



# **Student / Parent Handbook 2025-2026**

**Laurel Highlands Elementary School Parent/Student Handbook  
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## Board Members

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Mrs. Beverly Beal  
Mr. Kenneth Meadows  
Mr. Joseph D'Andrea

Mrs. Olivia Conway  
Mr. Edward Kolencik  
Mr. Tom Landman

Mr. Randy Raymond  
Mr. Marcus DiNunno  
Mr. Bill Elias

## Central Administration

Dr. Jesse T. Wallace III	Superintendent
Mr. Gregory Hensh	Business Manager
Mr. Randy Miller	Director of Curriculum
Mrs. Lori Dicenzo	Director of Pupil Services and Special Education
Mr. Jason Johns	Director of Federal Programs, Food Service, Assistant Curriculum
Mr. Richard Barron	Chief of Security, Transportation
Mr. Paul Eckert	Supervisor of Attendance/PIMS
Mr. Nick Gulino	Buildings and Grounds Supervisor

## Mission Statement

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*The mission of the Laurel Highlands School District is to empower every student through innovative and engaging learning experiences. In partnership with families and the community, we are dedicated to nurturing curiosity, resilience, career readiness, and a commitment to lifelong learning—preparing all students for success beyond high school.*

## Contact Information

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### District Administration

304 Bailey Ave.  
Uniontown, PA 15401  
Phone 724-437-2821  
[www.LHSD.org](http://www.LHSD.org)

### Clark Elementary

200 Water Street  
Uniontown, PA 15401  
Phone: 724-437-9600

### Hatfield Elementary

370 Derrick Avenue  
Uniontown, PA 15401  
Phone 724-437-7371



### Hutchinson Elementary

213 Mountain View Drive  
Uniontown, Pa 15401  
Phone: 724-437-6208

### Marshall Elementary

335 Park Street  
Uniontown, PA 15401  
Phone: 724-438-5851

## **ANNUAL SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT**

*The Laurel Highlands Elementary Schools(LHSD) and the parents of the students participating in activities, services, and programs funded by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (participating children), agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will help children achieve the State's high standards. This school-parent compact is in effect during school year 2025-2026.*

### **School Responsibilities**

**The Elementary Schools will:**

- **Provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating children to meet the State's student academic achievement standards as follows:**
  - Utilizing research-based core curriculum that is aligned to the current State Core Standards.
  - Providing students with differentiated instructional opportunities to ensure that we are reaching students on multiple levels of intelligences.
  - Following the district's Response to Intervention and Instruction Model as a pathway to success, not as a path to special education.
  - Analyze and synthesize student data to assist with instruction and develop a best practice model for each student.

**Hold parent-teacher conferences (at least annually in elementary schools) during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual child's achievement.**

- Parent Conf. Nov 26 (8:00 -11:30) & Dec 1 (2:00-4:00 & 6:00-8:00)
- **Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress.** Specifically, the school will provide reports as follows:

- In grades K-5, all parents will receive a NWEA Benchmark Progress Report at the beginning, middle, and end of the year.
- In grades K-5, all students will receive a progress report midway through each quarter of school.
- In grades K-5, all students will receive a report card at the end of each quarter.
- **Provide parents reasonable access to staff.** Specifically, staff will be available for consultation with parents as follows:
  - Teachers and administrators shall make themselves available at a time that is agreed upon by both parties either by phone or face to face meeting.
  - Teachers and administrators are available via email communication provided by the district.
- **Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities, as follows:**
  - PTO functions
  - Fundraising Activities
  - Meet the Teacher Nights
  - Festival/Fun Days
  - Choir/Band/Holiday Performances

### **Parent Responsibilities**

**We, as parents, will support our children's learning in the following ways:**

- *Monitoring attendance.*
- *Making sure that homework is completed.*
- *Monitoring amount of television their children watch.*
- *Volunteering in my child's classroom.*
- *Participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to my children's education.*
- *Promoting positive use of my child's extracurricular time.*
- *Staying informed about my child's education and communicating with the school by promptly reading all notices from the school or the school district either received by my*

- child or by mail and responding, as appropriate.*
- *Serving, to the extent possible, on policy advisory groups, such as being the Title I, Part A parent representative on the school's School Improvement Team, the Title I Policy Advisory Committee, the District Wide Policy Advisory Council, the State's Committee of Practitioners, the School Support Team or other school advisory or policy groups.*

### **Optional Additional Provisions**

#### **Student Responsibilities**

We, as students, will share the responsibility to improve our academic achievement and achieve the State's high standards. Specifically, we will:

- *Do my homework as assigned and ask for help when I need to.*
- *Read at least 30 minutes every day outside of school time.*
- *Give to my parents or the adult who is responsible for my welfare all notices and information received by me from my school every day.*

### **Additional Required School Responsibilities**

The **Elementary Schools** will:

1. Involve parents in the planning, review, and improvement of the school's parental involvement policy, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way.
2. Involve parents in the joint development of any school wide program plan, in an organized, ongoing, and timely way.
3. Hold an annual meeting to inform parents of the school's participation in Title I, Part A programs, and to explain the Title I, Part A requirements, and the right of parents to be involved in Title I, Part A programs. The school will convene the meeting at a convenient time to parents, and will offer a flexible number of additional parental involvement meetings, such as in the morning or evening, so that as many parents as possible are able to attend. The school will invite to this meeting all

parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs (participating students), and will encourage them to attend.

4. Provide information to parents of participating students in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon the request of parents with disabilities, and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand.
5. Provide to parents of participating children information in a timely manner about Title I, Part A programs that includes a description and explanation of the school's curriculum, the forms of academic assessment used to measure children's progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
6. On the request of parents, provide opportunities for regular meetings for parents to formulate suggestions, and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions about the education of their children. The school will respond to any such suggestions as soon as practicably possible.
7. Provide to each parent an individual student report about the performance of their child on the State assessment in at least math, language arts and reading.
8. Provide each parent timely notice when their child has been assigned or has been taught for four (4) or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified within the meaning of the term in section 200.56 of the Title I Final Regulations (67 Fed. Reg. 71710, December 2, 2002).

### **Optional School Responsibilities**

To help build and develop a partnership with parents to help their children achieve the State's high academic standards, the LHSD Elementary Schools will:

1. Recommend to the local educational agency (LEA), the names of parents of participating children of Title I, Part A programs who are interested in serving on the State's Committee of Practitioners and School Support Teams.
2. Notify parents of the school's participation in Early Reading First, Reading First and Even Start Family

- Literacy Programs operating within the school, the district and the contact information.
3. Work with the LEA in addressing problems, if any, in implementing parental involvement activities in section 1118 of Title I, Part A.
  4. Work with the LEA to ensure that a copy of the SEA's written complaint procedures for resolving any issue of violation(s) of a Federal statute or regulation of Title I, Part A programs is provided to parents of students and to appropriate private school officials or representatives.

### **Age Waiver Public Notice**

Due to the decrease of enrollment and small classes in the Laurel Highlands School District, special education maybe out of compliance due to age range according to PDE. A student with a disability eligible to receive special education services may not be placed in a class in which the chronological age from the youngest to oldest student varies beyond three years in the grades K-6 and 4 years in grades 7-12 unless an exception is determined to be appropriate by the IEP team of the student whose age is outside the age range of the program where the student would be receiving special education services. (22 Pa. School Code 14.42(f)). A statement will be written into student's IEP's indicating age differences. Parents will also sign a waiver informing them of the age range of their child's special education program and their child's IEP will not be adversely affected by this change. Their child's needs will be met through the students IEP.

### **Annual Public Notice of Child Identification Activities**

The Laurel Highlands School District uses the following procedures for screening, identifying, and evaluating specific needs of school-aged students requiring special programs of service.

The district meets the health screening requirements as described in Section 1402 of the School Code. The district routinely conducts screenings of a child's hearing acuity in following grades: Kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, 7, and 11, and other grades according to need. Visual acuity is screened in every grade. Height and weight data are collected yearly at every grade level and Body Mass (BMI) is calculated. Visual acuity, hearing acuity, height and weight

screenings are conducted throughout the school year at the child's home school. School nurses work with the private schools (such as Montessori, New Directions, etc.) to provide required screenings. Dental exams are conducted in the spring of each school year in kindergarten, grades 3 and 7 at the respective schools. Physical exams are conducted in the spring of each year. Physicals are conducted in Kindergarten, grades 6 and 11, as well as scoliosis screenings in grades 6 and 7.

Kindergarten registration is held in the spring of each year. Currently all school districts throughout Fayette County are holding kindergarten registration during the same week in order to take advantage of local media to inform parents of the need to register students who will attend kindergarten in the fall. Students are to accompany parents when registering for kindergarten. During the registration, kindergarten teachers will screen each student's readiness skills, speech/language therapists will screen the student's articulation and language abilities, and the nurse will review the student's health record including immunizations. Classroom teachers assess gross motor and fine motor skills, academic skills, and social-emotional skills on an on-going basis and referrals made for follow-up when needed.

Throughout the school year, the district will administer standardized tests to students, beginning in kindergarten. These tests may include in grades K-5 the NWEA (Northwest Educational Assessments) and the Moby Max placement exams. The CDT (Classroom Diagnostic Test) will be administered throughout the year in grades 3-12. Results of these tests are provided to the parent/guardian each year. In addition, elementary teachers will test students to see if they have learned the particular skill being taught. These tests are given throughout the year.

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is administered at the mandate grade levels each school year. Other testing occurs on the basis of individual need. Vocational interest tests may be given in the secondary schools. Report cards are issued quarterly. Any parent who has a question about the testing program should contact the Building Principal. The Pennsylvania Alternate School Assessment (PASA) is available for students who meet the eligibility for this assessment.

If the student is experiencing academic, social, and/or behavioral issues that are impacting the student's

education, then the student may be eligible for intervention to address the student's concerns. Every attempt will be made to maintain the student in his/her regular education environment prior to considering special education services. Screening information is utilized by a team consisting of the building principal, classroom teacher, guidance counselor, and school psychologist to determine if adjustments can be made in the child's current program and/or if a multidisciplinary evaluation is warranted. Once the student's needs are identified the team will discuss strategies to implement in the child's current program. If a student does not make progress, parents will be asked to give written permission for a multidisciplinary evaluation.

Parents with concerns regarding their child may contact the building principal at any time to request a screening or evaluation. The request shall be in writing, if the request is made orally, the parent will be asked to make the request in writing and will be provided with the proper form. Communication with the parents and students shall be in English or their native language. For parents with a hearing impairment, the school district will provide a person to communicate in sign language.

After the multidisciplinary evaluation is completed, an Evaluation Report (ER) is compiled with parent input and includes recommendations for the types of intervention necessary to accommodate the child's specific needs. Parents are provided with a draft copy of the ER to review prior to the meeting where the results of the evaluation are explained and discussed. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed for those students qualifying for special education services. This plan includes demographic information regarding the student; his/her strengths and needs with goals and objectives that address needs, along with specially designed instruction and related services necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives. The IEP Team consists of the following: the parent, the building principal/LEA, a special education teacher and a regular education teacher. Other team members may include: the student when appropriate, the school psychologist, public agency representative, other teachers or specialists, other administrative staff, etc. Parents are an integral part of the IEP team and are encouraged to be physically present at the IEP meeting. The district makes every effort to ensure parent participation. The district notifies the parent in writing and makes documented phone calls to make parents aware of the IEP conference and the

importance of parent participation. Parents are then presented with a Notice of recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) with which they may agree or disagree. If parents agree, the IEP is implemented. If parents disagree with the recommendation, the issue may be taken to mediation or to a due process hearing.

The Laurel Highlands School District operates a comprehensive continuum of services for special needs students. For the most part identified exceptional students are served in their home school. Types of services available include: Learning Support that is primarily for students with academic learning needs. Life Skills Support that focuses primarily on the need for independent living skills. Emotional Support which addresses social and emotional difficulties, Multiple Disabilities Support which is for students with more than one disability, Physical Support for students whose need is the result of a physical disability, Autistic Support for those students diagnosed with Autism and/or Pervasive Development Disorder, Speech/Language Support that is for students who have articulation and/or expressive/receptive language difficulties, Hearing Support for students who are hearing impaired/deaf, Vision Support which is for students who are blind or visually impaired, and Gifted Support for those students identified as mentally gifted. The Laurel Highlands School District works closely with neighboring school districts and Intermediate Unit # 1 to place students who cannot be served within the district. The small number of students who needs cannot be accommodated in the public school setting can receive services in an approved private school or other licensed facilities at school district expense. No such placement is made without an IEP meeting and parental agreement. Laurel Highlands intends to serve students at the home school or within the district before considering other placements.

If a child does not qualify for special education services, he/she may still be considered a protected handicapped student and require services under Chapter 15. A protected handicapped student is a student who is school aged with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to any aspect of the school program. The Laurel Highlands School District provides each protected handicapped student the aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extra curricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the

student's abilities. If you believe your child comes under this classification and is in need of a service to assist him/her in benefiting from his/her education, you should contact your building principal.

The Laurel Highlands School District recognizes the need to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in the education records of exceptional children. The Laurel Highlands School District confidentiality Assurance Policy has been prepared as to insure the privacy rights of both the parents and the exceptional child in the collection, maintenance, release, and destruction of these records. The Laurel Highlands School District and its staff are required by Federal law and State and Federal Rules and Regulations to protect the rights of students. The foundation of these rights comes from Federal Legislation entitled the Family Educational rights and Privacy Act of 1974 – FERPA (also known as the Buckley Amendments). All students are protected by the State Regulations contained in Chapter 12 known as Student's Rights and Responsibilities. In addition, State Rules and regulations protect regular and special education students' rights and privacy.

School records are always open and available to parents and only to school officials who have legitimate "need to know" information about the child. Disclosure of information means to permit the release, transfer or other communication of education records to any part, by oral, written and /or electronic means. This means that information about a student cannot be shared in conversation without permission. This also applies to other personnel who do not have an educationally relevant reason to possess knowledge student.

The parents of a student or eligible student have the right to inspect and/or challenge their child's or their own educational records, to receive copies of the records, and to have a school official explain the records if requested as outlined in the Laurel Highlands District Policy. The school district will disclose directory information which includes: the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weights and heights of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency of or institution attended by the student, and other similar information. Should the parent of a student or eligible student wish to refuse disclosure of this

information, a written notice or refusal of disclosure of directory information must be sent to the Principal within twenty (20) days of this public notice. To inspect your child's or your records, contact the Building Principal.

The Laurel Highlands School District will release information from a student's education record without prior consent to officials of the other primary or secondary schools or school systems in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. Transcripts to post-secondary institutions in which a student seeks or intends to enroll will be sent upon request of parents of a student or eligible student. Parents, upon written request, may receive a copy of records that may be released by the school district. The parents have the right to request that their child's or their educational records be changed if they are inaccurate, misleading or violate students' rights, and to have a hearing if that request is refused.

A more detailed explanation of these rights, the procedure to follow, and the limitations on the release of records are presented in the school district's policy on the collection, maintenance and release of student records. You may obtain a copy of this policy by contacting the Building Principal.

### **Early Intervention**

In Pennsylvania, a child between three years of age and the school district's age to begin school who has a developmental delay or one or more of the physical or mental conditions listed above, will be identified as an "eligible young child." The parents of these children have the same rights described above.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and services to eligible young children under Act 212 of 1990, the Early Intervention Services System Act. Screening for preschool children is available through the Child Alert Program operated by Intermediate Unit #1. To schedule an appointment for screening call Barbara Rothermel at 1.800.328.6481. For additional information, contact Lori DiCenzo at 724.437.2821

A developmental delay is determined by the results of a developmental evaluation. The results of one or more domain areas (adaptive, personal-social, communication, motor or cognitive) have to show at least a 25% delay or a score of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean (Standard Score of 77 or below). The delay results in the need for specially designed



intervention/instruction (SDI) in order to participate in typical activities and routines.

Children with a developmental delay may show weaknesses in the following areas:

**Adaptive** – Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty dressing/undressing; using utensils to eat, removing shoes without assistance, distinguishing between nonfood/food substances, or have difficulty with toileting needs. One may have difficulty moving independently around the house, understanding that hot is dangerous, putting away toys when asked, indicating an illness or ailment to an adult, or demonstrating caution and avoiding common dangers.

**Personal-Social** – Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty responding positively to adult praise, rewards or promise of rewards; greeting familiar adults spontaneously, enjoying simple stories read aloud, helping with simple household tasks, initiating social interaction with familiar adults, expressing affection/liking for peers, playing cooperatively with peers, stating first name, last name, age, or whether he is a male/female; using objects in make-believe play, using ‘I’ or ‘me’ to refer to himself, or recognizing facial expressions of common emotions.

**Communication** - Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty following 2-step verbal commands, associating spoken words with pictures, recalling events from a story presented orally; engaging in extended and meaningful nonverbal exchanges with others, using words to get his/her needs met, responding to ‘yes’ and ‘no’ questions appropriately, or asking ‘wh’ questions.

**Motor** - Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty running without falling, kicking a ball without falling, walking up and down stairs alternating feet without assistance, walking backward, imitating the bilateral movements of an adult, pointing with his index finger independent of the thumb and other fingers, scribbling linear and/or circular patterns spontaneously, using the pads of fingertips to grasp a pencil, holding a paper with one hand while drawing or writing with the other hand, fastening clothing without assistance, cutting with scissors, copying a circle, or imitating vertical and horizontal markings.

**Cognitive** - Pre-kindergarten aged children with a developmental delay may have difficulty attending to one activity for 3 or more minutes, reciting memorized lines from songs or TV shows, showing interest in age-appropriate books, matching/naming colors, responding to one and one more, giving three objects on request, matching shapes, identifying objects by their use, identifying items by size, identifying colors of familiar objects not in view, or identifying simple objects by touch.

Developmental disabilities are birth defects related to a problem with how a body part or body system works. They may also be known as functional birth defects. Many of these conditions affect multiple body parts or systems. Researchers have identified thousands of different birth defects. Birth defects can have a variety of causes, such as:

Genetic problems caused when one or more genes doesn’t work properly or part of a gene is missing, problems with chromosomes, such as having an extra chromosome or missing part of a chromosome, environmental factors that the expectant mother is exposed to during pregnancy, such as Rubella or German measles or if she uses drugs or alcohol during pregnancy.

For further information in the screening procedures, evaluation procedures, and provision of services to protected handicapped students, contact Dr. Jesse T. Wallace, Superintendent of Schools, 304 Bailey Avenue, Uniontown, PA 15401 or call 724-437-2821

### **Assessments and Evaluations**

In addition to regular classroom assessments, students are assessed for basic academic skills and state standards through district and state assessments. The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is administered in grades 3, 4, and 5 in the areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics, and grade 5 in Science.

Benchmark assessments are given at certain times of the year to monitor progress and provide remediation where needed. Benchmark tests include CDT’s, NWEA, Classroom based assessments, unit tests from all content areas, and portfolio collections.

### **Attendance**

The Laurel Highlands Attendance Policy requires that each student is in regular attendance except when illness, injury, or some other condition beyond his/her control may cause the student to be absent. Frequent

absences are discouraged, as academic progress will be delayed.

Students will be allotted ten (10) absences per school year. Parental excuses, unexcused/illegal absences, early dismissals and late arrivals/tardies will count towards the allotted ten (10) absences. After ten (10) absences a student must have a mandatory doctor excuse. All absences will be considered unexcused/illegal after the allotted ten (10) absences per school year unless a doctor's excuse is provided.

At the elementary level, students who arrive 1½ hours or less after the start of the school day will be charged a quarter (.25) day absence. Students who arrive 1½ to 3½ hours after the start of the school day will be charged a half (.50) day absence. Students leaving 1½ hours or less prior to dismissal will be charged a quarter (.25) day absence. Students leaving 1½ to 3½ hours prior to dismissal will be charged a half (.50) day absence. After accumulating three (3) unexcused absences, the student's parents will receive a warning letter. Additional unexcused absences will result in a citation being issued for non-compliance with the compulsory attendance laws.

## **Bullying Policy**

### **Purpose**

The Laurel Highlands School Board is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The district 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 Laurel Highlands School Board prohibits bullying by district students.

### **Definitions**

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

1. **Substantially interfering** with a student's education.
2. **Creating** a threatening school environment.
3. **Substantially disrupting** the orderly operation of the school.

**Bullying**, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying in a school setting.

**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.

### **Authority**

The Laurel Highlands School Board prohibits all forms of bullying by district students.

The Laurel Highlands School Board encourages students who believe they or others have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the homeroom teacher or teacher on duty.

Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the building principal, or to put the complaint 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 a violation of this policy.

The Laurel Highlands School Board directs that verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventive action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Laurel Highlands School 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.

### **Discrimination/Discriminatory Harassment**

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 and discriminatory harassment shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the building administrator or designee. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination or discriminatory harassment are identified, the building administrator or designee 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 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 shall 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. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
5. Detention.
6. Suspension.
7. Expulsion.
8. Referral to law enforcement officials

### **Bus Regulations**

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Riding a school bus is a privilege that children should enjoy. Concerns about safety and behavior are addressed as needed to maintain a safe situation on the school buses. Children are expected to conduct themselves on buses in an orderly manner. Courtesy toward others and respect for the law and for others is expected. Warnings or suspension from riding the bus will be given to the students by the principal. Bus drivers alert the principal if inappropriate behavior occurs. If the unwanted behavior continues, the student may lose the privilege of riding the school bus. A loss of bus privileges does not legally excuse a child from school. Bus routes will be published in the local paper and on the district website ([www.lhsd.org](http://www.lhsd.org)) the week before the start of school. All students must report to the designated bus stop prior to the pick-up time.

In order that we have a definite understanding as to the rules governing students who ride school busses owned and contracted by the Laurel Highlands School District, we present you with the following set of regulations:

1. The bus driver has the same authority on the bus as the teacher has in the classroom and it is the driver's duty personally, to report all misconduct to the principal in charge.
2. Student transportation is a service provided by the Board of School Directors and the State of Pennsylvania. This service can be denied to any student according to policies established by the Laurel Highlands School District.
3. Students may be denied the privilege of being transported to and from school for the following reasons:
  - a. Using foul language at any time.
  - b. Loud or boisterous noises that could distract the bus driver.
  - c. Throwing or shooting objects.
  - d. Smoking while traveling to and from school.
  - e. Marking or destroying any part of the school bus will result in suspension plus cost.
  - f. Striking or fighting any member of the traveling group.
  - g. Spitting or throwing any trash on the floor of the bus.
  - h. Refusing to sit in seat assigned by the bus driver.
  - i. Pushing or disorderly rushing to the school bus while loading or unloading.
  - j. Placing arms or any part of the body outside the windows.
  - k. Throwing objects or materials from the bus.
  - l. Failure to remain in seat while bus is in motion.
  - m. Boisterous or annoying yells to the passing public.
  - n. Illegal use of the emergency door.
  - o. Violating the property of others.
  - p. Misconduct at the bus stop.
4. Students denied transportation must be present for each school session to prevent them from being marked illegally absent from school and subjecting parents to arrest.
5. The above rules are established for safety and the concern of all children who ride the school busses.
6. The Elementary School Policy concerning bus misbehavior will be as follows:

- **First Offense – Detention**

- **Second Offense – 1-day bus suspension or detentions.**
  - **Third Offense – 3-day bus suspension.**
  - **Fourth Offense – 5-day bus suspension**
  - **Fifth Offense – 10-day bus suspension.**
  - **Sixth Offense – Bus suspension for the remainder of the year.**
7. The above are standard discipline measures, but the school principal has the right to adapt these based on the frequency and severity of the action.
  8. If there are too many problems on a bus, all students may be given assigned seats on the bus.

**Note:** Laurel Highlands School District has purchased and uses a number of video cameras on their busses.

### **Cafeteria Lunch Forms**

Cafeteria lunch forms for free and reduced lunches do not need to be completed to receive a free breakfast and lunch. The district is operating the Community Eligibility Provision(CEP) and all students are free.

### **Cafeteria Prices**

For the 2025-2026 school year, breakfast and lunch will be free for students due to operating the Community Eligibility Provision.(CEP)

### **Cafeteria - District Charge Policy**

Students and staff must have funds on their account to purchase A la carte and snacks. No students or staff will be permitted to charge items if they do not have enough funds in their account to cover the transaction.

### **Cafeteria Allergy/Peanut Free Food Preparation**

Due to the hazards of peanut allergies; the Laurel Highlands School District will not offer and/or prepare any of its food offerings with peanuts and/or peanut butter.

If a child has a food allergy or special dietary need, please notify the School Nurse immediately. If a child cannot have milk or dairy products with their meal, please provide us with a note from your doctor specifying a substitute beverage or item. This note must be renewed each year.

### **Cafeteria Rules and Expectations**

1. Noise in the cafeteria must be kept at a low level. If it gets too loud, the teachers may use a no talking rule.
2. Students are not to leave their seats without permission.
3. Throwing food or other objects will not be tolerated.
4. No paper or food should be left on tables or floors. All waste will be thrown away.
5. Food must be eaten in cafeteria, not in rooms or on the playground.
6. Three (3) minutes of quiet/rest when warning bell rings.
7. Be orderly and quiet during dismissal.
8. All other school Discipline Policies and Conduct Rules are to be followed.

### **Car Drop-Off /Pick-up Procedures**

Procedures will be sent out during the first week of school and can also be located on our District Website. [www.lhsd.org](http://www.lhsd.org). Please follow these procedures to keep our students and staff safe.

### **Change of Address/Phone Number**

Parents are asked to notify the office immediately of any change in the home address or home, cell and work telephone numbers.

### **Conduct Rules**

The rules of conduct deal with acceptable behavior. The real goal of the school is to provide each student with a worthwhile educational experience. We want to provide each student with the educational skills that will be needed for success in school as well as in life. Here's a list of do's for all students that will lead towards the achievement of these goals:

1. Make wise use of your time in school.
2. Develop good study habits.
3. Make sure of homework assignments and complete homework assignments.
4. Strive to make the best grades that you are capable of making.
5. Take pride in your work and academic achievements.
6. Be proud of your school; keep it neat and clean.
7. Make as many friends as you can while you are in school.
8. Enjoy your time on the playground, in library, in art class, in physical education class, in music class and with the computers.

9. Discuss school work and school activities with your family. Make school a part of your family.

Education is a cooperative effort in which teachers and students are brought together for learning to take place. An environment that permits order and efficiency must be provided. One of our goals is to instill a sense of self-discipline in students so that individuals do not allow themselves to infringe upon the rights of others as they seek an expression of their own.

The responsibility for development and maintenance of this self-discipline falls to the combined efforts of students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community that established the value system that we accept. When self-discipline fails, regulations for management of school behavior must be outlined by those responsible for education. The Laurel Highlands School District has established policies and appointed administrators to carry them out.

Students are required to behave properly, respecting others and property. This includes traveling to and from school. Respect for all school employees and fellow students is expected. Consequences for failure to follow school rules may include recess detention, lunch detention, withdrawal of privileges, after school detention, Saturday detention, community service, suspension from school, or a discipline review hearing.

Each classroom teacher has established rules and procedures. Students must realize that failure to follow classroom rules will result in consequences.

### **Detention**

If the rules of the school are broken, individual classroom rules are broken, or homework assignments are not completed, students may be placed on detention.

#### **Rules of Detention:**

1. All students are to bring school work to detention.
2. All students are to bring paper and pencil to detention.
3. Detention is in a quiet setting.
4. Failure to comply with the above rules could result in additional detention.

If any student is placed on detention too frequently during any one grading period, a call home will be made informing his/her parents and a conference will

be scheduled. \*Detention slips will be sent home to be signed by a parent. Forms must be returned to the homeroom teacher within two school days.

## **Discipline Code**

### **Purpose**

The Board finds that student conduct is closely related to learning. An effective educational program requires a safe and orderly school environment.

### **Authority**

The Board shall establish fair and reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of all students in the school district during the time they are under the supervision of the school or at any time while on school property, while present at school-sponsored activities, and while traveling to or from school and school-sponsored activities.

The Board shall adopt a Code of Student Conduct to govern student discipline, and students shall not be subject to disciplinary action because of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin or handicap/disability. Each student must adhere to Board policies and the Code of Student Conduct governing student discipline.

The Board prohibits the use of corporal punishment by district staff to discipline students for violations of Board policies and district rules and regulations.

Any student disciplined by a district employee shall have the right to notice of the infraction.

Suspensions and expulsions shall be carried out in accordance with Board policy.

In the case of a student with a disability, including a student for whom an evaluation is pending, the district shall take all steps required to comply with state and federal laws and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

### **Off-Campus Activities**

This policy shall also apply to student conduct that occurs off school property and would violate the Code of Student Conduct if any of the following circumstances exist:

1. The conduct occurs during the time when the student is traveling to and from school or traveling to and from school sponsored activities, whether or not via school district furnished transportation.

2. The student is a member of an extracurricular activity and has been notified that particular off-

campus conduct could result in exclusion from such activities.

3. Student expression or conduct materially and substantially disrupts the operations of the school, or the administration reasonably anticipates that the expression or conduct is likely to materially and substantially disrupt the operations of the school.

4. The conduct has a direct nexus to attendance at school or a school-sponsored activity, for example, a transaction conducted outside of school pursuant to an agreement made in school, that would violate the Code of Student Conduct if conducted in school.

5. The conduct involves the theft or vandalism of school property.

6. There is otherwise a nexus between the proximity or timing of the conduct in relation to the student's attendance at school or school sponsored activities.

### **Corporal Punishment**

The Board prohibits the use of corporal punishment to discipline students for violations of district policies, rules or regulations.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that reasonable and necessary rules and regulations are developed to implement Board policy governing student conduct.

The Superintendent or designee shall publish and distribute to all staff, students and parents/guardians the rules and regulations for student behavior contained in the Code of Student Conduct and the sanctions that may be imposed for violations of those rules, and a listing of students' rights and responsibilities. A copy of the Code of Student Conduct shall be available in each school library and school office and may be printed in the student handbooks.

The building principal shall have the authority to assign discipline to students, subject to the policies, rules and regulations of the district and to the student's due process right to notice, hearing, and appeal.

Teaching staff and other district employees responsible for students shall have the authority to take reasonable actions necessary to control the conduct of students in all situations and in all places where students are within the jurisdiction of this Board, and when such conduct interferes with the

educational program of the schools or threatens the health and safety of others.

Reasonable force may be used by teachers and school authorities under any of the following circumstances: to quell a disturbance, obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects, for the purpose of self-defense, and for the protection of persons or property.

#### Referral to Law Enforcement and Reporting Requirements

- For reporting purposes, the term incident shall mean an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use, or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the Safe Schools Act.
- The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents committed by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.
- The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in an incident as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.
- In accordance with state law, the Superintendent or designee shall annually, by July 31, report all new incidents to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form.

The Superintendent shall report to the Board the methods of discipline imposed by administrators and incidences of student misconduct, in the degree of specificity required by the Board.

**Level I Offenses** – Minor misbehaviors which interrupt the orderly classroom procedures or interferes with school operations. These misbehaviors include inappropriate cafeteria behavior, leaving school building without permission, classroom or school disruption, tardiness, incomplete assignments, academic dishonesty, snowballing, and other similar incidents.

Responses: One day suspension, detention, withdrawal of privileges

**Level II Offenses** – Misbehavior whose frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the learning climate. This level usually requires the intervention of an administrator because Level I options have failed to correct the situation. Included within this level are more serious misbehaviors, such as continuation of Level I misbehaviors, failure to attend detention, falsifying passes, excuses, parent notes, etc., gambling/card games, chronic tardiness, smoking, truancy; fighting; indecent acts; disrespect, wearing indecent apparel, abusive language, and any other misbehavior that is detrimental to the school and/or school district.

Responses: 2-3 day suspension, withdrawal of privileges, referral to outside agency

**Level III Offenses** – Acts directed against persons or property whose consequences could seriously endanger the health or safety of others in the school. Offenses at this level include continuation of Level II misbehaviors; possession of a weapon, alcohol and/or drugs, setting off false fire alarms, tampering with fire extinguishers, destruction or defacing of school property, buses, private property going to and from school, and student property, fireworks and smoke bombs; harassment or extortion of students or school personnel, stealing; insubordination.

Responses: 4-10 day suspension, Fayette Drug and Alcohol Student Assistance Program, Social Adjustment Class, referral to civil authorities and/or police for action, withdrawal of privileges

#### District Goals

- Increase student attendance rates to exceed the state average, ensuring consistent engagement and maximizing learning opportunities.

- Strengthen literacy achievement and annual growth for all students participating in the PSSA and Keystone Exams
- Enhance district communication with families to increase awareness of career pathways, opportunities, and real-world experiences available to all students.
- Increase the percentage of students to 95% who report on a survey that they feel comfortable asking for help if they have trouble with homework or assignments.

## **Dress Code**

These rules and procedures have been developed according to Board Policy regarding student dress and grooming. However, solutions to situations not specifically covered are the responsibility of building level administrators. Appropriate decisions will be made based on the intent and spirit of Board Policy. Students and parents are expected to exercise careful judgment in the selection of appropriate attire for school.

### **Section 1: General**

1. Upon entering any district building any person may be scanned by metal detection equipment. (Typically a “walk through” or hand held device.).
2. Torn or ripped clothing that expose skin are not permitted. Torn or ripped pants are only permitted if holes are below fingertip length. To ensure the safety and welfare of all students the administration will have final determination as to appropriateness. In addition, pajama wear is not to worn in school during the school day.
3. Coats, jackets, or garments designed for protection from outside weather are not to be worn in school during the school day.
4. Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, industrial technology, extracurricular activities and other situations where special attire may be required to ensure health and/or safety of the student.
5. At the principal’s discretion, “School Spirit Day”, Jump–A–Thons, Steeler Days, etc., may be held. Appropriate attire for these days will be determined by the building principal.
6. Game day dress for cheerleaders and athletes will be at the discretion of the building principal.
7. Baggy or excessive layers of clothing or any clothing considered to pose a safety threat may not be worn. Clothing should be neat and properly fitted and sized to the individual.

8. Students with Written Medical Excuses Should Submit Them to the Building Principal for Review and Possible Exemption as it Applies to the Dress Code.

### **Section 2: Tops**

1. Tops that can be classified as under garments are not permitted. Tops shall not have any writing, pictures, insignias, etc., that are obscene, sexually explicit, violence, drug, alcohol or tobacco related, display confederate/rebel flags, or considered to have double meanings. Also prohibited are any gang related or hate symbols.
2. Halter tops or mesh tops are considered unacceptable and will not be permitted to be worn. Also considered unacceptable are see through blouses or shirts, tube tops, crop tops, tank tops with straps less than 3 fingers wide, or spaghetti straps; also, tops may not be low cut or exposing. Bare midriffs, sides, and bare backs are not permitted.

### **Section 3: Pants/Shorts/Skirts/Skorts**

1. Tear away pants are not permitted.
2. Yoga pants, spandex and leggings are permitted as long as an appropriate shirt/cover is worn that is at least finger length with the arms and fingers fully extended straight down towards the floor and no undergarments are visible.
3. Shorts, skirts, and skorts should not be higher than fingertip length above the knee; this includes the slits in skirts.
4. Pants, shorts, skirts, or skorts must be secured and worn at the waist, no lower.
5. Undergarments must not be exposed in any way.
6. Cut offs are not permitted.

### **Section 4: Footwear**

1. Shoes must be worn at all times.
2. Dress sandals are permitted. Shower shoes/flip flops, and slides are permitted in the swimming pool and locker room areas only. However, the final decision of appropriateness will be made by the building administrator.
3. Bedroom slippers are not acceptable footwear and are not permitted.
4. While participating in PE class, athletic footwear must be worn.



### **Section 5: Jewelry/Accessories**

1. Spiked jewelry, chains, or any jewelry that may cause injury or is considered a hazard to student safety, will not be permitted. Chains connecting jewelry or chained wallets are not permitted.
2. Pins, tattoos, jewelry, belts, purses, book bags, shoes etc. shall not have writing, pictures, insignias, etc. that are obscene, sexually explicit, violence, drug, alcohol, or tobacco related. Also prohibited are any gang related symbols, hate symbols, or confederate/rebel flags.

### **Section 6: Headwear**

1. Hats, sunglasses, visors, sweat bands, bandanas, or any type of headwear is not permitted to be worn in school.
2. Any exception to headwear must be documented by an authorized official in the office.

### **Section 7: Health & Hygiene**

1. Any apparel that is judged unhealthy or unsanitary (i.e. clothing that is dirty and/or gives off a foul odor) is not permitted.
2. All students are expected to maintain good personal hygiene.

### **Section 8: Bookbags**

1. Book bags/Gym bags are permitted as designated by the building principal.
2. Book bags/Gym bags brought to school are subject to random searches. In other words, these are no longer your total private property. Anything found in the bags that are illegal, unlawful, or violates a school rule will be the student's responsibility and appropriate legal and discipline measures will be taken. Items of this nature will be confiscated to ensure the safety and welfare of our children.

### **Emergency Cards**

Emergency cards should be completed and returned before the end of the first week of school. Any change of address or telephone number after the opening of the school year must be made known to the school office as soon as possible. The information on the emergency cards is vital when a situation arises where the parent must be contacted.

### **Emergency Notification System**

The Laurel Highlands School District uses the School Messenger emergency notification system to make parents/guardians aware of early dismissals, health

threats, changes to the school calendar, and to announce special school events. School Messenger is an automatic notification system that delivers voice mail messages to telephones and/or mobile phones.

### **Entrance Requirements**

- **AGE:** To enter kindergarten, a child must be five years of age before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year.
- **PROOF OF AGE:** A valid birth certificate issued by the Department of Health, hospital certificate or other proof of age is necessary to enter school.
- **PROOF OF RESIDENCE:** A current document showing parents' names and resident address. A utility bill would be an example.
- **SHOT RECORDS:** The following immunizations are required:
  - 4-DT (diphtheria, tetanus), the fourth taking place after age four
  - 3-Polio (Oral)
  - 2-Measels, Rubella, Mumps (MMR) after age 1
  - 3-Hepatitis B
  - Chicken Pox

### **Grading Scale**

<b>Grading Scale</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Proficiency Level</b>
A	95%-100%	Advanced
A-	90%-94%	Advanced
B+	87%-89%	Proficient
B	83%-86%	Proficient
B-	80%-82%	Proficient
C+	77%-79%	Basic
C	73%-76%	Basic
C-	70%-72%	Basic
D	60%-69%	Below Basic
F	59% or Lower	Below Basic (Failing)

Report cards are distributed 4 times per year. Progress reports are sent home with all students during the 5<sup>th</sup> week of the grading period or when a teacher detects a problem with achievement or effort. A conference may be scheduled upon a parent's request. So that staff can be prepared to serve you more efficiently, please schedule conferences at least one day in advance. Annual parent conferences are scheduled in November.

## **Hazing Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe, positive environment for students and staff that is free from hazing. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the educational goals of the district and are prohibited at all times.

### **Definitions**

For purposes of this policy, hazing occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with an organization, or for the purpose of continued or enhanced membership or status in any organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to any of the following:

1. Violate federal or state criminal law.
2. Endanger the physical health: shall include but not be limited to; any brutality of physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding; forced calisthenics; exposure to the elements; forced consumption of any food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, drug or other controlled substance; or other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical and/or emotional health and safety of the individual.
3. Endanger the mental health: shall include any activity that would subject an individual to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which is intended to or could result in humiliation, extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual or staff.
4. Endure brutality of a sexual nature.
5. Endure any other activity that creates a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to the student

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

1. The person acts with reckless indifference to the health and safety of the student; or
2. The person causes, coerces or forces the consumption of an alcoholic liquid or drug by the student.

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

Any activity, as described above, shall be deemed a violation of this policy regardless of whether:

1. The consent of the student was sought or obtained, or
2. The conduct was sanctioned or approved by the school or organization.

For purposes of this policy, student activity or organization is defined as any organization, team, club or service, society, corps, social or similar group operating under the sanction of or recognized as an organization by the district, whose members are primarily students or alumni of the organization. For purposes of this policy, bodily injury shall mean impairment of physical condition or substantial pain. For purposes of this policy, serious bodily injury shall mean bodily injury which creates a substantial risk of death or which causes serious, permanent disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily member or organ.

### **Authority**

The Board prohibits hazing in connection with any student activity or organization regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school property or outside of school hours.

No student, parent/guardian, coach, sponsor, volunteer or district employee shall engage in condone or ignore any form of hazing.

The district will investigate all complaints of hazing and will administer appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy.

The Board encourages students who believe they, or others have been subjected to hazing to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee.

### **Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination**

Every report of alleged hazing 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 hazing 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 hazing.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

Students, parents/guardians, coaches, sponsors, volunteers, and district employees shall be alert to incidents of hazing and shall report such conduct to the building principal or designee.

District administrators shall investigate promptly all complaints of hazing and administer appropriate discipline to any individual or student activity or organization found to be in violation of this policy.

### **Guidelines**

The district shall annually inform students, parents/guardians, coaches, sponsors, volunteers and district staff of the district's policy prohibiting hazing, including district rules, penalties for violations of the policy, and the program established by the district for enforcement of the policy by means of distribution of written policy, publication in handbooks, presentation at an assembly, verbal instructions by the coach or sponsor at the start of the season or program, or posting of notice/signs, as well as on district website.

This policy, along with other applicable district policies, procedures and Codes of Conduct, shall be provided to all school athletic coaches and sponsors and volunteers affiliated with a student activity or organization annually, prior to coaching an athletic activity or serving as a responsible adult supervising, advising, assisting or otherwise participating in a student activity or organization together with a notice that they are expected to read and abide by the policies, procedures and Code of Conduct.

### **Complaint Procedure**

When a student believes that he or she has been subject to hazing, the student is encouraged to promptly report the incident 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 complaint 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 a violation of this policy.

The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of hazing shall be provided to the building principal or designee, who shall promptly notify the Superintendent or designee of the allegations and determine who shall conduct the investigation. Allegations of hazing shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventative action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of hazing brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be hazing under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies.

### **Interim Measures/Police**

Upon receipt of a complaint of hazing, the building principal or designee, in consultation with the Superintendent or designee, shall determine what, if any interim measures should be put in place to protect students from further hazing, bullying, discrimination or retaliatory conduct related to the alleged incident and report. Such interim measures may include, but not be limited to, the suspension of an adult who is involved, the separation of alleged victims and perpetrators, and the determination of what the complaining student needs or wants through questioning.

Those receiving the initial report and conducting or overseeing the investigation will assess whether the complaint, if proven, would constitute hazing, aggravated hazing or organizational hazing and shall report it to the police consistent with district practice and, as appropriate, consult with legal counsel about whether to report the matter to the police at every stage of the proceeding. The decision to report a matter to the police should not involve an analysis by district personnel of whether safe harbor provisions might apply to the person being reported, but information on the facts can be shared with the police in this regard.

### ***Referral to Law Enforcement and Safe Schools Reporting Requirements –***

For purposes of reporting hazing incidents to law enforcement in accordance with Safe Schools Act reporting, the term incident shall mean an instance involving an act of violence; the possession of a weapon; the possession, use, or sale of a controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined in the Pennsylvania Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act; the possession, use, or sale of alcohol or tobacco; or conduct that constitutes an offense listed under the Safe Schools Act.

The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report required incidents and may report discretionary incidents, as defined in the Safe Schools Act, committed by students on school property, at any school-sponsored activity or on a conveyance providing transportation to or from a school or school-sponsored activity to the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school's property, in accordance with state law and regulations, the procedures set forth in the memorandum of understanding with local law enforcement and Board policies.

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the parent/guardian of any student directly involved in a defined incident as a victim or suspect immediately, as soon as practicable. The Superintendent or

designee shall inform the parent/guardian whether or not the local police department that has jurisdiction over the school property has been or may be notified of the incident. The Superintendent or designee shall document attempts made to reach the parent/guardian.

In accordance with state law, the Superintendent shall annually, by July 31, report all new incidents to the Office for Safe Schools on the required form.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with this policy and the district's legal and investigative obligations.

### **Retaliation**

Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of hazing or participation in an investigation of allegations of hazing is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Consequences for Violations**

#### *Safe Harbor –*

An individual needing medical attention or seeking medical attention for another shall not be subject to criminal prosecution if s/he complies with the requirements under law, subject to the limitations set forth in law.

#### *Students –*

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of hazing, the investigator shall recommend appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. The student may also be subject to disciplinary action by the coach or sponsor, up to and including removal from the activity or organization. The fact of whether a student qualified for and received safe harbor under a criminal investigation shall be considered in assigning discipline.

#### *Nonstudent Violators/Organizational Hazing -*

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding that a coach, sponsor, or volunteer affiliated with the student activity or organization engaged in, condoned or ignored any violation of this policy, s/he shall be disciplined in accordance with Board policy and applicable laws and regulations. Discipline could include, but is not limited to, dismissal from the position as coach, sponsor, or volunteer, and/or dismissal from district employment.

If an organization is found to have engaged in organizational hazing, it shall be subject to the imposition of fines and other appropriate penalties. Penalties may include rescission of permission for that organization to operate on school property or to otherwise operate under the sanction or recognition of the district.

### **Criminal Prosecution**

Any person or organization that causes or participates in hazing may also be subject to criminal prosecution.

### **Homebound Instruction**

Homebound instruction may be provided for students who are unable to attend school in accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Should you need and desire this service, consult the principal's office, or the Home and School Visitor. The form for physician recommendation is located on the district website.

### **Homeless Policy**

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#### **Authority**

The Board recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational programs and services provided to other district students. The Board shall make reasonable efforts to identify homeless children within the district, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.

The Board may waive policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers for enrollment, attendance, transportation and success in school of homeless students, based on the recommendation of the Superintendent.

#### **Definitions**

**Homeless students** are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, adequate, regular and nighttime residence, which include children and youth who are:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship or a similar reason.
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations.
3. Living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters.

4. Abandoned in hospitals.
5. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings.
6. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings.
7. Living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples.
8. Living as run-away children.
9. Abandoned or forced out of homes by parents/guardians or caretakers.
10. Living as school age unwed mothers in houses for unwed mothers if they have no other living accommodations.

**School of origin** is defined as the school the student attended when permanently housed or the school in which the student was last enrolled. When the child completes the final grade level served by school of origin, the school of origin shall include the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Board designates the Superintendent to serve as the district's liaison for homeless students and families.

The district's liaison shall coordinate with:

1. Local service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youth and families.
2. Other school districts on issues of records transfer and transportation.
3. State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies.
4. District staff responsible for the provision of services under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Act.

The district's liaison shall provide public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens.

The District's liaison shall provide reliable, valid and comprehensive data to the coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Program in accordance with Federal and state laws and regulations.

**Guidelines** Students shall not be discriminated against, segregated nor stigmatized based on their status as homeless.

### **Enrollment/Placement**

To the extent feasible, and in accordance with the student's best interest, a homeless student shall continue to be enrolled in his/her school of origin while s/he remains homeless or until the end of the academic year in which s/he obtains permanent housing. Parents/Guardians of a homeless student may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area where the student is actually living or other schools. If a student is unaccompanied by a parent/guardian, the district liaison will consider the views of the student in determining where s/he will be enrolled.

The selected school shall immediately enroll the student and begin instruction, even if the student is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment pursuant to district policies. However, the district may require a parent/guardian to submit contact information. The district liaison may contact the previous school for oral confirmation of immunizations, and the school shall request records from the previous district, pursuant to Board policy.

If the district is unable to determine the student's grade level due to missing or incomplete records, the district shall administer tests or utilize appropriate means to determine the student's placement.

If a dispute arises over school selection or enrollment, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parents/guardians shall be provided with a written explanation of the district's decision, their right to appeal and the procedures to use for the appeal.

### **Services**

Homeless students shall be provided services comparable to those offered to other district students including, but not limited to, transportation services; school nutrition programs; vocational programs and technical education; preschool programs; programs for students with limited English proficiency; and educational services for which students meet eligibility criteria, such as programs for disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, English as a second language, and gifted and talented students.

### **Transportation**

The district shall provide transportation for homeless students to their school of origin or the school they choose to attend within the school district.[5][2]

If the school of origin is outside district boundaries or homeless students live in another district but will attend their school of origin in this district, the school districts shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation.

### **Training**

The District's liaison shall participate in professional development programs and other technical assistance activities offered by the Coordinator of Pennsylvania's Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program.

The District's liaison shall arrange professional development programs for school staff, including office staff.

School Personnel providing services to homeless children and youths, including school enrollment staff, shall receive professional development and support to:

1. Improve identification of homeless children and youths and unaccompanied youths;
2. Understand the rights of such children, including requirements for immediate enrollment and transportation; and
3. Heighten the awareness of, and capacity to respond to, the educational needs of such children.

### **Inclement Weather**

Should winter weather be such as it would make bus travel too difficult or too dangerous, the school will be closed or delayed. Do not call school personnel. School officials will contact the radio stations as soon as a decision is reached. Stay tuned to your radio and television. School closing or delay information as well as emergency information will be announced on the following radio and television stations:

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WMBS AM 590	WASP FM 94.9, AM 1130
PICKLE FM 99	WPXI TV CHANNEL 11
KDKA AM 1020	WTAE TV CHANNEL 4
FROGGY 103	KDKA TV CHANNEL 2
KDKA AM 1020	

Information on school delays and cancellations can also be obtained from the Laurel Highlands School District website @ [www.lhsd.org](http://www.lhsd.org), or by calling the district hotline at 724-437-2821.

### **Internet Access and Computer Policy**

**Monitoring** - The Laurel Highlands School District reserves the right to log, monitor, and review all Internet and other network usage. This logging,

monitoring, and review may be conducted without cause and without notice. Each user of a district's computer, by the use thereof, agrees and consents to such logging, monitoring and review and acknowledges that he/she has no right or expectation of confidentiality or privacy with respect to Internet or any other network usage. Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review student files and communications to maintain system integrity and to ensure that students are using the system only for appropriate purposes. Users should expect that files stored on district servers or computers will not be private.

**Filter** - The Laurel Highlands School District will employ the use of an Internet filter as a technology protection measure pursuant to the Children's Internet Protection Act. The filter may not be disabled for use by students or other minors for any reason.

**Authority** - Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of governmental agencies, and regional networks. The smooth operation of the Internet relies upon the proper conduct of all users who must adhere to certain guidelines. These guidelines are provided here as part of this user agreement to be signed by all students and teachers who use the Laurel Highlands School District Internet Account. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. A willful disregard for the following guidelines will result in a cancellation of those privileges. The Laurel Highlands School District reserves the right to log Internet use and to monitor file storage space utilized by District users at the same time respecting the privacy of all users. The District reserves the right to remove a user account in the event that the following guidelines are violated.

The signature(s) at the end of this document are binding and indicate the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance.

**Guidelines/Procedures** - Network accounts will only be used by the owner of the account and only for authorized purposes. All correspondences and information accessed via the network is private property and shall not be disclosed. Network users shall respect the privacy of other users of the system.

**Prohibited Activities** - The use of the Internet network for illegal, inappropriate or unethical purposes is prohibited. Specifically:

- Use of the network to facilitate illegal activity is prohibited.
- Use of the network for commercial or for-profit purposes is prohibited.

- Use of the network for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Malicious use of the network to develop programs that in any way harass other users or infiltrate a computer system and/or damage the software components of a computer system is prohibited.
- Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial communications on the network are prohibited.
- The illegal installation, distribution, reproductions or use of copyrighted software on district computers is prohibited.
- The use of the network to access obscene or pornographic material is prohibited.
- Use of the network to transmit material likely to be offensive or objectionable to recipients is prohibited.
- The use of the network to intentionally obtain or modify files, passwords, or data belonging to another user is prohibited.
- Use of the network to misrepresent other users on the network is prohibited.
- Use of school technology or the network for fraudulent copying, communication or modification of materials in violation of law is prohibited and will be referred to the appropriate authorities.
- Loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files or other electronic media is prohibited.
- The network shall not be used to disrupt the work of others; and the hardware or software of other users shall not be destroyed, modified or abused in any way.
- Use of the network that results in any copyright violation is prohibited.

### **Language Instruction Educational Program for English Learning**

#### **Purpose**

In accordance with the Board's philosophy to provide quality educational programs to all district students and to increase the English language proficiency of students who are English Learners (EL), the district shall provide an effective Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) that meets the needs of English Learners. The goal of the LIEP shall be to demonstrate success in increasing English language proficiency and student academic achievement so that EL students can attain the academic standards adopted by the Board and achieve academic success. EL students shall be

identified, assessed and provided appropriate instruction in accordance with the LIEP, and shall be provided an equitable opportunity to achieve their maximum potential in educational programs and extracurricular activities, consistent with federal and state laws and regulations.

#### **Authority**

The Board shall approve a LIEP to provide English Language Development instruction (ELD) to EL students as part of the approved curriculum, in order to develop the English language proficiency of EL students. The district shall provide EL students with both planned ELD instruction and modifications in content instruction and assessments for all curricular areas, based on the provisions of the LIEP. The LIEP shall be thoughtfully and deliberately planned and evaluated in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, and shall meet the needs of the district's EL students. The LIEP shall be based on effective research-based theory, implemented with sufficient resources and appropriately trained staff, and shall meet the following requirements:

1. Aligned to state academic content standards for the appropriate grade levels of EL students.
2. Include ELD instruction delivered by properly certified English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, and other certified content area teachers working in conjunction with ESL certified teachers.
3. Incorporate the use of state assessments and ELD criteria.
4. Provide equitable access to content for EL students at all proficiency levels.
5. Provide equitable access to enrollment in courses or academic programs for which EL students are otherwise eligible.

The Board directs the LIEP to be evaluated for effectiveness based on student outcomes at least annually, and the results documented in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, and state guidelines.

The district's LIEP and evaluation results of the LIEP shall be made available to district staff working with EL students and parents/guardians of EL students.

The Board may address EL students and programs in the district's comprehensive planning process.[10]

The Board may contract with Intermediate Unit No. 1 for ELD services and programs.

The Board shall ensure that eligible EL students who are enrolled in nonpublic schools are identified, assessed, evaluated, provided with equitable LIEP services and programs and monitored in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The district shall coordinate with nonpublic schools in the provision and monitoring of services and programs for eligible EL students.

#### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent or designee shall implement and supervise a LIEP that ensures appropriate instruction in each school and complies with federal and state laws and regulations.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district complies with all federal and state laws and regulations, and program requirements, for ELD program funding, including required reports in the form prescribed by the state.

The Superintendent or designee, in conjunction with appropriate stakeholders, shall develop administrative regulations regarding the LIEP and provision of services to EL students.

#### **Guidelines:**

##### **Identification and Placement of EL Students**

The district shall establish procedures for identifying and assessing the needs of students whose dominant language is not English. In order to identify which students are potential English Learners, the Home Language Survey shall be completed for each student upon enrollment in the district, and shall be maintained as part of the student's education records.

EL students shall be appropriately placed in accordance with the LIEP within the first thirty (30) days of the school year, or within fourteen (14) days of enrollment.

##### **Program Access**

EL students shall have equitable access to and be encouraged to participate in all academic and extracurricular activities available to district students.

##### **Assessment**

The district shall annually administer required assessments to EL students to measure students' English Language proficiency and progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening/understanding. Assessment results shall be maintained in the student's education records. Parents/Guardians may not opt students out of English language proficiency assessments.

EL students shall participate in all annual state or locally required assessments, with accommodations where applicable, and meet established academic standards and graduation requirements, in accordance with law, regulations and Board policy.

#### **Program Exit**

The district shall include uniform provisions in the LIEP, in accordance with state required criteria, for:

1. Reclassifying EL students as former EL students when they attain English language proficiency.
2. Actively monitoring and reporting the progress of former EL students for a period of two (2) years following reclassification and program exit, and reporting students to the state in a monitor status for an additional two (2) years, to ensure students are meeting academic standards.
3. Redesignating former EL students as active EL students if they struggle academically based on persistent language barriers.

#### **Staff Qualifications and Professional Development**

Certified employees and appropriate support staff, when necessary, shall provide the LIEP. The district shall ensure that all teachers providing ELD instruction hold the appropriate certification and can demonstrate academic language proficiency both in English and in the language used for instruction in their classroom.

Non-ESL staff shall incorporate ELD into all classes for EL students, as well as provide supports, modifications and accommodations for curricular content to enable EL students to achieve academic standards.

The district shall provide appropriate training in ELD for all professional staff as part of the Professional Development Plan.

##### **Special Education and Gifted Education Services**

EL students may be eligible for special education services when they have been identified as a student with a disability and it is determined that the disability is not solely due to lack of instruction or proficiency in the English language.

EL students may be eligible for gifted education services, when identified in accordance with law, regulations and Board policy. The district shall ensure that assessment of a student for gifted education services screens for intervening factors,



such as English language proficiency, that may be masking gifted abilities.

Students participating in ELD instruction who are eligible for special education services shall continue receiving ELD instruction, in accordance with their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP), at the appropriate proficiency and developmental level.

### **Parent/Family Engagement and Communication**

Communications with parents/guardians shall be in the mode and language of communication preferred by the parents/guardians.

Within thirty (30) days of the beginning of each school year, or within fourteen (14) days of enrollment during the school year, the district shall notify parents/guardians of students identified as EL about the process for identifying their children as EL, the results of that process, and the recommended program placement. The district shall also provide parents/guardians with detailed information regarding the LIEP, the benefits of ELD instruction for their children, and an explanation of the program's effectiveness.

Parents/Guardians shall be regularly apprised of their child's progress, including achievement of academic standards and assessment results.

The district shall maintain an effective means of outreach to encourage parental involvement in the education of their children.

### **Parental Right to Opt Out of ELD Programs and Services -**

Parents/Guardians of EL students have the right to refuse specialized programs and services that may be part of the LIEP for their child. A parent's/guardian's decision to refuse programs or services must be informed and voluntary; the district shall not influence a parent's/guardian's decision in any way, or make any program or placement determinations without parental notification and an opportunity to opt the student out of programs and services.

The district shall make a parental waiver form available for parents/guardians to opt their EL child out of ELD programs and services.

The district shall document all notifications made to parents/guardians regarding assessment and recommended placements and programs for EL students, and whether or not a parental waiver form is received. When a waiver form is not received from the parent/guardian, the district shall proceed with the recommended placement.

EL students who have a parental waiver for ELD programs and services shall be assessed on English language proficiency annually, and shall be provided with supports and accommodations to participate in general curricular and extracurricular programs, in order to meet academic standards and graduation requirements.

### **Mandated Health Screening**

#### **Provision of School Health Services and Mandated School Health Services**

The Laurel Highlands School District will provide the following mandated health services to your child/children.

SERVICE	K	1	2	3	4	5
School Nurse Services	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maintenance of Health Record	X	X	X	X	X	X
Immunization Assessment	X	X	X	X	X	X
Medical Examination	*	*				
Dental Examination	*	*		X		
Growth Screen	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hearing Screen	X	X	X	X		
Scoliosis Screen						
Tuberculin Test	*	*				
Vision Screen-Far Visual Acuity Test	X	X	X	X	X	X
Vision Screen-Near Visual Acuity Test	X	X	X	X	X	X
Vision Screen-Convex Lens Test (Plus Lens)		X				

**If you do not approve of any of the screenings listed below please send a written letter to the school nurse indicating the screening in which you do not want your child to participate.**

### **Medications**

All medication, including over the counter medication, must be reported to and handled by the school nurse. A doctor's prescription is needed for any type of medication, (even aspirin). Teachers will not dispense medication. All medication will be kept in a locked location in the Health Room.

### **Medication Policy and Procedures**

This communication is to establish guidelines for children who must take prescription medication while in school. Prescription medication can be given on a

daily basis at school by complying with the following policies and procedures:

- Furnish a written authorization from the child's physician and parent or guardian. (Medical authorization forms are available at school.)
- Send only those prescription medications which must be given during school hours. (Medications given three times per day should be given before and after school and at bed time.)
- **IMPORTANT:** Medication should be sent in the original prescription container.
- Parent/Guardian must bring medication to the office. **DO NOT** send medication with your child on the school bus. Medication will be prohibited in desks, lockers, or to be carried by the students during the school day.
- The child is to go to the nurse's office and request his/her medication at the scheduled time.
- When the physician is not available for consultation, the parent is to assume the complete responsibility for giving any medication to their child while in school.
- Over the counter medications will not be given in school without a doctor's authorization.

**State Department of Health Regulations lists as follows the minimum days a child must remain out of school for the following diseases:**

Measles: 6 days from onset of illness

Whooping Cough: 4 days from onset

German Measles, Chicken Pox and Mumps—No specified period of exclusion is provided in the regulation. The duration of absence from school in those instances will depend on the illness of the child and shall be at the discretion of the attending physician. If a child returns earlier than these specified days, a note from the family physician must be presented in school.

### **Parent Engagement Policy**

#### **Purpose**

The Board recognizes that parental involvement contributes to the achievement of academic standards by students participating in Title I programs. The Board views the education of students as a cooperative effort among the school, parents/guardians and community.

#### **Authority**

In compliance with federal law, the district and parents/guardians of students participating in Title I programs shall jointly develop and agree upon a written parental involvement policy. When developing and implementing this policy, the district shall ensure the policy describes how the district will:

1. Involve parents/guardians in the joint development of the district's overall Title I plan and the process of school review and improvement, [including Schoolwide Plans](#).
2. Provide the coordination, technical assistance and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
3. Develop activities that promote the schools' and parents'/guardians' capacity for strong parental involvement.
4. Coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies with appropriate programs, as provided by law.
5. Involve parents/guardians in an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the policy in improving the academic quality of schools served under Title I.
6. Identify barriers to participation by parents/guardians who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority.
7. Use findings of annual evaluations to design strategies for more effective parental involvement.
8. Involve parents/guardians in the activities of schools served under Title I.

The Board shall adopt and distribute the parental involvement policy, which shall be incorporated into the district's Title I plan and shall be evaluated annually, with parental involvement

#### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the district's Title I parental involvement policy, plan and programs comply with the requirements of federal law.

The building principal and/or Title I staff shall provide to parents/guardians of students participating in Title I programs:

1. Explanation of the reasons supporting their child's selection for the program.
2. Set of objectives to be addressed.
3. Description of the services to be provided.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that information and reports provided to parents/guardians are in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents/guardians can understand.

#### **Guidelines**

An annual meeting of parents/guardians of participating Title I students shall be held to explain the goals and purposes of the Title I program. Parents/Guardians shall be given the opportunity to participate in the design, development, operation and evaluation of the program. Parents/Guardians shall be encouraged to participate in planning activities, to offer suggestions, and to ask questions regarding policies and programs.

In addition to the required annual meeting, additional parent/guardian meetings shall be held at various times of the day and evening. At these meetings, parents/guardians shall be provided:

1. Information about programs provided under Title I.
2. Description and explanation of the curriculum in use, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet.
3. Description and explanation of the State's academic content standards and student achievement standards, local academic assessment used to measure student progress and work with teachers to improve the achievement of their children.
4. Opportunities to formulate suggestions and to participate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the education of their children.
5. Opportunities to submit parent/guardian comments about the program to the district level.

If sufficient, Title I funding may be used to facilitate parent/guardian attendance at meetings through payment of transportation and child care costs. Opportunities including day and evening conferences shall be provided for parents/guardians to meet with the classroom and Title I teachers to discuss their child's progress. Parents/Guardians may be given guidance as to how they can assist at home in the education of their child.

#### **School-Parental Compact**

Each school in the district receiving Title I funds shall jointly develop with parents/guardians of students served in the program a School-Parental Compact outlining the manner in which parents/guardians, school staff and students share responsibility for improved student achievement in meeting academic standards. The compact shall:[2]

1. Describe the school's responsibility to provide high-quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment, enabling students in the Title I program to meet the district's academic standards.
2. Indicate the ways in which parents/guardians will be responsible for supporting their children's learning, such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and television watching; volunteering in the classroom; and participating, as appropriate, in decisions related to their child's education and positive use of extracurricular time.

Address the importance of parent-teacher communication on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum, parent-teacher conferences, frequent reports to parents/guardians, and reasonable access to staff.

Legal

1. 20 U.S.C. 6318
2. Pol. 102

#### **Playground Rules & Expectations**

Students are to use all equipment properly. Boundaries and expectations will be set by each building principal.

1. Swings
  - a. One student at a time on a swing.
  - b. No jumping off of swings.
  - c. No standing on swings.
  - d. If others are waiting please be courteous and allow others a turn.
  - e. Plan to stay a safe distance away from others while waiting for your turn on the swings.
2. Sliding Boards
  - a. One student at a time going down the slide
  - b. No standing on or running down the slide.
  - c. Make sure bottom area of the slide is clear before sliding down.

3. Students are not to re-enter the building once they are on the playground without the permission of a playground teacher.
4. Gravel, stones, woodchips, acorns, etc. are not to be picked up, thrown, or put down the sliding board.
5. Tackle football, baseball, and acrobatic or gymnastic type activities are not permitted. Other games or activities will be permitted or deemed unsafe at the discretion of the principal or teachers on duty.
6. Please show extreme caution when using any of the playground equipment or apparatus. Watch out for your fellow classmates.
7. When it is time to return to your room please line up quickly but carefully at your assigned area. Do not loiter after the bell has rung.

### **Remote Day**

#### **(Snow/Inclement Weather/Emergencies)**

The district will release the remote day procedures in the fall of 2025.

### **Reporting Time**

When possible, please consider sending your children to school by bus and making it part of the regular school day. When bringing students to school by car, please arrive no later than 8:45 A.M. as Instruction begins at 8:55 A.M.

Please be reminded that arriving late to school is charged as a quarter (.25) day absence.

A doctor's excuse is the only valued excuse for tardiness. A parent-generated excuse will not suffice for tardiness, either A.M. or P.M.

### **Retention Policy**

#### **Promotion and Retention**

The District believes the placement and grooming of students, as well as promotion policies in all grades should be guided by the academic progress of students and his/her instructional needs.

Promotion and Retention decisions are based on successful mastery of academic standards and student academic performance. The need for at least a solid fundamental base for promotion should always be considered. Before retention is considered, every effort must be made to help the student meet the appropriate standards for academic performance. These efforts will include parent conferences and may include remedial classes,

tutoring, counseling and special help from classroom teacher(s).

#### **Promotion and Retention, Grades 1-5**

1. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students must earn a grade of 60% or better in Math and in at least one of the Language Arts subjects (e.g., Reading, Language, Spelling) to be promoted to the next grade level.
    - a. Failing Math and Reading constitutes grounds for retention. (or)
    - b. Failing Math and 1 Language Arts subject (Reading, Language, or Spelling) constitutes grounds for retention. (or)
    - c. Failing 2+ Language Arts subjects (Reading, Language, Spelling) constitutes grounds for retention.
  2. Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 must earn a grade of 60% or better in Math and/or Reading, as well as in 3 of 4 other major subjects (e.g., Language, Spelling, Science/Health, Social Studies) to be promoted to the next grade level.
    - a. Failing Math and Reading constitutes grounds for retention. (or)
    - b. Failing Reading and 1 other major subject constitutes grounds for retention. (or)
    - c. Failing Math and 1 other major subject constitutes grounds for retention.
  3. Promotion or retention of a student with an Individual Education Plan (IEP), may be determined by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team.
  4. In all cases, promotion will also be based on appropriate social, emotional and developmental maturity considering academic standards.
- ❖ It is ***strongly recommended*** that students who pass Reading and/or Math with a "D" grade (60-69%) attend the Title I Summer Reading/Math Camp if available.

Exceptions to this policy can be reviewed by a committee consisting of, but not limited to, the superintendent, district curriculum coordinator, building principal, guidance counselor, and classroom teacher of the student in question. Promotion can be granted if recommended by this committee.

### **Retention**

A student who fails two or more courses and does not seek remedy through alternative programs, such as summer school or pre-approved tutoring, will be retained. The steps involved in assisting students in danger of retention and/or course failure include:

1. All students having difficulty in a given subject will receive a progress report before they receive a failing grade.
2. When students are having difficulty, teachers are encouraged to call and/or have a conference with the student's parents.
3. Parents are encouraged to check student grades using the online electronic grading system.
4. Students in danger of failing the year, will be notified at the end of the first semester.
5. If failure is still an option immediately following the conclusion of the third marking period, a conference may be scheduled.
6. Prior to the end of the school year, another conference may be scheduled to discuss additional options, such as summer school. Options for demonstrating academic standards and hence course completion are:
  - a. Completion of academic standards, using after school programs when available.
  - b. Completion of academic standards in summer school.
  - c. Alternative Education Programs
  - d. Other options as approved by the Principal.
7. A final decision will be rendered once success or failure of all alternatives has been determined. The professional staff will be involved in the consultation and the principal will make the final determination. The decision shall be confirmed in writing

to the parents. In all cases, the decision of the principal is **final**.

### **Safety Drills**

Important Note: Laurel Highlands works to ensure physical and psychological safety for students, and part of that work includes practicing Emergency drills. Monthly, each school will conduct a fire drill in compliance with state law. During the drill, all persons must leave the building and remain outside until given permission to return. Parents are encouraged to support the school in emphasizing the importance of these drills and the need for cooperation and compliance. In addition, bus evacuation, emergency, and weather drills are conducted throughout each school year. Emergency drills including lockdown drills when there is a reported threat to safety (e.g. an event in the community) are practiced annually. The training provided in the lockdown drill provides the safety rehearsal necessary to prepare students and staff. Please visit [www.lhsd.org](http://www.lhsd.org) to find ways to help your child prepare before, during, and after a drill is practiced as each student may react differently.

### **Safety and Privacy with Student Email**

As part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring the safety and privacy of our students while using digital resources, we kindly request your support in reminding your children not to share their email addresses with anyone, especially outside of our approved educational platforms.

By adhering to this guideline, we aim to maintain compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). These regulations are in place to safeguard the online experiences of our students and ensure that their personal information remains confidential and secure.

### **School Visitors**

In order to assure the safety of all students during the school day, access is limited to the front doors of the building. All other doors remain locked to maintain the security of the buildings. Before entering the building, visitors must use the buzzer system to gain access to the building. Visitors are required to report

directly to the security guard's desk and provide their driver license. All guests will be required to go through a metal detection device, sign in at the office, and wear a visitor's pass during their stay. Visitors are not permitted to the classroom during instructional time.

Many opportunities exist throughout the year for parents to attend activities, open houses, programs, and PTO meetings. Please refer to the monthly calendar. To volunteer for Fun Day a parent must have active clearances and completed their volunteer requirements.

### **Student Wellness**

Laurel Highlands School District recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. A Student Wellness policy was adopted in May of 2007 and updated in 2022 for the Laurel Highlands School District. Some of the highlights that directly impact the elementary children follow:

- Individual classroom celebrations that involve food during the school day are limited to three (3) parties per year, not including Kindergarten birthday celebrations. Additional celebrations will be considered on a case by case basis, must be held for a specific purpose, and must be approved by the building principal.
- In elementary schools, celebrations to be held during the school day shall not be held prior to the end of the last lunch period.
- Aside from Kindergarten, birthday parties for individual students throughout the course of the school day shall be prohibited but may be included as part of one or all of the four permissible celebration days as outlined in the policy.
- Policy located at [www.lhsd.org](http://www.lhsd.org) under School Board Policies

### **Suicide Prevention**

#### **SUICIDE AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

The Laurel Highlands School District recognizes the need to protect the health, safety and welfare of its students; to promote healthy development; to

safeguard against the threat or attempt of suicide among school-aged youth and to address barriers to learning.

This policy corresponds with and supports other federal, state and local efforts to provide youth with prevention education, early identification and intervention and access to all local resources to promote health and prevent personal harm or injury.

The District, recognizing its role within the community to address this important issue, shall establish regulations for staff members to follow to prevent suicide and to identify students who may be at risk.

In compliance with state law and regulations, and in support of the District's suicide prevention measures, information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student's parents/guardians, the building principal or other appropriate authority when the health, welfare or safety of the student or any other person is deemed to be at risk.

The District shall utilize a multifaceted approach to suicide prevention which integrates school and community-based supports.

The District shall notify District employees, students and parents/guardians of this policy and shall post the policy on the District's website.

#### **SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION EDUCATION**

##### Protocols for Administration of Student Education

Students shall receive age-appropriate education of the importance of safe and healthy choices, coping strategies, how to recognize risk factors and warning signs, as well as help-seeking strategies for self or others including how to engage school resources and refer friends for help.

Lessons shall contain information on comprehensive health and wellness, including emotional, behavioral and social skills development.

##### Protocols for Administration of Employee Education

District employees, including but not limited to secretaries, coaches, bus drivers, custodians and cafeteria workers, shall receive information regarding risk factors, warning signs, response



procedures, referrals and resources regarding youth suicide prevention.

As part of the District's professional development plan, professional educators in school buildings serving students in grades six (6) through twelve (12) shall participate in four (4) hours of youth suicide awareness and prevention training every five (5) years.

Additional professional development in risk assessment and crisis intervention shall be provided to guidance counselors, District mental health professionals and school nurses.

#### Resources for Parents/Guardians

The District may provide parents/guardians with resources including, but not limited to, health promotion and suicide risk, including characteristics and warning signs; and information about local behavioral/mental health resources.

#### **Methods of Prevention**

The methods of prevention utilized by the District include, but are not limited to, early identification and support for students at risk; education for students, staff and parents/guardians; and delegation of responsibility for planning and coordination of suicide prevention efforts.

#### *Building Level –*

Each building principal shall designate an individual to act as a point of contact in each school for issues relating to suicide prevention and policy implementation. This may be an existing district employee.

#### Early Identification Procedures

Early identification of individuals with one (1) or more suicidal risk factors or of individuals exhibiting warning signs, is crucial to the District's suicide prevention efforts. To promote awareness, District employees, students and parents/guardians

#### Referral Procedures

Any District employee who has identified a student exhibiting a combination of risk factors or who has an indication that a student may be contemplating suicide, shall refer the student for further assessment and intervention.

#### Documentation

The District shall document the reasons for referral, including specific warning signs and risk factors

should be educated about suicide risk factors and warning signs.

**Risk factors** refer to personal or environmental characteristics that are associated with suicide including, but not limited to:

- Behavioral Health Issues/Disorders:

- Depression.
- Substance abuse or dependence.
- Previous suicide attempt(s).
- Self injury.

- Personal Characteristics:

- Hopelessness/Low self-esteem.
- Loneliness/Social alienation/isolation/lack of belonging.
- Poor problem-solving or coping skills.
- Impulsivity/Risk-taking/recklessness.

- Adverse/Stressful Life Circumstances:

- Interpersonal difficulties or losses.
- Disciplinary or legal problems.
- Bullying (victim or perpetrator).
- School or work issues.
- Physical, sexual or psychological abuse.
- Exposure to peer suicide.

- Family Characteristics:

- Family history of suicide or suicidal behavior.
- Family medical health problems.
- Divorce/Death of parent/guardian.
- Parent-Child relationship.

**Warning signs** are indications that someone may be in danger of suicide, either immediately or in the near future. Warning signs include, but are not limited to:

- Expressions such as hopelessness, rage, anger, seeking revenge, feeling trapped, anxiety, agitation, no reason to live or sense of purpose.
- Recklessness or risky behavior.
- Increased alcohol or drug use
- Withdrawal from friends, family or society.
- Dramatic mood changes.

identified as indications that the student may be at risk.

#### **Methods of Intervention**

The methods of intervention utilized by the District include, but are not limited to, responding to suicide threats, suicide attempts in school, suicide attempts outside of school, and completed suicide. Suicide intervention procedures shall address the development of an emotional or mental health safety

plan for students identified as being at increased risk of suicide.

#### Procedures for Students at Risk

A District-approved suicide assessment instrument may be used by trained mental health staff such as counselors, psychologists, social workers. Parents/Guardians of a student identified as being at risk of suicide shall be notified by the school. If the school suspects that the student's risk status is the result of abuse or neglect, school staff shall immediately notify Children and Youth Services. The District shall identify mental health service providers to whom students can be referred for further assessment and assistance.

**Mental health service providers** – may include, but not be limited to, hospital emergency departments, psychiatric hospitals, community mental health centers, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and primary care providers.

The District shall create an emotional or mental health safety plan to support a student and the student's family if the student has been identified as being at increased risk of suicide.

#### Students with Disabilities

For students with disabilities who are identified as being at risk for suicide or who attempt suicide, the appropriate team shall be notified and shall address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

If a student is identified as being at risk for suicide or attempts suicide and the student may require special education services or accommodations, the Director of Special Education shall be notified and shall take action to address the student's needs in accordance with applicable law, regulations and Board policy.

#### Documentation

The District shall document observations, recommendations and actions conducted throughout the intervention and assessment process including verbal and written communications with students, parents/guardians and mental health service providers.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations providing recommended guidelines for responding to a suicide threat.

## **METHODS OF RESPONSE TO SUICIDE OR SUICIDE ATTEMPT**

In the event of a suicide threat, established procedures shall be followed:

1. Student shall not be left alone. Student needs to be accompanied by a staff member to a counselor.
2. Report threat to building administrator, nurse and/or counselor.
3. Notify the parent/guardian immediately. If unable to contact the parent/guardian, call the Mental Health Crisis Unit.
4. Discuss mental health assessment with the parent/guardian.
5. Initiate steps for a No Suicide Contract with the student.
6. Confirm assessment by building administrator or Suicide Prevention Point of Contact.

The method of response to a suicide or a suicide attempt utilized by the District include, but are not limited to:

1. Identifying and training the school crisis response/crisis intervention team.
2. Determining the roles and responsibilities of each crisis response team member.
3. Notifying students, employees and parents/guardians.
4. Working with families.
5. Responding appropriately to the media.
6. Collaborating with community providers.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations with recommended guidelines for responding to a suicidal act or attempt on school grounds or during a school-sponsored event

#### Re-Entry Procedures

A student's excusal from school attendance after a mental health crisis and the student's return to school shall be consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.

A District-employed mental health professional, the building principal, guidance counselor, or designee shall meet with the parents/guardians of a student returning to school after a mental health crisis and, if appropriate, meet with the student to discuss re-entry and applicable next steps to ensure the student's readiness to return to school.

When authorized by the student's parent/guardian, the designated District employee shall coordinate



with the appropriate outside mental health care providers.

The designated District employee will periodically check in, as needed, with the student to facilitate the transition back into the school community and address any concerns.

#### **REPORT PROCEDURES**

Effective documentation assists in preserving the safety of the student and ensuring communication among school staff, parents/guardians and mental health service providers.

When a District employee takes notes on any conversations or situations involving or relating to an at-risk student, the notes should contain only factual or directly observed information, not opinions or hearsay.

As stated in this policy, District employees shall be responsible for effective documentation of incidents involving suicide prevention, intervention and response.

The building principal or designee shall provide the Superintendent or designee with a copy of all reports and documentation regarding the at-risk student. Information and reports shall be provided, as appropriate, to guidance counselors, district mental health professionals and school nurses.

#### **SUICIDE AWARENESS AND PREVENTION RESOURCES**

A listing of resources regarding suicide awareness and prevention shall be attached to this policy.

#### **Valuables**

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Students are not to bring large amounts of money or valuable merchandise, such as cameras, cell phones, electronic devices, leather jackets, etc. to school. If a student wears glasses or jewelry, he/she is to keep track of them at all times. Students are responsible for personal property. **Please mark all of your child's belongings, jackets and book bags in particular, with a permanent marker.** No toys or items from home are permitted into the building unless for a project that has been cleared by the teacher.