parents/guardians to sign electronically through the Parent Portal.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

(PA's school attendance laws and district policy has been changed in recent years. Please be sure to read it carefully.)

Regular attendance is instrumental for academic success and growth. The Compulsory Attendance Law of Pennsylvania states that when a child enters Kindergarten, he/she is now required to comply with the guidelines and regulations of the compulsory attendance laws. By law, the following reasons for absence are considered excused:

1. **Illness of student**
2. **Death in the immediate family**
3. **Reasons of emergency nature**
4. **Preadvised doctor and dental appointments**
5. **Authorized school activities**
6. **Approved family educational trips.**

In case of absence, the following procedure should be followed:

- Students who have been absent from school must submit a dated excuse signed by the parent/guardian or doctor ***immediately following the absence.***
- These excuses must be submitted to the school office immediately following the absence. Excuses may be submitted via a dated written excuse or an email (please see below under AUTOMATED ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATION).
- Excuses not received by the Office within **three days of the absence** may be recorded as unlawful. After three days of unlawful absence, a letter of warning is issued to the parent or guardian. Any additional unlawful absence beyond the warning may result in legal action, contact by the School Outreach Coordinator, and/or contact by Children and Youth Services.

In the case of chronic or irregular absences without a sound reason, the school may require an excuse from a certified physician for any future absence(s) in order to comply with compulsory school attendance laws.

Chronic absences or ongoing discipline concerns may also result in the student not participating in school-sponsored field trips/activities.

We encourage you to try to schedule your child's dental and doctor's appointments around school hours. If that is not possible, please send a note on the day your child needs to be dismissed. Then, report to the Office to sign him/her out. ****We strongly encourage that parents/guardians ask the physician for an excuse for absence each time your child is absent for an appointment and submit this physician excuse to the school office.****

You may be excused only for those religious holidays now recognized by the PA Department of Education. Any student wishing to be excused for religious holidays must have his/her parent/guardian contact the Principal in writing beforehand.

AUTOMATED ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATION

Parents/guardians will receive an automated call and email informing them that their child/children is/are absent from school via our Parent Notification System. An automated phone call will be placed to the primary contact person listed in the Parent Portal/Parent Notification System. In addition, an email will be sent to the primary contact person. Parents/guardians will be able to email an excuse for absence simply by replying to the automated email message and following the directions to supply the school with the required information. Parents may still supply a written note for an excuse for absence if preferred.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL TRIPS: PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL

Families planning a trip during the school year that will require a student to miss school time must complete a Family Educational Trip Form **at least three days prior to the trip.** For the absences to be considered an excused absence, the parent/guardian must provide an educational purpose/value to the

trip. This rationale must be stated on the Educational Trip Form. **Failure to submit a Family Educational Trip Form and/or providing an educational rationale to the trip will result in the absence to be marked as unlawful.** Family Educational Trip forms are available from the school office or can be accessed via the district website (www.montoursville.k12.pa.us). On the website, click on “Parents” along the top menu bar. Next click on “Forms.”

- *A student may only be excused for a maximum of two trips per year and up to a total of 10 days per year for a Family Educational Trips. These absences will count as part of the districts’ attendance policy.*

Family Educational Trips will not be approved during the days of PSSA testing for students in grades 3 and 4.

TARDINESS

It is important for children to arrive to school on time each morning. Children arriving after the late bell will be marked as tardy (see each school’s *Key Information at a Glance* handout for each school’s start times). Those with chronic **unexcused** tardiness may face disciplinary action by school administrators and/or the attendance officer. Doctor and dentist appointments will be marked as excused legal tardiness.

WITHDRAWAL

When a **withdrawal** from school is necessary due to a move out of the attendance area/school district, parent(s)/guardian(s) must supply the school with the exact date of withdrawal, their new address, and the name of the school district to be entered. A student withdrawal form must then be completed by the withdrawing parent(s)/guardian(s).

TRANSFER

The school laws of Pennsylvania require that accurate records be kept of all pupils in each school. This is possible only with the full cooperation of parents. **Parents must report:** (1) Any **change of address** within the school system and (2) the **date of withdrawal**, if the family is moving from the district.

MCKINNEY – VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATION PROGRAM

MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is authorized under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.) (McKinney-Vento Act). The McKinney-Vento Act was originally authorized in 1987 and most recently re-authorized in December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).¹ The McKinney-Vento Act is designed to address the challenges that homeless children and youths have faced in enrolling, attending, and succeeding in school.

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, educational agencies must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youths. Homeless children and youths must have access to the educational and related services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held. In addition, homeless students may not be separated from the mainstream school environment. Local Educational Agencies are required to review and undertake steps to revise laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as barriers to the identification, enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths.

The law indicates that the LEA liaison shall ensure that all homeless children, youth and families are identified through coordinated activities with other entities.

DEFINITION OF HOMELESS (MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT SEC. 725(2); 42 U.S.C 11435(2)): CHILDREN WHO LACK A FIXED, REGULAR, AND ADEQUATE NIGHT TIME

RESIDENCE:

"Doubled up" - Sharing the housing of others due to the loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reasons.

Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds, due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations.

Living in emergency or transitional shelters.

Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live.

Migratory children living in above circumstances

Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings

Unaccompanied Youth - Children or youth who meets the definition of homeless and not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Residency and Educational Rights:

Students who are in temporary, inadequate and homeless living situations have the following rights:

Immediate enrollment in the school they last attended or the school in whose attendance area they are currently staying even if they do not have all of the documents normally required at the time of enrollment;

Access to free meals and textbooks, Title I and other educational programs and other comparable services including transportation;

Attendance in the same classes and activities that students in other living situations also participate in without fear of being separated or treated differently due to their housing situations.

When a student is identified as being McKinney-Vento eligible, staff will:

Assist with enrollment, monitor school attendance and arrange transportation (preK-8 students)

Provide school supplies and other school related materials as needed

Advocate for and support students and families through school and home visits

Set clear expectations for student behavior, attendance and academic performance

Assist students/families access with community services

Assist students/families with access to tutoring, special education, and English language learner resources

Assist students so they can participate in sports, field trips, and school activities regardless of their ability to pay or to provide their own transportation.

For additional information, contact Mr. Daniel Taormina, LEA Homeless Liaison at 570-368-2491.

<u>A WORD TO STUDENTS ABOUT RULES</u>
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School Staff will instruct students on expected behaviors in such settings as the classroom, hallway, bathroom, playground, cafeteria, and the bus. While the focus is on promoting positive school-wide behavior, there will be instances where inappropriate behaviors occur. Consequences for inappropriate behavior will be directly related to the behavior and will provide a learning opportunity for the student.

Examples of possible consequences/learning opportunities are listed below:

Re-teaching

Conference w/School Counselor

Parent Contact/Conference

Loss of Privileges

Conference with the Building Administrator

In or Out-of-School Suspension

Severely disruptive behavior will result in the immediate removal of the student from the situation and a conference with the building administrator.

The classroom teacher and/or principal will determine the appropriate intervention strategies for each situation on an individual basis. All Federal and State guidelines regarding students who are identified and/or protected by the Americans with Disabilities Act will be followed. Certain behaviors are also subject to federal and state laws as well as District policies, therefore, when addressing these behaviors, district policies and state and federal laws will supersede this document. Copies of MASD policies are available on the school district website.

SCHOOL - WIDE BUILDING RULES

Keep hands, feet and objects to myself

Walk in the building

Listen and follow directions

Treat people and property with care

Use kind words and quiet voices when speaking

NON-NEGOTIABLE RULES

Because of their serious nature, contact will be made with the parent/guardian on the first offense.

Consequences for infractions of these rules will follow school district policy and procedures.

ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR – BULLYING (PHYSICAL AND/OR VERBAL):

Constant or serious fighting, continued use of profanity, or consistent inappropriate language toward others, pushing, throwing objects or any act that can bring physical or emotional harm to another individual will be considered a physical or verbal act of abuse and will not be permitted. (Policy #249)

POSSESSION OF POTENTIAL WEAPONS:

As stated in school board policy, you are prohibited from possessing weapons or lookalikes on school buses or on school property without the express permission from the administration to possess and/or use the weapon in conjunction with a lawfully supervised school activity. A weapon is defined as any implement or instrument capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. Special Note to Parents/Guardians: This policy includes ALL types of knives and lookalikes. (Policy #218.1)

EXTORTION / VANDALISM / STEALING:

You are not allowed to obtain money, lunch items or personal belongings by force or undue pressure from another student. Remember, every student has a right to private property and the right not to be threatened by anyone. Leave people's things alone - hands-off.

You are not allowed to destroy, damage or misuse school property. You are expected to take care of equipment, textbooks and materials the school lets you use. Do not write on desks, walls, textbooks, or any other property.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES:

To protect each of you, the school district prohibits the use/possession or distribution of illegal drugs or alcoholic beverages on school property. In addition, students are not permitted to possess or use tobacco products in the school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses or at any school sponsored activity. (Policy #123.1/227) "The possession and/or use of e-cigarettes/vaporizing device in the Montoursville Area School District is prohibited. Possession and/or use will result in the same consequences as outlined in Board Policy #222.

HARASSMENT:

Harassment of any kind is not acceptable. The district's harassment policy and complaint procedures can be found on the district website as Policy #103 under the school board tab.

***Because of their serious nature, these rule infractions may require parental/guardian involvement on the first offense.**

SEARCH AND SEIZURE:

Student desks and lockers may be inspected from time to time to ensure that they are being cared for and that the contents are in no way harmful to the students and any other persons in the school building. Any illegal/inappropriate material may be seized. Students may also be asked to empty their pockets, backpacks, and purses to search for controlled or criminal material if there is reasonable cause to do so. Parents will be contacted and made aware of the reasons for the search.

DISOBEDIENCE:

DISOBEDIENCE MEANS REFUSING TO DO WHAT YOU ARE TOLD:

While you are at school, in the classroom, on the playground, and on a school bus, you are expected to treat with respect the people who work at the school and follow their directions.

BUS ISSUES

Please talk with your child about proper bus behavior. It is imperative for the safety of all the children on board the bus, that the driver is not distracted by the poor behavior of any student. If this should occur, your child may find his/her bus riding privileges suspended. The bus driver or principal will notify you if this must happen.

Students will only be permitted to ride the bus to which they are assigned and rostered. Requests to ride home with another student on different bus or ride on a different bus will not be approved.

SCHOOL BUS SURVEILLANCE CAMERA NOTICE

Students and parents/guardians should be aware that Montoursville Area School District school buses and vans have cameras monitoring bus passengers. The cameras record both **audio and video** at different locations throughout each bus/van. Camera recordings are reviewed by school officials for discipline and safety purposes and may be provided to police or used in school disciplinary proceedings. Students should understand that their actions while on school buses and vans will be recorded; therefore, they should have no expectation of privacy when riding school buses/vans. Riding school buses/vans constitutes consent to the recordings by the surveillance cameras.

APPROPRIATE BUS CONDUCT

Students who ride the bus are expected to:

- **Stay in their seats while the bus is in motion**
- **Speak in low voices, using appropriate language at all time**
- **Keep head, arms and hands inside the bus**
- **Keep hands and feet to themselves**
- **Cooperate with the bus driver**
- **Act in a respectful manner**

<p>Lack of self-control in following the bus riding procedures may result in a discipline report being filed by the bus driver with the building administrator. Disciplinary action may include the loss of bus riding privileges.</p>

BUILDING SURVEILLANCE CAMERA NOTICE

The Montoursville Area School District uses electronic video surveillance system in its schools. This system covers the interior and exterior of the district's buildings and grounds to protect district property and ensure the safety of students, staff, community, and visitors. District surveillance cameras will only be utilized in public areas where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy and in areas deemed to be at risk for either vandalism or student misconduct. Any activities detected through use of video surveillance cameras that present a violation of school rules, breach of security, or possible criminal activity will be reported immediately to the appropriate authority and appropriate disciplinary action will be administered and/or criminal charges filed consistent with Board policy and procedures. Appropriate signage will be posted at entrances to the school campus and/or at major entrances into school buildings notifying students, staff and the general public of the District's use of surveillance cameras.

BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

The School District supplies textbooks, technology, and supplementary materials for student use throughout the school year. These supplies are to be treated with respect by the students and each student is responsible for the appropriate care of these supplies when they are issued to them for use. If loss or willful damage occurs to school district supplies, the pupil may be responsible to pay for replacement of the item(s).

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES (PEDs)

In accordance with the School District's Acceptable Use Policy, students are permitted to bring certain electronic devices to school if they adhere to school policies for their use. Students are not required to have a personal electronic device, but rather this policy allows for those who choose (with parental permission) to bring a device to school. Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) may only be used, during the school day, with the permission of the classroom teacher/school personnel, while under the supervision of school personnel, and only for educational purposes at the discretion of school district personnel.

Cell phones are included as part of this PED policy. Cell Phones brought to school must be turned off as students enter the school and remain off until students have exited. Students wishing to use Apps or functions on their cell phones during the school day must adhere to the guidelines stated above pertaining to PEDs.

Students bringing a PED to school, on school grounds, or at a school sanctioned activity assume all responsibility for the security and protection of the personal property from damage, destruction, or loss.

Students using their own device must access the internet through the district network to comply with The Child Internet Protection Act. Violations of this school policy may result in confiscation and loss of privileges. The School District Acceptable Use Policy applies to the use of all technology (school purchased or personal devices) while on school district property.

SCHOOL DRESS CODE

The Montoursville Area School District realizes that proper student dress and grooming habits are best learned at home under the guidance and supervision of the parents or guardians; therefore, the school does not wish to dictate what clothes students must wear. However, the school must provide the best possible educational climate for the understanding and development of good grooming habits. It is with this in mind that the following restrictions have been adopted:

- No bare feet (footwear must be worn at all times).
- No clothing, buttons or other insignia if they are intended to mock, ridicule or otherwise deliberately demean or provoke others because of race, religion, individual views or national origin.
- No clothing that presents safety hazards or interferes with the educational process.

- Hats may not be worn in the building.
- Clothing that inappropriately exposes body areas may not be worn. Appropriate clothing must cover undergarments.
- Students may not wear clothing that promotes/advertises the use of violence or the use of drugs including alcohol.
- ***Sandals with backs are permissible—(no flip-flops)***

As a matter of general policy, the Montoursville Area School District expects that all students be neat and clean in appearance when in attendance at school. The District believes that the responsibility for seeing that children meet these standards of dress ultimately rests with the parents or guardians. The principal and teachers of each building are responsible for enforcing the regulations governing the proper dress of the students in their school.

The administration holds the right to determine whether clothing is inappropriate for school. Students who are in violation of this policy will be asked to exchange inappropriate clothing for suitable attire. In cold and inclement weather, provisions should be made so that children are not only outfitted in the proper type of outer clothing, but also the proper articles for in-school wear. Snow boots, heavy insulated slacks and other types of outer clothing should not be worn inside during the school day.

BRINGING THINGS TO SCHOOL

Toys, electronic games, Pokemon/trading cards, fidget spinners, and other types of toys ARE NOT to be brought to school. The only time a toy should come to school is when a teacher asks you to do so or when permitted for special occasions (like for Show and Tell). You will assume responsibility for any item brought to school. However, we do recognize that some students have a long bus ride to and from school and these items help the time pass more quickly. Therefore, if these items are brought to school, they need to remain in your backpack while school is in session. ***The school will not be held responsible if anything is lost, stolen, or broken.***

RECESS/PLAYGROUND GUIDELINES

To maintain satisfactory order and conduct, and to ensure maximum safety, the following playground rules will be observed by all students and enforced by school personnel.

- Dress in appropriate clothing for the weather throughout the year
- No rough playing including wrestling, tackle football, battle ball, karate, carrying other students, etc.
- No toys or play items from home.
- Use all equipment in a safe manner.
- Get the permission of the adult on duty before going back into the school during recess.
- Line up quickly and quietly as soon as the bell rings or when you hear a whistle blown by the adult on duty.
- Play only in/on those areas designated as safe by the adult on duty. Do not play in walkways. Do not run on the blacktop.
- Balls on the blacktop area should be limited to those used for 4-square and basketball.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment):

The PSSA measures skills in English-Language Arts and Mathematics for students in grades 3 and 4. Every student who attends public school in PA is required to take the PSSA. Classroom instruction across all grade levels is designed to help prepare the students for these assessments.

Grades 3 & 4: Specific information on the PSSA will be sent home with your child prior to the testing window.

- **PSSA ELA (Reading/Lang. Arts)** will be administered **April 21-25, 2025.**
- **PSSA Mathematics** will be administered **April 28-May 2, 2025.**

It is vital that your child be in school during this testing window. Please feel free to contact your building principal if you would like more information.

REMINDER: Family Educational Trips will not be approved during the days of PSSA testing for students in grades 3 and 4.

For more information on the state standards, PA Common Core and PSSA assessments, go to www.pde.state.pa.us.

SPECIAL AREAS

In addition to the core instruction students receive in language arts, reading, mathematics, science, and social studies, all students will be instructed in the following Special Areas at least once every six days (Music will occur twice in a six-day cycle for students in grades 1-4).

- Music
- Art
- Physical Education
- Library Technology and Library Book Exchanges
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)

MTSS (Multi-Tier System of Support)

MTSS is an intervention and acceleration program that provides students with additional instruction in small groups in their area(s) of difficulty and/or strength, whether it is academic or behavior. Our school staff provides research-based interventions during school hours. There is on-going progress monitoring of the student during throughout the intervention, using a variety of assessments and tools. By using more efficient and appropriate targeted instructional techniques, we can move all students towards proficiency in all academic areas.

For more information on the MTSS program, please call the school office and ask to speak with Mrs. Metzger (MTSS teacher-Loyalsock Valley), Mrs. Julia Edler (MTSS teacher- Lyter), your school counselor, or the building administrator.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The Montoursville Area School District has the English Language Learners (ELL) Program for students whose primary language is not English. Students identified as needing ELL support may receive assistance from our certified ELL teacher. English language learners are encouraged to participate in all academic and extracurricular activities offered by our District. Interpreters are available for parent conferences and meetings and may be scheduled by contacting the school office.

COUNSELOR

The school counselor is available to all students. In addition to coordinating our 4th grade peer mediation program, our counselors also teach social and emotional skill lessons at the first, second and third grade levels and may meet with students individually or in small groups for problem-solving lessons. Call the school to set-up appointment with the school counselor.

L. Valley (Mrs. Jenny Krepshaw) - 570-435-0446

Lyter (Mrs. Vanessa Lorson) - 570-368-2614

CONFIDENTIALITY & SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Student confidentiality is important to our school counselors; they follow all professional standards as well as federal and state laws. All information shared is confidential except in the instances of the suspicion of abuse or neglect, harm or threats to harm self or others, and any court order or other legal proceedings.

These exceptions to confidentiality are required by law.

HEALTH SERVICES AND REGULATIONS (SCHOOL NURSE)

Each elementary school has a Licensed Practical Nurse on staff under the direct supervision of a Registered School Nurse. The school nurses/LPNs will take care of any ill or injured student.

In the event a student needs to take **medications at school**, the school nurse must be contacted by the parent/guardian. The Department of Public Welfare and MASD policies specify required guidelines that must be strictly followed which may include medical orders from a licensed physician and medications in their original containers.

CLASSROOM/BIRTHDAY TREATS AND DELIVERIES

All school classroom treats for birthday or other treats provided by parents should be pre-planned with the child's teacher. All treats and baked goods brought in to school to share with other children for birthdays, parties, etc. **must be pre-packaged, store bought**. **No homemade baked goods/treats will be permitted**. Due to the increasing number of students with food allergies and other medical issues, this will help to ensure the well-being of all our students. Parents are encouraged to provide nutritious snacks such as popcorn, veggies, fruit, granola, etc. In addition, parents/guardians must supply the paper goods needed to serve the snack as these items are not available by the teachers for such purpose. Parents should not feel obligated to provide a birthday treat for their child's class.

Invitations for birthday parties and other parties may only be distributed at school if there is an invitation for every child in the class. Deliveries of gifts for students such as balloons or flowers will be kept in the office until the end of the school day, such items are not permitted to go home on the school bus.

SPECIAL EDUCATION:

Parents of students who suspect that their child has a disability and is in need of special education may request a multidisciplinary team evaluation of their child through a written request to the building principal or Mr. Timothy Hanner, Supervisor of Special Education. For additional information pertaining to special education services, please refer to the Montoursville Area School District website at www.montoursville.k12.pa.us or contact the Office of Special Education at 570-368-2491, ext. 6400.

PTO

You will receive monthly updates in the school newsletter from our PTO including the date and time of the meetings. Our PTO is comprised of parents at each school, and your support is vital to the programs here at school. The PTO fundraising helps provide assemblies, field trips, special events, and various activities throughout the year. **Volunteers are always needed and welcomed. All volunteers are required to supply the school with copies of their appropriate clearances in accordance with state guidelines.**

CAFETERIA

In order to make the lunch as pleasant as possible, we need your help. As you may know, our lunch times are sometimes noisy. We need everyone's cooperation to make lunch a pleasant time to eat lunch. Please follow these rules:

- If you are waiting in line to get your lunch, talk in a low tone of voice with a neighbor as you wait patiently for your turn.
- Get everything you need for your lunch the first time through the line.
- Carry your tray carefully back to your table with two hands.
- Use good table manners while eating and talk quietly with a neighbor.
- Clean up your own area and pick up any food/paper from the floor when you are told to do so.
- Line up quietly when dismissed from the table and deposit all trash in the garbage can.
- Walk quietly in the hallways.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH:

Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, **one breakfast and one lunch will be available daily FREE for ALL STUDENTS**. Students may elect to purchase a second breakfast (or lunch), a la carte items, milk, or snacks for an additional cost.

All students wishing to purchase breakfast must go immediately to the cafeteria for breakfast prior to 8:15 AM.

Second Breakfast/Lunch Prices:

Breakfast	Regular - \$1.10
Lunch	Regular - \$2.60

POINT OF SALE:

A "Point of Sale" system has been implemented in the Montoursville Area School District's cafeterias. Funds can be deposited into your child's account regardless of meal status (free, reduced, or full pay) and can be used for full meals and/or individual food purchases. We encourage you to maintain a positive balance of funds in your child's account. Confidentiality is maintained regardless of the student's meal classification (free, reduced or full pay). **Deposits cannot be accepted without the student's name, PIN, and the amount of the deposit listed on the envelope**. Deposits may also be made electronically via an outside provider (NOTE: electronic deposits may be subject to a surcharge fee per transaction). This information can be obtained via the district website: (follow the tabs for "District" > "Food Service") <https://www.montoursville.k12.pa.us/district/departments/food-services/schoolcafe/>

Make cafeteria checks payable to: MASD Cafeteria.
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STUDENT LUNCH ACCOUNTS-

Parents and students will be kept abreast of their child's student meal account balance as it nears a low balance. Verbal reminders to the student as well as parent contacts will be made by cafeteria staff as necessary to maintain a positive lunch account balance. Parents may request this information from the head cook at any time. **Charging/borrowing will not be permitted for any second breakfast or second lunch and a la carte items (snacks, etc.).**

Questions about the Point of Sale System or Borrowing Policy may be directed to the Food Services Director at 368-2491 (ext. 4801).

<u>SAFETY AND BUILDING SECURITY</u>
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The Montoursville Area School Board approved the placement of security officers at the front doors of each of our elementary school buildings.

- **Building Visitor Procedures** – We require visitors to present a government issued photo identification (i.e., Driver's license) upon arrival at any of our school buildings. Our Visitor Management software logs visitors and retrieves data from multiple databases to help our employees make informed decisions about who may be admitted into our schools.
- Teachers will be required to provide the School Security with a list of visitors expected during the day.
- **Visitors/Parent Volunteers, not on a list, will be brought to the Principal's attention. Any volunteers who help in the school/classroom or chaperone a field trip/special event during school hours will be required to provide copies of their current Act 34, 114, and 151 clearances. Contact the school office for guidelines/procedures.**

- The security officers will issue badges to all visitors.
- The School Security personnel will be responsible for the signing in/out all adult/student visitors in the Visitor Management software.
- The Montoursville Area School District and the Montoursville Borough jointly employ a Montoursville Police Officer (School Resource Officer) to serve in the capacity of school resource officer at all district facilities. Montoursville Area School District employs armed security personnel to monitor each school campus. Additionally, each elementary school has Main Entrance Security personnel.
- All staff have been informed of the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. Your child's safety is our first concern. All our actions in responding to an emergency are made with that in mind.
- If for any reason we need to evacuate our school for an emergency and it is not safe for your child to reenter the building, we will bus them to a safe location. You should listen to the local radio station for specific information. Your child's teacher will remain with your child until every one of them is safely on their way home.

All students arriving after the start of the school day and all visitors when permitted must enter through the front doors and sign-in at the security officer/main office counter.

ARMED SECURITY PERSONNEL - Additionally, the Montoursville Area School District employs armed security personnel to monitor each school campus.

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

If you wish to anonymously report suspicious or illegal activities on district property or at district events you may call the School Resource Officer – (Montoursville Police) at (570) 368-3554 or e-mail district security at lstelene@montoursville.k12.pa.us. (Loyalsock Valley) or jwhipple@montoursville.k12.pa.us (Lyter).

If an immediate response is necessary, please call 911. All information will be kept confidential.

EMERGENCY /NATURAL DISASTER

If an emergency should arise when the students are in school, appropriate action will be taken to protect the health and safety of each one.

Emergency Contingency Plans:

1. If time permits, students will be returned to their home *via* normal dismissal procedures.
2. If the emergency is such that the best location for students is the school building, all students will be housed in the facility and cared for by the professional staff.
3. If an emergency exists where the students are in imminent danger, they will be evacuated and taken to another site (such as another school), which will be determined by the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

In the event of an emergency, parents are requested to listen to their radio or television for specific details regarding the care of their children. When possible, the District will also issue a telephone alert, using the district's notification system or posted on the district website at www.montoursville.k12.pa.us. All actions to be taken in emergency situations will be given directly from the District Administration Office.

In the event an evacuation of your child's school is warranted, you will be notified via the district's global communication network. At that time, you will be given information regarding the situation. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL. In the event you are asked to come and pick up your child, you will be directed via the Global Communication System to the district's Reunification Site.

Inclement Weather/Emergency

When bad weather conditions develop during the night, School District personnel assume the responsibility for making the decision as to whether schools will open at regular time, open on a delay, or

be closed. Announcements will be made via the District's notification system, and the District's Web site, www.montoursville.k12.pa.us, beginning at approximately 6:00 a.m. The announcements may also be made over select local radio and television stations. Should inclement weather make it necessary to delay the opening of school or close early during the school day, announcements will be made via the same outlets as to the times of arrival or dismissal.

The policy of the District is to keep schools open, if reasonably possible, and thereby continue to follow the established school calendar for the school term. On the morning of a delayed opening, parents are requested not to bring children to school prior to the announced time. In case of early dismissal, be sure children have a procedure to follow, e.g., go to a neighbor, know where a house key is located, call parents during the school day, etc.

IMPORTANT DATES

REPORT CARD ISSUE DATES

Report Cards November 25 March 17 June 5

Parent-Teacher conferences will take place on November 25 & 26, 2024.

Spring conferences will be held April 17, 2025, for only those students whose teacher identifies a need for an additional parent conference.

INTERIM REPORT PERIODS:

Interim report periods for student progress will be issued three times during the school year. Report cards will be sent home in your child's backpack on the dates above.

DISTRICT CALENDAR:

The district calendar and calendar of events is available on the school district's website:

www.montoursville.k12.pa.us

MASD School Board Policy- # 218.1 Weapons

August 10, 2004

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

Weapon - the term shall include but not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, non-chuck stick, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon, and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

Possessing - a student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker; under the student's control while on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school, or while the student is coming to or from school.

The Board prohibits students from possessing and bringing weapons and replicas of weapons at any time into any school district buildings, onto school property, to any school sponsored activity, and onto any public vehicle providing transportation to school or a school sponsored activity.

The school district may/shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law. *The Superintendent may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.*

In the case of a student with disabilities, the Superintendent shall take all necessary steps to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

The Superintendent or designee shall report the discovery of any weapon prohibited by this policy to the student's parents/guardians and to local law enforcement officials.

The Superintendent or designee shall report all incidents relating to expulsion for possession of a weapon to the Department of Education.

MASD School Board Policy- # 249 Bullying/Cyberbullying

rev. September 13, 2022

The Montoursville Area School District is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying by district students.

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantial interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

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

- The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by district students.
 - The Board encourages students who believe they or others have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee.
 - Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the building principal, or to put the complain in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally, and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of the violation of this policy.
 - The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective or preventative action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of bullying brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be bullying under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies.
 - Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination- Every report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination are identified, the Title IX Coordinator shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.
 - Confidentiality - Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy and the district's legal and investigative obligations.
 - Retaliation - Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of bullying or participation in an investigation of allegations of bullying is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action
- Delegation of Responsibility

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

- The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.
- The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students.
- The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.
- District administration shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School Report:
 1. Board's Bullying Policy
 2. Report of bullying incidents.
 3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

Guidelines

The Code of Student Conduct, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within each school building and on the district website.

Education

The district may develop, implement and evaluate bullying prevention and intervention programs and activities. Programs and activities shall provide district staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.

Consequences for Violations

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include:

1. Counseling within the school.
2. Parental conference.
3. Loss of school privileges.
4. Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.
5. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
6. Detention.
7. Suspension.
8. Expulsion.
9. Counseling/Therapy outside of school.
10. Referral to law enforcement officials.

MASD School Board Policy- # 815 Acceptable Use of Digital Technologies

August 11, 2020

The Board recognizes the need to establish rules and regulations for the use by students, staff and other authorized users of district-owned or issued technology resources, consistent with the educational and operation goals of the district.

For purposes of this policy and the accompanying administrative guideline, **district-owned or issued technology resources (district technology resources)** shall mean:

1. All networks, servers and telecommunications systems maintained or operated by the district;
2. All district telephone, cellular phone, voicemail, electronic mail, intercom, and Internet resources;
3. All district-owned or issue hardware devices such as computers, laptops, tablets, telephones, cellular phones, fax machines, printers, copiers, scanners, etc.;
4. All web-based and cloud-based storage; and
5. Web and cloud-based applications provided by the district through a third party.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, consistent with the general guidelines listed below, governing the acceptable use of district technology resources.

The use of district technology resources shall at all times be in accordance with applicable law and other Board policies and administrative guidelines.

The use of district technology resources is a privilege, not a right, which may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct or violation of the terms outlined in this Board policy or the accompanying Administrative Guideline.

District technology resources shall be used primarily for school, district employment, or approved educational-related activities only. Limited incidental personal use is permitted, so long as such use otherwise complies with this policy and the accompanying administrative guideline, and further provided that such limited incidental personal use does not interfere with and is not disruptive to district or school operations or another user's use of district technology resources.

The district reserves the right to monitor, track, and document use of any activity conducted on, over and through district technology resources to the extent permitted by law.

The district further reserves the right to prevent unauthorized, inappropriate or illegal use of district technology resources, and to administer appropriate discipline to users who violate this policy or the accompanying administrative guideline.

Discipline could include, but is not limited to, usage restrictions, loss of access privileges, restitution, referral to law enforcement, and/or any applicable consequence outlined in a student handbook, collective bargaining agreement, or Board policy/administrative guidelines, as appropriate under the circumstances.

Users of district technology resources shall have no expectation that their activity on or files or communications stored on or sent through such resources will be private; this includes, but is not limited to, anything that is created, stored, sent, deleted, received or displayed on, over or through district technology resources.

The district has the ability to collect, track and store data, such as IP addresses which identify technology devices using and communicating over and through the district's network and other district technology resources. The district reserves the right to utilize such data for troubleshooting and lawful investigative purposes.

Procedures regarding the individualized search of district technology resources when the district has reasonable suspicion that a user of district technology resources has violated the terms of this Board policy, or the accompanying administrative guideline shall be included in the accompanying administrative guideline.

The availability of information on district technology resources does not imply endorsement by the district of such content, nor does the district guarantee the accuracy of such content.

The district shall not be responsible for any information lost, damaged or unavailable while using district technology resources.

The district will fully cooperate with local, state and federal officials in any investigation concerning or related to alleged illegal activities of any individuals misusing district technology resources.

Users of district technology resources shall immediately report any violations of this policy or the accompanying administrative guideline to their building principal, immediate supervisor, or the Supervisor of Information Technology.

Users of district technology resources may be required, as a condition of being given access to such resources, to sign a user agreement acknowledging and agreeing to be bound by this policy and the accompanying administrative guideline.

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No. 911 AR

MONTOURSVILLE AREA
SCHOOL DISTRICT
ADMINISTRATIVE
REGULATION

**STUDENT RELEASE & CONSENT FORM –
PUBLICATION OF PHOTOGRAPHY, VOICE & IMAGE**

This electronic form (via the Parent Portal) is requested for students who may be photographed or filmed during one or more activities of the Montoursville Area School District. Approving with electronic signatures in the Parent Portal will allow the student's photograph, voice, and/or image to be used by the District in connection with its promotional materials, including brochures, video or audio broadcasts or tapes, newsletters, the District website, or other promotional materials. The consent to the use of student images is intended to extend only to the Montoursville Area School District, and not to be assigned to any other entity without the consent of the student or student's parent(s).

GENERAL RELEASE PERMISSION

My son or daughter has permission to participate in school sponsored field trips which have been approved by the Montoursville Area School Board and the Administration for the 2024-2025 school year. Permission slips will be sent home for all field trips and must be signed by a parent/legal guardian.

HIPAA ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I understand that the Montoursville Area School District follows the Federal guidelines for confidentiality as regulated by FERPA and HIPAA. By signing the handbook acknowledgement page, I approve for the school district to share information with appropriate school staff on a need-to-know basis and only if it impacts the education of my child.

In accordance with the Federal Law (HIPAA), regulating the sharing and transmission of health information, MASD requires parental/guardian permission to share health information of each student. The following are ways we are protecting the privacy of our students:

- ❖ Parental/Guardian consent is needed to share health information.
- ❖ By following our confidentiality policy, we will not discuss health information of students with other parents. (Please refrain from asking.)
- ❖ Health information will be sent in a sealed "confidential" envelope.
- ❖ All health record files are locked.
- ❖ Health conditions such as allergies and asthma will be given only to the teacher with direct contact with the student only if parental/guardian consent has been obtained.
- ❖ The school district will avoid sending health information via e-mail if possible. If sending, a disclosure statement will be used.
- ❖ When sending a fax, a "confidentiality request" will be included. The individual receiving the information will be notified that it is being sent.
- ❖ Phone conversations regarding health information will be conducted privately.
- ❖ The nurse will be present when printing or photocopying health information.
- ❖ Faculty/staff will avoid casual conversation regarding health information in the halls and other public areas.