ELEMENTARY STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

Learning. Leading. Living Purposefully.

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This handbook will answer many of the questions you may have about the rules and activities here at the elementary level. It has been designed to provide students with a tool that will promote success in all academic and extracurricular activities. It includes the Code of Student Conduct and other pertinent information about the elementary centers. We hope that this will be helpful to you throughout the year. Digital signatures are required once students and families have read the handbook.

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HAMBURG AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

To foster in each learner the knowledge, skills, and mindset to live purposefully.

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Michele Zimmerman, Business Manager
Teresa Freiwald, Chief Learning Officer
Robert Marra, Director of Special Education & Student Services
Dr. Shawn Gravish, Director of Operations
Aaron Menapace, Director of Athletics
Jillian Bergman, Director of Food Service
Andrew Diehl, Director of Information Technology
Margaret Schearer, Transportation & Child Accounting

The Hamburg Area School District is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or handicap in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and ADA.

The School District will provide those related services, aids, and accommodations which are needed to afford all students an equal opportunity to participate in and obtain benefits of the school program and co-curricular activities without discrimination and to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's ability.

For information regarding Civil Rights, Grievance Procedures, as well as services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to handicapped persons, contact the Hamburg Area School District, Hamburg, PA 19526-0401 (610-562-2241).

ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

Reports of Student Progress

Progress reports are issued to students every twelve weeks (3 times per year), approximately one week after the trimester ends. Parents can access student's reports and attendance on the Community Web Portal, which is located on the district website.

Title One

HASD participates in a schoolwide Title One federally funded program. Based on results of benchmark assessments, students are identified for targeted interventions with a Title One teacher throughout the school year. More information is available on the HASD website.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AI is a useful tool when used appropriately. As AI becomes more integrated into our lives, it is crucial to use it responsibly. This includes understanding the implications of AI decisions, respecting privacy, and ensuring fairness and transparency in AI applications. AI cannot be used for assignments without teacher approval. Use of AI tools without permission will be considered a violation of academic integrity. Consequences for unauthorized AI use will be determined at the teacher's discretion and may include, but are not limited to: receiving a zero on the assignment, resubmission of work under supervision, parent/guardian notification, and/or disciplinary referral in repeated or severe cases.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Every child is required to attend school every day.

The child's parents or guardians are legally responsible to ensure that the child attends school on a regular basis and is absent only for the reasons allowed by law. Any parent or guardian found violating the law are subject to prosecution, fine and court costs.

A parent/guardian convicted of habitual truancy may be fined: (1) up to $300 per offense, with court costs, for the first offense; (2) up to $500 per offense, with court costs, for the second offense; and (3) $750 per offense, with court costs, for the third and any and all subsequent offenses.

ABSENCE/TARDINESS

1. All students who are not in their homeroom by 9:00 AM are tardy for school.
2. All students who arrive at school after 11:20 AM will be recorded as a half-day absence for the morning.
3. All students who leave school before 1:20 PM will be recorded as a half-day absence for the afternoon.
4. A student who has been absent from school one-half day or more will, after his/her return, obtain an excuse card or complete the electronic excuse form located on the district website and have it signed by his/her parent or guardian stating:
    a. The date or dates of absence
    b. The student's name and homeroom
    c. The reason for absence

This excuse card is to be presented to the homeroom teacher or main office for the attendance records. **All students that are absent from school for more than three consecutive days are required to provide a physician's note for the absence to be excused.** When the reason for the student's absence is questionable, when an absence is extended, or when the attendance pattern is irregular, a statement from a physician will be required**.**

All students will have **three school days** following their return to present an excuse card to their homeroom teacher explaining their absence. If the excuse card has not been presented by the fourth day, the absence will be recorded as unexcused/unlawful.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

According to School District Policy, the following are the only legal reasons for an excused absence:

Illness	Injury or Medical Procedure
Quarantine	Medical/Dental Appointments
Family Emergency	Impassable Roads
Approved Educational Trip	Required Court Attendance
Religious Holidays/Instruction	

EARLY DISMISSALS

Students who need to leave school early are required to submit a note, hard-copy or virtually, from a parent or guardian.

The following must be indicated on each request:

1. Name, grade, and homeroom section of student
2. Date and time of requested dismissal
3. Parent/guardian signature and phone number
4. Reason for request

Early dismissals are excused for the following reasons:

1. Physician's appointment
2. Court appearances (verification required)
3. Death in the immediate family
4. Religious observances
5. School-related activities (*i.e.* field trips, athletics, etc.)
6. Other exceptionally urgent reasons that are authorized by school administration

EDUCATIONAL ABSENCES

All students who are going to be absent from school due to a planned trip must request an educational absence to have those days marked "excused." Educational absences may not be granted during the weeks of state testing (PSSA's) and the first 5 days of the school year. Forms are available in the main office or online and **must** be submitted five (5) days in advance of the anticipated absence. Educational absences exceeding 10 school days requires a meeting with the building principal prior to the trip.

UNEXCUSED OR UNLAWFUL ABSENCES

If a student is unlawfully absent for three school days, a notice will be sent to the parents or guardians informing them of the absences. **Additional unlawful absences subject the parents or guardians and the student to a hearing before a District Justice and the penalties imposed by law**.

Absences will be recorded as unexcused/unlawful, based on, but not limited to, the following list of reasons:

Oversleeping	Car Trouble
Unauthorized trips	Missing the bus

No student may excuse themselves from school under any circumstances. All students will be subject to the compulsory attendance expectations; parents/guardians will be subject to the consequences of the accumulation of unlawful absences.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCES

Benchmarks have been established to notify parents of accumulated absences on behalf of their child. Parents should contact the school administration to discuss any concerns or situations that may result in the need for special arrangements or to address their child's attendance. Letters are sent home when a child reaches each of the following:

3 days unlawful during the school year

6 days unlawful during the school year - Parents/Guardians will be required to participate in a School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) to identify and eliminate absenteeism issues.

10 total days - Once a student accumulates 10 absences, the student will be required to supply a written note from a doctor for each additional absence.

TARDINESS

Any child arriving at school after 9:00 a.m. must be accompanied into the building by an adult.

a. All students are permitted three excused tardies per year with a parent/guardian signed note/excuse card. An excess of three tardies will require a written doctor's note.
b. Tardiness that occurs more than fifteen times in a school year will be considered excessive and will result in an attendance conference. When a student is illegally tardy again after the attendance conference is held, it may result in a citation/fine.

BULLYING PREVENTION

The entire faculty is committed to the prevention of bullying and will address every occurrence.

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, or verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, 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 environment
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Bullying, as defined in Board Policy 249, includes cyberbullying.

BULLYING PREVENTION RULES

Students will…

1. not bully others.
2. help students who are bullied.
3. make it a point to include students who are easily left out.
4. tell an adult, either at school or at home, when someone is being bullied.

DRESS CODE

The Hamburg Area School District has a specified code for dress and grooming. This code is covered under School Board Policy 221. Clothing should be neat, clean, and in good taste. **It should not be extreme to the extent that it focuses attention on the wearer and causes a distraction or disruption in the classroom, hall, or throughout the building.** The administration has the authority to determine inappropriate clothing, attire or costuming. Some examples of such inappropriate items may be, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Clothing, tattoos, patches, buttons, pins, jewelry, backpacks, etc. that have obscene or sexually suggestive writing/pictures, advocate violence, advertise, imply or promote the use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs, have double meaning wording, obscene language, or are disrespectful.
2. All tops and dresses must have sleeves that pass the shoulder. Halter tops, tube tops, spaghetti strap tops, tank tops, muscle shirts, mesh tops worn alone, and clothes that expose the midriff or undergarments are not acceptable. In addition, see-through, provocative, excessively tight, sagging, or improperly fitting clothing may not be worn.
3. Tears, holes, or distressed clothing are permitted if pelvic/groin area and buttocks are covered and undergarments are not exposed.
4. Underwear worn as outerwear; underwear that can be seen, or any clothing not worn as designated/intended.
5. Clothes must be worn in a way such that the chest, midriff, pelvic/groin area and buttocks are covered. Shorts/skirts/dresses must be acceptable in length.
6. Hats and other head apparel, such as but not limited to du-wraps, bandanas, scarves, visors, hoods, etc.
7. Sunglasses, jackets, and coats worn during the school day unless deemed necessary by administration.
8. Chains, pins, dog collars, dangling jewelry, or other ornaments that may be disruptive, damaging to school furniture or present a safety hazard.
9. Pants must be worn at the waist and fit properly.
10. Shoes that pose a safety threat. Shoes must always be worn.
11. Costume effect contact lenses or make-up, decorative masks, or headpieces and other items that do not serve a legitimate purpose (i.e. part of a costume) are not permitted.
12. Inappropriate, visible tattoos (as defined in number 1 above) must be covered in full every day.
13. The administration will consider factors of safety, cleanliness, suitability to the activity, and commonly held standards of decency to determine the appropriateness of clothing.

***Parents may be asked to bring a change of attire to the school if the policy is violated.*

CAFETERIA CONDUCT

Eating lunch in the cafeteria is a privilege, not a right. Student behavior in the cafeteria is expected to be orderly and mannerly and will be monitored by the cafeteria proctors. Failure to obey the established cafeteria rules may result in disciplinary action or removal from the cafeteria.

The following procedures should be followed:

1. Students are expected to follow all directions given by the lunch monitors.
2. Students must remain in their seats. They are not permitted to wander about the cafeteria.
3. Talking and socializing is permitted, but yelling and/or loud talking will not be tolerated.
4. Students must seek permission to leave the cafeteria. All students granted permission to use the lavatories must use the lavatories located adjacent to the cafeteria.
5. Students are to keep their areas clean. Food or any item dropped on the floor must be picked up.
6. Throwing of any items is strictly prohibited.

BUS PROCEDURES & CONDUCT

RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS IS A PRIVILEGE...NOT A RIGHT

School laws of Pennsylvania provide for the transportation of children to and from school. Safety requires the school district to enforce the rules for proper school bus conduct. The school bus driver is authorized to enforce the rules of conduct that must be adhered to within the policies set forth by the district.

Transportation is provided to:

Elementary Students (Grades K – 5):

a. who live more than 1.5 miles from their attending school.
b. who live in a walking area (1.5 mi. or less) that has been declared hazardous by Penn DOT.

Secondary Students (Grades 6 – 12):

a. who live more than 2.0 miles from their attending school.
b. who live in a walking area (2.0 mi. or less) that has been declared hazardous by Penn DOT.

SCHOOL BUS RULES AND GUIDELINES

Appropriate student behavior is critical. When a driver's attention is called from the road, the chance of an accident increases. Maintaining good order on school buses requires the cooperation of everyone.

PRIOR TO LOADING:

1. Students should wait for the bus at a safe place, on the side of the street on which they live. Cross the street to enter the bus only when the bus is stopped, and the red flashing signals are activated.
2. Students must be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to the time designated and be ready to board with the least possible delay. The bus must maintain their set schedule and cannot wait.
3. Respect the property rights of people who reside at or near the bus stop.
4. Students may board only assigned buses and may board only at the bus stop they are assigned. Boarding another bus requires a bus pass.
5. Act 65 prohibits anyone from boarding a school bus without proper authorization.

WHILE ON THE BUS: (THESE RULES ALSO APPLY TO FIELD TRIPS)

1. Observe classroom conduct and follow the bus driver's instructions. The bus driver has the same authority on the bus as a teacher has in the classroom.
2. Do not distract the bus driver; they must concentrate on driving.
3. Students may not block the aisle or emergency door with musical instruments, athletic equipment, lunch boxes, books or other possessions.
4. Students are to be assigned a seat and stay in their assigned seat.
5. For the safety of the student, students must remain seated while the bus is in motion or if the bus is delayed on the road.
6. For safety, students must not extend any body part out of the bus windows, roof hatches or emergency exits.
7. Students must not damage or tamper with any parts of the bus or use the emergency door, except in the case of an emergency.
8. Roughhousing, fighting, vulgarity, profanity, throwing items in the bus or other improper conduct will not be tolerated.
9. Students may not smoke or use tobacco products or vaping products while on the bus.
10. To prevent choking, students may not eat, drink or chew gum while on the bus.
11. For sanitary reasons, students may not spit inside the bus or out of the bus windows.
12. Nothing is to be thrown on the inside or outside of the bus.
13. Items that may harm any student are not allowed on the bus.
14. Musical instruments, large duffle bags, class projects or other uncontrollable items may not be brought on the bus, unless small enough for the student to control on their lap.
15. Students bringing small toys to school must keep them in their bookbag while on the bus. Balls, yo-yos, etc. could roll under the driver's feet and/or pedals and may cause an unsafe situation.
16. Anything that has a strong odor is not to be opened/sprayed on the bus, as there may be students/bus drivers who are strongly sensitive/allergic to these smells.
17. Any conduct that endangers the safety of the other students, or driver, will be considered severe and could result in immediate loss of bus riding privileges.
18. Students may depart the bus only at their assigned stop, unless a bus pass is given.
19. **Students may not take photos or videos while on the bus.**

AFTER LEAVING THE BUS:

1. If you must cross the road, cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus, but only after looking to be sure no traffic is approaching from either direction. Always make sure approaching cars stop before crossing. **NEVER cross behind the bus.**

2. Help look after the safety and comfort of younger children.
3. Go directly to your school building in the morning and directly home in the afternoon.

ALTERNATE BUS STOPS:
Alternate stop requests are digital and can be found on the district website.

Grades K-8: Families may designate one (1) morning pick-up stop (home or babysitter) and one (1) afternoon drop-off stop (home or babysitter). The pick-up location may be different from the drop-off location; however, the pick-up and drop-off locations must be consistent each day Monday through Friday for the entire school year. Rotating days cannot be accommodated. Please see Guideline 2 below regarding custody agreements.

All Grades: Emergency requests will only be considered for specific reasons outlined below. Requests should be in writing and be made as early as possible. The driver will not accept a note from the parent. Acceptable reasons for emergency requests may include custody agreements, death in the family, medical emergency, or if parents/guardians are out of town for a temporary time period. Unacceptable requests include but are not limited to spending an evening at a friend's house, going to a dance, going to work, or completing school projects/homework with classmates.

Further Guidelines Regarding Alternate Stops:
1. Alternate stops will only be granted if all the following apply: Seating is available, it is along an existing route and is located at an existing stop.
2. Alternate stops must be a set pattern and not changing. Stops are MON-FRI and AM, PM, or BOTH. Requests for rotating days cannot be accommodated. All customized transportation as stated in a custody agreement, must have an accompanying calendar with stop locations. Custody agreements and associated calendars must be sent to the transportation office.
3. Requests will not be honored for social activities.
4. ONE alternate stop is permitted for students in grades K-8.
5. The alternate stop must be located within the attendance boundaries of the HASD school your child is enrolled in.

BUS DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES:
The responsibility of maintaining discipline on the school buses begins with the individual driver. Bus incident reports will be the primary tool for use by the driver to report misconduct. The reports are forwarded to the building principal for corrective disciplinary action.
Warning Phase: The first and second offense may result in a verbal warning and seat change. Parents/Guardians may be notified. If the violation is severe, the warning phase may be omitted. School administrators may suspend bus privileges for severe violations and/or any further or subsequent disciplinary offense.

TRANSPORTATION AUDIO/VIDEO MONITORING:
The Board recognizes that the serious misconduct on board a bus jeopardizes the safety of all the passengers. Audio/Video surveillance may be used for disciplinary or security purposes. A warning (via posted decal) informs riders that audio/video monitoring system may be always used. Review of the surveillance will be limited to the Principal, Transportation Director and Superintendent or Designee. A request for viewing such footage may be made by the student's parent or guardian if disciplinary action has been recommended. All requests must be made in writing and at the parent or guardian's expense the other student faces redacted. Parents may only view that portion of the tape which documents the alleged misbehavior of their child on the bus. Audio/video surveillance could be available for all school related bus transportation.

FLAG SALUTE & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

It is the responsibility of all citizens to show proper respect for his/her country and its flag. Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

All students have the right to express themselves, unless the expression materially and substantially interferes with the educational process, threatens immediate harm to the welfare of the school or community, encourages unlawful activity or interferes with another individual's rights.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Each student will receive a school identification card with their school picture displayed. The card may be used to gain entry into certain events and to identify them as current Hamburg Area students.

LOST AND FOUND

Student articles that are lost and/or suspected of being stolen are to be reported the day the article is discovered missing. Students who find articles that do not belong to them are asked to turn them in at the office. Articles not claimed by the end of the school year will be donated to charity. HASD is not responsible for lost/stolen items but will investigate and issue disciplinary consequences if possible. If students are concerned about potential theft of valuable personal items (i.e. air pods, cell phones, etc.), they are encouraged to leave those items at home.

STUDENT PRIVACY

Without the prior written consent of the student (if the student is an adult or emancipated minor), or in the case of an unemancipated minor, without the prior written consent of the parent, no student shall be required to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

1. Political affiliations
2. Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or family.
3. Sexual behavior and attitudes.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminated and demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers.
7. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program). Such a survey, analysis, or evaluation may, however, be conducted on a wholly voluntary basis, provided that the student and parents have been notified of their rights.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may possess cell phones for use before and after school, but their possession during the school day is strictly prohibited. (Section 1317.1 PA School Code) Use is interpreted as using any cell phone function or feature, not just sending or receiving calls or texts. Cell phones must be turned off upon entering the school building and may not be turned on again until the end of the school day. The use of any personal electronic device is prohibited during school hours. Special exceptions may be made only with prior administrative approval in extreme circumstances.

Students are NOT permitted to use their cell phone/smart watch or any other electronic device to text, make phone calls, video calls, or take pictures/videos at any point during the school day.

Harmful or harassing social media posts or messages made during school hours or made outside of school that create a disruption to the educational process in school constitute Level III harassment and will result in disciplinary measures, as well as possible referral to police.

Administration reserves the right to confiscate the phone/smart watch/electronic device or prohibit its use for students after repeated violations. The student will be prohibited from having the phone/smart watch/electronic device in their possession on school property for a period of time or for the remainder of the year.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

The Hamburg Area School District participates in a free program provided by Google called Google Apps for Education. This service allows us to provide communication (email) and collaboration (documents) to our students and staff. Since the implementation, students and teachers have found a variety of ways to use the Google tools in classrooms and beyond.

Every elementary student will be assigned to an individual email account which is necessary to access this valuable resource. The Hamburg Area School District maintains all accounts assigned to the Hamburg (hak12) domain. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child about appropriate online communication and view the account together.

The following are excerpts from Board Policy 815, regarding the acceptable use of digital technology in the District.
"DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY" shall mean all forms of digital technology, including software, hardware, and digital services of any nature and kind that is based on digital technology, that is provided directly or indirectly by the HASD to its employees or students, and that is: (i) owned, leased or licensed to the HASD; or (ii) that is accessed by or through digital technology that is owned, leased or licensed to the HASD. "DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY" includes computers; servers; networks; programs; software; digital files, folders, data and records of any nature; the Internet; cell phones; voicemail; E-mail; user groups; applications; social media platforms; and such similar technologies.

Purpose

The Hamburg Area School District ("HASD") makes various forms of digital technology available to its students for educational purposes exclusively.

Prohibitions

Students shall not:

1. Use any digital technology for any purpose other than for the legitimate educational purposes of the HASD's students.
2. Use any digital technology for personal business or affairs, except as expressly provided in this policy or in administrative guidelines promulgated and adopted by the Technology Coordinator or his/her designee.
3. Use any computer unless and until a confidential user ID and password have been assigned to the student.
4. Use any computer without using his/her user ID and password.
5. Terminate use of any computer without logging off the computer.
6. Disclose his/her password to any other individual.
7. Use the user ID and/or password belonging to or assigned to any other individual.
8. Open or log onto any computer, software, program or application using or inputting the user ID and/or password of any other individual or entity.
9. Misrepresent his/her identity when using the HASD's computers including the use of anonymous Internet proxy servers.
10. Bypass CIPA Compliant Software or any other blocking, security or anti-virus software that may be used or installed by the HASD by use of either direct means or subterfuge.
11. Intentionally, willfully, maliciously or through reckless indifference damage or corrupt the functioning of any digital technology or any data stored, either temporarily or permanently, on any digital technology.
12. Visit or access pornographic websites.
13. Violate any applicable Code of Student Conduct.
14. Use any computers until he/she has signed an acknowledgment, in a form prescribed by HASD, attesting to his/her understanding of the rules governing the use of digital technology.
15. Intentionally enter any secure or confidential area of the HASD's systems or computers without proper authority.
16. Violate any copyright laws or the ownership or license rights of any person or entity.
17. Violate the legal rights of others.
18. Knowingly infect any computer with any virus.
19. Use any software or Internet site in violation of any applicable licensing agreement or applicable terms of use. Licensing Terms of any digital technology either owned, operated or leased by HASD shall not be construed in any way to supersede any HASD policy regarding said digital technology.
20. Use any digital technology to gain unauthorized, unwanted or unwarranted access into anyone else's computers or networks in any way or manner.
21. Use any data mining, robots, or similar data gathering and extraction methods in violation of any person's or entity's rights.
22. Use digital technology to violate any applicable law, including the Wiretap and Electronic Surveillance Control Act.
23. Outside the circumstances or situations which pertain to direct classroom instruction, install any software program onto, or download any software program onto any computers without the express approval of the Technology Coordinator.
24. Fail to report to the classroom teacher any time when he/she inadvertently accesses a pornographic or other restricted site.
25. Outside the circumstances or situations which pertain to direct classroom instruction, alter or change the desktop or the look or operation of any desktop of any computer.
26. Outside the circumstances or situations which pertain to direct classroom instruction, alter or change the screen saver, or the look or operation of any screen saver, installed by the HASD.
27. Outside the circumstances or situations which pertain to direct classroom instruction, delete, disable or remove any program, or application from any HASD computer.

Privacy

No student using the HASD's digital technology shall have any right of privacy or expectation of privacy with respect to anything done with said digital technology. The digital technology belongs to, is licensed to, or is accessible through digital technology that is owned by or licensed to the HASD. The HASD retains all rights as an owner or licensee with respect to all digital technology that it owns or licenses and has, unless restricted by an express agreement with a third party supplier, the rights of an owner or licensee, including, the rights to use, transfer, inspect, look in, read or store any such digital technology.

Permissible and Impermissible Uses of Digital Technology

1. Digital technology may be used only for legitimate educational purposes.
2. Digital technology is being provided or made available to students solely as part of the educational program, for the purpose of teaching students how to use and employ digital technology, and to further the teaching of the HASD's curriculum and educational programs. The HASD is not, through digital technology that is being made available by the HASD to students, creating a public forum, an open public forum or a limited public forum.
3. Digital technology may not be used by students for speech or expressive conduct:
    a. That materially and substantially interferes with the education process;
    b. That threatens immediate harm to the welfare of the school community, or to any individual;
    c. That is lewd, vulgar, indecent or obscene or which contains sexual innuendo, metaphor or simile;
    d. That encourages unlawful activity;
    e. That interferes with another individual's rights;
    f. That constitutes libel, slander or defamation; or
    g. That is sexually, racially or ethnically related, that is offensive, threatening or an affront to the sensibilities of others, and that is unlawful under the standards of the anti-discrimination laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or The United States of America.
4. All expressive conduct or material, whether verbal, written, or graphic-created, downloaded, maintained, copied, pasted, harvested or otherwise obtained, used or transmitted by, to, from or with the HASD's digital technology, is required to be related to the adopted curriculum, assigned classroom activities, or school programs. Consequently, all expressive conduct by students shall be (i) age appropriate; (ii) consistent with the rules of grammar, spelling, sentence structure and format being taught by the HASD; and (iii) consistent with the abilities of the student.

CONSEQUENCES

Students shall be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including permanent expulsion in the event that any one or more provisions of this policy are violated.

MEDICINES

Students are not permitted to take medicines in school without the direct order of a physician. Medications to be administered in school, including aspirin, antihistamines, cough drops, and ointments, shall be given to the school nurse, who will administer them upon request of a parent/guardian and order of a physician. All medications must be properly labeled with instructions. The in-school medication administration form MUST be completed and can be found on the Health Services page of the district website.

MEDIA RELEASE

The Hamburg Area School District is proud of our students and wants to share news about activities, events and happenings that occur in the schools with parents/guardians and the community. This may be done through school publications, the district's web page or local media including, but not limited to, social media, television, radio, yearbooks, or the newspapers. To respect your right to privacy, please complete the media release form available on the Sapphire Community Portal if you have any objection to your child's name and/or photo appearing in such publications. **The District will assume your consent if the form is not completed.**

DELIVERIES TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OFFICE

Food delivery services including but not limited to Door Dash and Uber Eats are not permitted during the school day. The delivery of balloons, flowers, and other non-essential items to the Elementary School Office during the school day may cause a distraction and will be discouraged. All non-essential items will be held in the office until the end of the day in an effort to minimize distractions from the educational process. **Any birthday or classroom edible treats must be store-bought with all ingredients listed. Parents are encouraged to check with the classroom or nurse regarding any food allergies in the classroom.**

PTO ACTIVITIES

All school rules and expectations apply during any PTO event.

ELEMENTARY STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ESAP)

The Hamburg Area Elementary Student Assistance Program (ESAP) is a multi-disciplinary team composed of school personnel (teachers, administrators, school nurse, and counselors). This team will be trained to understand the issues of adolescent chemical use, abuse, and dependency, as well as mental health issues. ESAP will play a primary role in the identification and referral process of students coming to their attention through the procedures outlined by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Student Assistance Program. ESAP is not a treatment program; rather it is a systematic process to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning and, where the problems are beyond the scope of the school, to assist the student and parents with information so they may access services in the community. In addition, the ESAP team, with parent approval, may offer student-centered services such as educational support groups, in-school mentoring, and aftercare resources.

THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM

Each building has trained personnel to support the educational community. If at any time one has information concerning the safety and well-being of any member of the school community, please share your concern with a team member immediately. Please refer to the school district website for additional information.

HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS PROGRAM

The Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness program (ECYEH) is an initiative of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and is based on the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This federal legislation ensures that homeless children and youth have access to a free, appropriate, public education. Children and youth are eligible for services under the McKinney-Vento Act if they have been displaced from their homes and are living in a place that is not fixed, regular, or adequate, such as:

- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- In a place not designated as regular sleeping accommodation, such as a vehicle, park, hotel, or campground
- In a homeless or domestic violence shelter or transitional housing placement
- Outside of his/her home as an unaccompanied youth
- In any of the situations listed above as the child of a migrant family

The McKinney-Vento Act defines unaccompanied youth as "a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and lacking a fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residence." Unaccompanied youth have the same rights as other displaced students plus:

- The right to enroll in school as an independent student.
- The right to the same challenging academic standards as housed students, including partial credit and credit recovery when needed.
- The right to be informed of their status as independent students for FAFSA and receive verification of that status.

Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to:

- Continue their education in their current school, and receive transportation OR enroll immediately in the school where they are temporarily housed, even if lacking the paperwork normally required
- Participate in all applicable school programs, including supplemental services
- Receive free lunch
- Receive assistance with school-related expenses such as supplies, clothing, uniforms, etc.

HASD families experiencing homelessness are encouraged to follow the various HASD Facebook Pages for building/district-wide activities and initiatives. Families enrolled at HASD may also receive email/phone notifications of events/activities occurring at the building/district levels.

HASD collaborates with local agencies and businesses that work to aid those in need. For information regarding community resources and agencies, please navigate to the "Student Services" section of the HASD website.

The district will make a best interest determination when notified of a family/student becoming homeless/displaced. If a dispute involving a student experiencing educational instability arises, the concern shall be addressed and/or resolved at the lowest appropriate level in accordance with Board Policy 251. Information regarding disputes may be found on the "Student Service" section of the HASD website.

School District Responsibilities

The school district must appoint a liaison to ensure school staff are aware of the McKinney-Vento Act, to provide public notice to homeless families, and to facilitate access to school and transportation services. The position serves as liaison between the school, parents, students, and community agencies to meet the educational needs of the students. If you have a student/child who may qualify for our program's assistance and services, or would like more information, please contact our Homeless Education Liaison: Director of Student Services, 610-562-2241.

PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL ABUSE AND HARASSMENT

The law is clear that school districts have a duty to protect students from sexual abuse and harassment. It is the policy of the Hamburg Area School District to prohibit improper conduct of whatever kind, including sexual abuse and harassment of students, by school employees, fellow students, and others who come in contact with students during school or through school activities. Students and school employees should report any suspected violations of this policy to the principal or superintendent.

SEARCHES AND SEIZURES

The school district recognizes that The Fourth Amendment provides that students have a right "to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures." However, with the passage of the Gun Free Schools Act, the Safe Schools Act, and Act 26 of 1995 that amends the School Code, it is imperative that the school also recognizes its responsibility to protect and maintain the health, welfare, and safety of all students.

Consequently, the school district contends that school lockers and desks belong to the school, and that students are only given permission to use them. It is with this understanding that students should assume no expectation of privacy and realize that searches may be conducted by school officials with or without any suspicion of wrongdoing on the part of the student. Students should be aware that all student desks and lockers may be searched at any time and for any reason, with no qualifications or exceptions.

Student lockers and desks will be inspected from time to time to ensure they are being properly cared for and that the contents are in no way harmful to the student and other persons in the school building. Any illegal material may be seized.

Students may also be asked to empty their pockets, book bags, purses, and other personal articles to search for illegal, controlled, or criminal material.

DRUG/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/INHALANT USE

Please refer to School Board Policy 351 Drug and Substance Abuse.

All students are prohibited from the possession and use of tobacco products, vaping devices, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or drug paraphernalia (1) on school grounds, (2) in school buildings or school buses, (3) while participating in or attending an approved school function. The possession or use of any non-medical liquid or spray, (such as perfume, cologne, or glue) as an inhalant is also prohibited.

All students who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol shall be referred to School Administration/Nurse immediately. The school nurse will determine reasonable suspicion of whether the student is under the influence. If reasonable suspicion is determined, the student may be suspended from school for ten days. Law enforcement may be contacted.

If it is determined that the student is distributing drugs or alcohol on school property, the student will be suspended from school for ten days and a hearing will be held with the Board of School Directors, a committee of the Board, or its designee, with administrative recommendation for expulsion from school.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Hamburg Area Board of School Directors has adopted a code of student conduct which includes policies governing student discipline and a listing of student rights and responsibilities as outlined in Chapter 12 of the State Board of Education regulations. A complete copy of PA Code 12.2, Student Responsibilities, is available online.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

One of our goals is to help young learners grow and develop into respectful and productive members of society. The purpose of this code of conduct is to make known the responsibilities of each learner, so that all learners may realize their full potential.

However, these guidelines are not intended to be all inclusive as they do not always cover every situation and every condition. Therefore, if in the judgment of the school administration, a student's behavior is not defined in the code of student conduct, the administration will take appropriate action in the best interest of the student and the school.

Section 1317 of the Pennsylvania School Code provides as follows: S13-1317 - Authority of teachers, vice/assistant principals and principals over students. "Every teacher, vice principal, and principal in the public schools shall have the right to exercise the same authority as to the conduct and behavior over the pupils attending his/her school, during the time they are in attendance; including the time required in going to and from their homes, as the parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to such pupils may exercise over them."

In keeping with Section 1317, HASD believes that one of its goals is the preparation of its students to be lawful and responsible citizens. Therefore, the behavioral code is implemented to be consistent with the components of the student's rights and responsibilities and is committed to assuring equal opportunity and treatment to all students, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or ethnic background.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

To clarify disciplinary actions, offenses have been categorized into levels indicating seriousness. Appropriate disciplinary actions have been listed for each level. The school's primary concern is to assist students in modifying undesirable behavior. To this end, school officials will work with the students, their parents or guardians, as well as resource groups and community agencies to achieve more appropriate behavior.

To apply disciplinary action uniformly for all students, the administration has developed a set of specific disciplinary measures for each level of offense. Most often these can be handled as a routine matter. However, for very serious cases of misconduct, further action may be taken by the Superintendent or Board of School Directors.

Discipline will be administered in a progressive manner, where repeat offenses of the same infraction or level will receive a more severe discipline. A student may progress up the scale at a higher rate, depending on the severity of the offense in question.

LEVEL I OFFENSE

1. Hall pass violation; Not reporting to a scheduled class, homeroom, or assigned area; loitering; leaving class or assigned area without permission
2. Tardiness to class; Failure to provide a late pass.
3. Excessive tardiness to school; failure to sign-in late in the main office.
4. Minor incidence of insubordination, disrespectful, disruptive, or inappropriate behavior on school grounds, busses, and/or school events/trips.
5. Use of abusive language, obscene or profane language or gestures or drawings including school photos.
6. Academic misconduct, unprepared for class, etc.
7. Kissing, or other public displays of affection, besides holding hands
8. Inappropriate touching/Roughhousing/Unsafe Behavior
9. Having an open container of food or drink outside of the cafeteria
10. Misuse of cell phones and/or any other personal electronic devices during school hours, unless otherwise allowed.
11. Littering
12. Dress code violations
13. Minor vandalism
14. Computer/Network Violations
    a. Attempting to bypass network filter

b. Email/Computer Activity with not permitted
c. Laptop missing cover/case
d. Loss/Misplace of Computer/Electronic Device
e. Student Playing Online Games
f. Unacceptable Use of Computer/Network

15. Other minor infractions of unacceptable behavior

LEVEL I ACTION

Disciplinary action includes, but not limited to, the issuance of warning, recess detention, lunch detention, after-school detention, in-school suspension, or suspension of privileges, including, but not limited to, phone/electronic devices.

LEVEL II OFFENSE

1. Continuation of unmodified Level I misbehavior
2. Disrespect to staff
3. Insubordination and/or disruptive behavior
4. Unauthorized recording/pictures of student/staff
5. Academic forgery, plagiarism, cheating - including the unauthorized use of AI
6. Possession of lighter, matches or any other materials that create a spark or flame
7. Defacing/damaging school or personal property
8. Physical/verbal confrontation
9. Hostile or intimidating behavior
10. Failure to serve detention
11. Habitual truancy
12. Leaving school without permission
13. Stealing
14. Entering an unauthorized area of the campus, including but not limited to teacher's desks, storage closets, custodial rooms, etc.
15. More serious incidences of computer usage violations
16. More serious incidences of driving violations on school property
17. Other infractions of more serious unacceptable behavior or any condition that causes a disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health and/or safety hazard

LEVEL II ACTION

Disciplinary action for Level II offenses in any combination will result in the following:

1. A first offense may result in a detention to two-day suspension
2. Any further offenses may result in a one-to-five-day suspension depending on the severity of the behavior/action
3. Permanent loss of privileges, including, but not limited to, phone or electronic devices

Suspensions will be served in or out of school at the discretion of the school administration. Students are responsible for making up exams and work missed while on suspension and will be permitted to complete these assignments upon return to school within a period of time equal to the number of school days the student was suspended. Students may not attend extra-curricular activities or athletic events during their suspension period (both in-school and out of school suspensions apply).

LEVEL III OFFENSE

1. Continuation of unmodified Level II misbehavior
2. Bullying/Cyberbullying
3. Possession, Use, or Sale of Vaping Materials
4. Disorderly Conduct
5. Fighting
6. Racial Comments/Discriminatory Behavior
7. Hazing
8. Institutional Vandalism*
9. Minor Altercation
10. Possession of unauthorized item
11. Possession, Use, or Sale of Tobacco
12. Disruptive Behavior During Detention/Suspension
13. Possession of Pornography
14. Abusive, Obscene, or Profane Language or Gesture Towards Professional/Support Staff
15. Other more serious misconduct

* *"Institutional Vandalism" includes carrying aerosol spray-paint cans, broad-tipped indelible markers or similar marking device onto*

school property with the intent to vandalize, deface or otherwise damage property. Pa. C.S. Section 3307

LEVEL III ACTION

1. A first offense may result in a one- to three-day suspension.
2. A second offense may result in a three- to ten-day suspension.
3. Any further offense may result in a five- to ten-day suspension.

Depending upon the serious nature of the Level III offense, the administration reserves the right to increase the number of days of a suspension for a first offense occurrence.

**Note: Fighting, disorderly conduct, vandalism, and tobacco violations will result in a Level III disciplinary action and potentially a citation, which may result in a fine*.

LEVEL IV / V OFFENSES

1. Verbal/physical assault, serious threat
2. Possession of weapon and/or "look-alike" weapon
3. Tampering with fire alarm, extinguisher, vape detector
4. Deliberate server/network sabotage
5. Extortion
6. Possession and/or use of drugs, look-alike drugs, and/or alcohol or any unauthorized substance; possession of drug paraphernalia; intent to sell and/or distribute drugs and/or alcohol or any unauthorized substance
7. Bomb threats or terroristic threats
8. All other forms of harassment, or threatening behavior towards school administration/staff or student
9. Any other acts punishable under the Pennsylvania Crimes Code

**The Federal gun-Free School Act of 1994 states, "Any student who brings a firearm or weapon to school (as defined in Section 921 of Title 18, United States Code) shall be referred to the criminal justice system." (Public Law 103- 382)*

**The term "weapon" shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury (PA School Code, 1317.2) The term "weapon" shall also include paintball guns, whether operable or inoperable. Therefore, paintball guns are prohibited on school property, a school bus, or at any school sponsored activity.*

** Act 26 of 1995 and Act 30 of 1997 School Safety amends the PA School Code to require a one-year expulsion for students possessing a weapon on school property, on a school bus, or at any school-sponsored activity.*

LEVEL IV / V ACTIONS

Level IV & V acts include those which result in violence to another person or their property or which pose a threat to the safety of others in school. These actions are often criminal and are so serious that they require administrative actions, which may result in police involvement and in the immediate removal of the student from school.

A first offense may result in up to a 10-day out-of-school suspension, depending on context, and may further result in a hearing with the School Board, a committee of the School Board or its designee with administrative recommendation for exclusion of the student from school for a longer specified period of time.

**Note: As per policy 233, the length of the suspension may be shortened during the informal hearing at parent/guardian's request.*

SUSPENSIONS

Students assigned in-school suspension in the office will be responsible to complete assignments given by teachers. The student will be isolated from the rest of the student body and will be subject to certain restrictions.

Participation in all school related activities may resume upon full completion of the suspension. Students on out-of school suspension are not permitted on school property during the time of the suspension.

Students shall be permitted to complete all assignments missed due to the suspension from school. If the work is not assigned prior to the suspension, students will be given time to complete the work equal to the number of days missed due to the suspension. If assignments are not received by the suspended student before departure from school, parents may request the assignments by calling the school office, or by emailing teachers.

ACCUMULATION OF SUSPENSIONS

An accumulation of 20 or more days of suspensions from school may result in a hearing with the School Board with the administrative recommendation for exclusion from school for a specified period of time.

DUE PROCESS

The Board of School Directors believes that education is a fundamental right, and students must be afforded all appropriate elements of due process if they are to be excluded from school. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing, which is a fundamental element of due process.

1. *Informal Hearings* - When a suspension exceeds three school days, the student and parents or guardian shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing.
    a. The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended, to demonstrate that there is a case of mistaken identity or to show that there is some compelling reason why the student should not be suspended. The informal hearing also encourages the student's parents or guardian to meet with the principal to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.
    b. At the informal hearing, the following due process requirements are to be observed:
        i. Notification of the reasons for the suspension in writing, given to the parents or guardian and to the student.
        ii. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing.
        iii. A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
        iv. A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
        v. The district shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first five days of suspension.
2. *Formal Hearings* - Expulsion is exclusion from school by the Board of School Directors for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing under Section 12.8.
    a. A formal hearing may be held before the Board of School Directors or a duly authorized committee of the Board, preferably composed of no fewer than three members of the School Board. The hearing committee's decision is advisory to the School Board where expulsion is recommended. A majority vote of the entire School Board is required to expel a student.
    b. At the formal hearing, the following due process requirements are to be observed:
        i. Notification of the charges in writing, sent to the parents or guardian by certified mail, and to the student.
        ii. Sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing.
        iii. The right to an impartial tribunal.
        iv. The right to be represented by counsel.
        v. The right to demand that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
        vi. The student's right to testify and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.
        vii. A record must be kept of the hearing either by a stenographer or tape recorder. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy of the transcript.
    c. If requested by the student or the student's parents, the hearing shall be in private.
    d. Where the student is dissatisfied with the results of the hearing, recourse can be had to the appropriate state court. If it is alleged that a constitutional issue is involved, the student may file a claim for relief in the appropriate federal district court.