

**BELLE VERNON AREA  
MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2020-2021**



**“Graduates are Prepared to Embark on Their  
Own Pathway to Success”**

**This Student Agenda Book Belongs To:**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Homeroom #** \_\_\_\_\_ **Locker #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note that policies and procedures may be modified  
based on CDC guidelines due to COVID 19.**

**BELLE VERNON AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL**  
500 Perry Avenue; Belle Vernon, Pennsylvania 15012  
(724) 808-2500; Fax: (724) 930-6094

**ADMINISTRATION:**

**Superintendent of Schools**  
**Dr. Michele Dowell**

**BVAMS Principal**  
**John E. Grice IV**

**BVAMS School Counselor**  
**Judith Hassinger**

**Business Manager**  
**Crystal Clark**

**Solicitor**  
**Ira Weiss, Esquire**

**BVASD BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

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**Vice President Dan Engstrom**  
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**Treasurer: Business Manager – Crystal Clark**  
**Solicitor: Weiss, Burkhardt, Kramer, LLC.**

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## **I. ABOUT THE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

### **Principal's Message:**

I would like to welcome you to Belle Vernon Area Middle School, where this year you will "Make it Happen!" BVAMS has a longstanding tradition of civic duty, honor, and respect that we will carry on with us into the future. We are a school that develops educated and responsible citizens for a global society.

With a brand new year ahead of you, you have many decisions to make, such as what kind of student will you be, what friends will you stay close to, what influences you will accept or deny, and what parts of your life will be a priority. We at BVAMS will help you to prioritize, set and achieve your goals, and develop a true partnership with you and your family in the coming school year. We will accomplish this through consistent communication and active participation at all levels. We are committed to forming a true partnership by establishing a focus on cooperation, teamwork, dedication, and work ethic to help you "Make it Happen!"

All of us: staff, families, and students must do our part in order to develop a strong partnership and carry on the torch of success. As a school, we will model the focus of cooperation, teamwork, dedication, and work ethic by treating you and your family with respect. We will also be responsible in providing you with a challenging curriculum and knowing the needs of you the student. In return, we will expect results shown through your attitude, work ethic, academic performance, and behavior in the classroom and in the community.

In my experience, I have found that there are three types of people: those who "Make things Happen, those who "Watch things Happen;" and those who stray from their goals and are left begging the question: "What Happened?" Our Belle Vernon Area Middle School staff will work together as a team to provide you with a safe learning environment and will challenge you with a focused curriculum centered on grade level standards. We hold all of our students to high standards, and we expect nothing less than your absolute best! Do not be one of those students who "Watches Things Happen or one left begging the question, "What Happened?"

It is your time! "Make it Happen!" -John E. Grice IV

### **BELLE VERNON AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY:**

Because Belle Vernon Area Middle School is part of a democratic society, we believe that it is our duty to prepare our students for the responsibilities, obligations and privileges of good citizenship; but it is also our intent to encourage independent thought and critical evaluation of that society.

We believe that our modern school plant should provide the physical and human environment in which a fundamental concept of democratic life may be practiced - that of learning to live in a group where administrators, teachers and students uphold the rights of one another, recognize their responsibilities to one another, and give full support to the achievement of common interests.

We believe in the worth of every individual within the group; that we should show interest in each student and concern for his or her problems in the belief that understanding is essential for emotional growth; that our educational program should foster the moral, esthetic, physical, and intellectual development of each student so that he or she may become a productive member of the community.

We believe that the curriculum must be kept varied enough to provide for individual needs and flexible enough to meet the challenge of the rapidly changing society in which we live.

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

For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, contact the Belle Vernon Area Administration Office at 270 Crest Avenue, Belle Vernon, PA 15012 (724-808-2500).



### **STUDENT HANDBOOK:**

At the beginning of the school year, each student will receive a Student Handbook. The Handbook will have all necessary information needed for a successful year. **Parents/Guardians are to sign and return the Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement page. The Student Handbook will also be used as a hall pass.** Students will put the time, destination on the designated area of the Student Handbook. Teachers will initial and will also add the time of return. Students will not be given hall passes unless they have their OWN Handbook signed by a faculty member. If the handbook is lost, a new one can be purchased in the Middle School Office at a cost of **\$5.00. STUDENTS MUST HAVE THEIR OWN HANDBOOK IN THEIR POSSESSION AT ALL TIMES. EXTRA COPIES CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE BELLE VERNON AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL WEBSITE: <http://www.bvasd.net>**

During the course of the marking period, the appropriate use of your agenda book will be graded informally by your English Teacher Quarter 1, Social Studies Teacher Quarter 2, Math Teacher Quarter 3, and Science Teacher Quarter 4. The agenda grade will count for twenty points. Agenda book checks will occur randomly at least five times during the course of the marking period. Students may use their device to keep a calendar, but are to keep their agenda to be used for a hall pass. The following things will be checked:

1. Each day of the week has items recorded.
2. Each day has the proper homework and tests recorded.
3. Agendas are not to be damaged and pages are not to be torn out of the agenda book.
4. The book must be used appropriately.

### **BELL SCHEDULES:**

Bell Schedules will be modified for the 2020-2021 school-year and will be published at the start of school.

## **II. ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES**

### **ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL:**

If you arrive at school before the first bell in the morning (7:45 a.m.) you must enter the building through the lobby and then go directly to the gymnasium or cafeteria area. Unless you have special permission, you should never go to any other part of the building before the first admission bell. At the 7:45 a.m. bell, students will report to their lockers and be in homeroom period by 8:02 a.m. Students arriving to school or to homeroom period after 8:05 a.m. will be considered tardy. Any student who accumulates 3 unexcused tardies to school will automatically be issued a detention and/or placed on the No Privilege List.

### **LATE ADMITTANCE:**

Students arriving to school after 8:05 a.m. must sign in and report to the main office. **A written parental excuse or a School Absence Verification Form must be presented when students arrive to school tardy in order to excuse their tardiness. Parental handwritten notes and absence reports turned in the next day will not be accepted.**

**The student's attendance record will be marked as follows:**

**Arrivals –**

**8:05 – 10:30 AM – Tardy**

**10:31 – 11:49 AM – ½ Day Absent**

**After 11:50 AM – Full Day Absent**

**Leaving –**

**7:55 – 11:49 AM – Full Day Absent**

**11:50 - 12:30 PM – ½ Day Absent**

**12:31 or Later – Early Dismissal**

***Students must be in school for a ½ Day to be eligible for activities.***

**Parents/Guardians and students are reminded that if a student is tardy, comes in ½ day, leaves early or is absent, you MUST ALWAYS cover these absences with a written parental excuse or Absence Verification Form.**

**EARLY DISMISSALS:**

Parents requesting an early dismissal for their son/daughter must send a note stating the reason for the early dismissal. **There will be NO early dismissals accepted from parents/guardians by phone, except for medical/illness (as approved by the School Nurse) or for extreme family emergencies.** The early dismissal request must be presented to the Middle School Office for approval upon arrival to school. These early dismissals should be ONLY for legitimate medical appointments. **There will be NO dismissals for “personal” reasons.**

Early dismissal requests will be randomly confirmed by calling the home phone to obtain verification of the dismissal and the name of the person who will assume responsibility for the student. Early dismissal students will be listed on the bulletin noting the time of dismissal.

**ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL:**

**A Belle Vernon Area Student Absence Verification Form must be completed by a parent/ guardian and returned to the Middle School Office upon your return to school. Please include the student’s full first and last name on the excuse. FAILURE TO PRESENT AN EXCUSE BY THE THIRD DAY WILL RESULT IN AN UNEXCUSED/UNLAWFUL ABSENCE. (Please review the following student compulsory attendance policy regarding maximum number of days permissible).** Excused absences are for reasons of personal illness, death in the family and doctor or dental appointments. The excuse must show the dates of absence, the reason for absence and the parent signature.

**NOTE:** If a student has consulted with a doctor for an illness, the student should request a written statement from the doctor to present to the Office.

In addition to obtaining Absence Verification Forms from the homeroom period teacher or the Middle School Office, this form

can be downloaded from the Belle Vernon Area Middle School website at: <http://www.bvasd.net>

**STUDENT COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE & SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN:**

The Belle Vernon Area School District enforces the Student Compulsory Attendance and School Attendance Improvement Plan that was passed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in 2017. It is essential that every parent/guardian or person in parental relation, having control or charge of any child or children of compulsory school age, is familiar with this regulation as well as the penalties for violation of attendance requirements.

Compulsory school age shall mean the period of a student's life from the time the student's person in parental relation elects to have the student enter school, which shall be no later than six (6) years of age, until the student reaches eighteen (18) years of age. The term does not include a student who holds a certificate of graduation from a regularly accredited, licensed, registered or approved high school.

The Department of Education and all school districts in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are obligated to comply with State and Federal requirements for student attendance and truancy. Each school district within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is responsible for monitoring and maintaining attendance records of all students.

In accordance with the Compulsory Attendance and School Attendance Improvement Plan, all absences will be treated as unlawful until the school district receives and accepts a written excuse from a parent/guardian explaining the reason for a child's absence. The written excuse must be submitted with three calendar days of the student's absence. Failure to do so will result in the absence being permanently recorded as unlawful.

**Excused Absences:**

- Personal illness
- Quarantine of the individual or home
- Death in the family
- Educational trips, as approved by administration
- Religious holiday
- Required court appearance
- Emergencies that affect the child

**Unexcused Absences:**

Absences are considered unexcused and/or illegal for any reason not listed in Excused Section. Absences are considered unexcused when a student fails to provide school officials with a proper written excuse within three (3) days of his/her return to school.

**Students who miss ten (10) consecutive school days will be dropped from the active membership unless the school is provided with evidence that the absence is legal.**

**A maximum of ten (10) days of lawful absences, verified by parental notification, may be permitted during a school year. Each absence beyond a total of ten (10) days during a school year will require a written doctor's excuse.**

The following action will be taken to notify Parents/Guardians of their child's unlawful absences:

1. First Unlawful Absence:  
A notice of unlawful absence will be sent to the child's parent/guardian.
2. Second Unlawful Absence:  
A second notice of unlawful absence will be sent to the child's parent/guardian.
3. Third Unlawful Absence:  
A third notice of unlawful absence will be delivered to the student, parent/guardian's residence by the Truant Officer, along with an

invitation to attend the School Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC).  
A school/family conference will be held to discuss the truancy and a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) will be established.

**4. Sixth Unlawful Absence:**

**A final notice of unlawful absence will be sent to the child's parent/guardian from the School and a referral will be made to a Community-Based Attendance Improvement Program. The School will file a citation with Magisterial District Judge against the parent/guardian in parental relation in the same household as the child.**

**Once the Student is chronically absent (10+ unexcused absences), the School shall refer the Student to Westmoreland or Fayette County's Youth Agencies only if the Student continues to incur additional absences after being referred to SAP Liaison and the Student and parent/guardian refuse to follow the recommended plan from the SAIC.**

After this step, the District IS NOT obligated to inform parents/guardians in writing of their child's absences.

If any child, of any age, continues to be truant after the above action has been taken, the following can occur:

**Possible sentences for parents/guardians found to be in violation of the Compulsory Attendance Law:**

1. Paying fines of up to \$300.00 for each offense, plus court costs.
2. Completing a Parenting Education Program.
3. In cases where the party convicted fails to pay the fine

- or complete the Parenting Education Program, a subsequent sentencing to the county jail for no more than five (5) days will occur.
4. In lieu of or in addition to any other sentence imposed, the parent/guardian may be required to perform community service in the School District for a period not to exceed six (6) months.

For children convicted of violation of compulsory attendance requirements by the Magisterial District Judge or Court, including a court not of record, a certified record of the conviction or other disposition must be sent to the Department of Transportation.

#### **DEFINED TERMS**

##### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY:**

Upon written request of parents/guardians a pupil may be excused from attending school for observance of valid religious holidays in accordance with the District policies. A pupil's absence from school will be recorded as an excused absence. Students are responsible for making up all instructional assignments missed during the period of absence.

##### **EDUCATIONAL TRIPS:**

Students may be legally excused from school to participate in personal tours and trips for educational reasons, as provided by School District Policy.

The prior approval of the Principal is required five (5) days prior to a trip to be marked as an excused absence. Students are responsible to obtain and complete all classroom assignments.

If the student takes a personal trip or tour without the proper prior approval, his/her make up privileges will be forfeited and the day of absence will be unexcused.

**SUSPENSIONS:**

Students serving out of school suspensions are considered legally absent. Students may make up all work missed upon return to school in accordance with established guidelines for makeup work.

**CLASS CUTS:**

Regular attendance to classes is most important. Because of this belief, the student's unauthorized absence from classes is considered an unexcused absence. Any student with an unauthorized absence from class will be subject to disciplinary action.

An unauthorized class absence shall be designated a class cut. Students shall not be permitted to make up any work missed during a class cut. A failing grade will be recorded for examinations missed or graded class work due on the day of the class cut.

Chronic class cuts by any student may require that a parental conference be scheduled to resolve the problem.

Disciplinary action for class cuts, including study halls, is defined in the student handbook.

**FIELD TRIPS:**

Field trips, as permitted by School Policy, can be a very beneficial part of a student's educational experience. School sponsored field trips will be noted for attendance purposes, but will not be counted as an absence towards denial of credit. Field trips are a privilege, therefore, the following guidelines are set forth:

1. Students on the denial of privileges list are not permitted to go on field trips until detentions and obligations are made up.
2. Students must have parental permission forms filled out in order to be eligible to go on a field trip. These forms



will be distributed by the teacher or sponsor responsible for the trip.

3. **Students absent from any classes in excess of ten times per semester, regardless of reason, will be excluded from field trip participation.** Likewise, students academically failing ANY class will not be permitted to attend any field trip during the time the grade remains failing.
4. **No student will be allowed to attend more than two field trips per month.** The Principal may make exceptions on a case by case basis.
5. Students must obtain a Field Trip Approval from Subject Teacher Form from the teacher/sponsor or office. All classroom teachers' signatures approving the student going on a field trip must be completed. Classroom teachers have the right to deny a student the privilege of going on a field trip only if that student has excessive absences, has taken an excessive number of field trips, or if the academic performance of the student is not satisfactory at the time of the field trip. If a student is not eligible for a field trip for any of the above reasons, then the student may not attend that event.
6. A student going on a field trip must submit both the "Parental Permission" and "Field Trip Approval from Subject Teacher Form" to the teacher or sponsor responsible for the field trip at least **four days prior to the field trip.**
7. The teacher or sponsor responsible for a field trip will submit to the office for the daily bulletin a list of students eligible for the field trip two days prior to the trip.
8. Any student who goes on a field trip is responsible for getting the work AHEAD OF TIME for classes he or she will miss. The student is responsible for turning in all work on the same day as those who were in the class on the day of the field trip.  
Also, any homework assigned for the day following the

field trip should be prepared by the student and ready to hand in upon returning to class. **It is the student's responsibility (not the teacher's) to make sure that all work is completed.**

9. Student competitions are not considered as a general field trip, and are not subject to the rules outlined above. However, students will still be required to complete a Competition Approval from Subject Teacher Form and return to their teacher/sponsor four days prior to the competition.

**STUDENT OUT OF STATE TRAVEL POLICY:**

No contests for students shall be permitted to take place in any school or to use the name of any school without the approval of the Principal and/or the Superintendent.

Participation in interstate or regional tournaments, festivals, exhibitions or other types of multiple school competitions or individual student competition representing the School District may be approved by the Superintendent only if the event appears on the approved list of the National Association of Secondary School Principals or the National Elementary Principals Association.

The loss of class time for preparation and for competition shall be kept to a minimum. **Out of state trips will not be funded by the District.**

**PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

Participation in extracurricular activities requires a minimum of ½ day attendance at school the day of the practice or event. Students who are excused early from school to participate in athletic events, when the event necessitates early dismissal by the school, are not considered as absent from school.

**MAKEUP WORK AFTER ABSENCE:**

There is certain minimal work that may be assigned as make-up work which the student will be required to complete. It is the

student's duty to request make-up work and not the teachers' obligation to assign work. Requests for make-up work will only be honored if a student has missed 3 or more days.

### **III. ACADEMICS**

#### **GRADING:**

##### **MARKING PERIOD GRADES:**

At the close of each marking period, each subject teacher will submit grades for each student.

90% - 100% A  
80% - 89% B  
70% - 79% C  
60% - 69% D  
0 - 59% F

A student must attain a 3.0, or better, quality point average to qualify for the honor roll. High honor ranges from 3.51 to 3.99. Highest honor is 4.0. No student with an unsatisfactory "U" and/or below a "C" grade is eligible for the honor roll. No student who has an "incomplete" is eligible for the honor roll; however, a student may qualify by making up all work and assuming the responsibility of reporting this fact to the office.

##### **GRADES AND REPORT CARDS:**

Report cards are posted four (4) times a year. Grades are given in percentage. A student must earn an average of 60% or better to receive credit. Additionally, parents/guardians can monitor student progress via the Sapphire Community Portal Home Access Center, which can be accessed the Belle Vernon Area School District Website. There is also an app for this process. Any questions regarding Sapphire Community Portal accounts and passwords can be directed to Child Accounting at 724-808-2500 ext. 1108.

**INCOMPLETE GRADES:**

Any incomplete received for a nine-week grading period must be made up within fifteen (15) school days after the end of the nine-week period.

**MAKEUP DEADLINE FOR INCOMPLETE GRADES**

First Marking Period	60 <sup>th</sup>	School Day
Second Marking Period	105 <sup>th</sup>	School Day
Third Marking Period	150 <sup>th</sup>	School Day
Fourth Marking Period	15 <sup>th</sup>	School Day - Next Year

1. If an incomplete grade is received in the final marking period, the student will be permitted the first fifteen days of the next school year to erase the incomplete, provided the first three grading periods show no incompletes.

2. All incomplete grades must be made up to receive course credit. Failure to complete a major course requirement will result in the student not receiving credit for the subject. If an incomplete is not erased, the final grade will be "0."

An incomplete grade received in any of the first three grading periods and not erased by the 180<sup>th</sup> day results in a **Final Average of "0."**

**NOTE:** *Tests should be considered a major course requirement. Tests that are not made up within two weeks will be recorded as "0." Extensions may be granted for test make up depending upon the length of the absence. All other extensions are dependent upon the course syllabus and teacher discretion.*

3. Incompletes that are made up after the fifteenth day will be recorded as "0." The purpose of make-up after the fifteenth day is to erase the "I" for possible course credit. Course work not completed by these dates will result in a **Final Average of "0."**

**PROGRESS REPORTS:**

For those students receiving a failing grade for the first five weeks of each grading period--the subject teacher issuing the grade must complete an "Unsatisfactory Progress Report Form" no later than the final day of that period. This form will be sent home to the parent/guardian.

**STANDARDS FOR PROMOTION:**

Promotion at the high school level is based on the number of units or credits earned:

1. Assignment to grade 8 will depend upon the satisfactory completion of **4 credits**.
2. Assignment to grade 9 will depend upon the satisfactory completion of **4 credits**.

**AVERAGING MARKING PERIOD GRADES:**

The semester grade average will be the average of the two nine-week percentages converted to a letter grade according to the District Percentage Grading Scale.

A full year course grade average will be the average of the four nine-week percentages according to the District Percentage Grading Scale.

**ISSUING AND RETURNING REPORT CARDS:**

Report cards will only be accessed via the Sapphire Community Portal Home Access Center. A printed report card will be printed upon request.

**TABULATING HONOR ROLL:**

As of July 2017 the district administration office will prepare an honor roll at the close of each report period. The honor roll will consist of three levels, Honor, High Honor and Highest Honor. In order for a student to qualify, the following requirements must be met:

1. The student must be carrying a minimum load of five (5) solid subjects.

2. Students who have an "Incomplete" when their teachers turned in grades to Administration WILL NOT be eligible for the honor roll.
3. A student must attain a 3.0 or better quality point average to qualify for the honor roll.  
A quality point average is obtained by totaling all numerical values of grades earned and dividing this total by the total number of grades received. Honors range from 3.0 to 3.49, High Honors range from 3.5 to 3.74, Highest Honors are 3.75 to 4.0 and above.  
The district administration office will prepare an honor roll at the close of each nine week grading period.
4. A "D" automatically will drop anyone for the honor roll.
5. In ungraded courses, an unsatisfactory (U) or non-passing grade (0) will automatically drop anyone from honor roll status.

**Class Placement:**

Assigning students to classes is a lengthy process that involves a team effort by teachers and administrators. In order to provide the best possible learning environment for each student, placement decisions include gender and ethnic balance, levels of academic achievement, balance of students with special needs and student interest, motivation and behavior. There is a procedure by which parents may provide input about their child in relation to class placement. Requests for specific teachers are discouraged. However, listing the individual needs of your child enhances the ability of the school staff to make the best possible placement. We will do our best to work with parents toward that goal and consider all input. The Principal does reserve the right to make the final decision on student placement. Finally, please note that any requests of schedule changes during the first three weeks of school will not be accepted.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION EXCUSE**

State law requires that all students participate in physical education classes. Students excused from gym classes, having presented a legal excuse, will be required to complete written course work concerning sports information.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION GRADING, POLICIES AND ATTIRE:**

1. Must wear shorts or sweatpants and white t-shirt with sleeves. All shorts must be fingertip length and worn on the waist and pants must not drag on the floor
2. Must wear securely tied athletic tennis shoes and socks. No boots or any type of platform or designer sneakers.
3. Lockers: Each student is advised NOT to bring valuables such as wallets, money, watches, rings and gold chains to physical education class. Students should bring a lock daily to class to secure any personal belongings.

**It is the responsibility of each individual to take care of his/her own personal valuables and to secure items in a LOCKED locker before leaving the locker room area.** The Instructor will NOT hold any valuables unless arrangements are made prior to class.

**ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN EACH AREA IS NECESSARY FOR A GOOD PHYSICAL EDUCATION GRADE**

**Grading Scale:** A total of 4 points can be earned each day.

	<b>Advanced (1)</b>	<b>Proficient (0.5)</b>	<b>Below Expectations (0)</b>	<b>Score:</b>
<b>Sportsmanship/ Respect</b>	Encourages others, takes turns, shares, no put-downs	Takes turns, takes care of self, usually positive	Requires frequent intervention, demeans others, selfish, often not positive	
<b>Effort / Participation</b>	Awesome participation always on task, constantly pushes self	Steady participation on task, usually pushes self	Not yet working, passive participation rarely on task, seldom pushes self	

<b>Safety</b>	Followed all rules and safety guidelines	Followed most rules and safety guidelines, but broke 1 or more rule	Did not follow rules and safety guidelines on a consistent basis	
<b>Clothing</b>	Dressed in entire proper PE attire	Has proper shoes and athletic shorts and top	Does not have proper shoes and cannot participate in class activities	

**ATHLETIC/ACTIVITY ELIGIBILITY:**

The Belle Vernon Area School District considers it imperative that students who devote significant time to middle school athletics and/or activities must be able to satisfy the graduation requirements as set forth in the District's Strategic Plan. This policy applies to students in grades 7-12 who participate in district sponsored athletic programs.

Students are encouraged to review Sapphire Community Portal for updates on their grades. Eligibility will be run on the Thursday and coaches will be provided the ineligibility list to review. Students have until Friday at 3:00pm to rectify any situations that are causing that student to ineligible. Final eligibility will be emailed to the Athletic Director Friday afternoon and will be in effect Sunday through the following Saturday.

A student is eligible to participate if he/she meets the following requirements:

1. In order to be academically eligible, the student-athlete must be passing at least 4 full-credit subjects, or the



equivalent, as of each Friday during a grading period. According to PIAA policy, these do not need to be core classes. In addition, if a student athlete is failing 2 or more classes, the student athlete will not be eligible. Should a student-athlete fail to meet this requirement, he/she will lose their eligibility from the immediately following Sunday through the Saturday immediately following the next Friday as of which the student-athlete meets this requirement.

2. Successfully earns 4.0 credits per year.

3. The student-athlete must have passed at least four full-credit subjects or the equivalent during the previous grading period, except that eligibility for the first grading period is based on your final grades for the preceding school year. If a student-athlete fails to meet this requirement, he/she will lose their eligibility for the first 15 school days of the next grading period, beginning on the first day that report cards are issued. Students who fail to pass four full-credit subjects or the equivalent during the previous school-year must enroll in and successfully pass a credit recovery course in order to be eligible for extracurricular activities during the fall semester of the following school year. Failure to do so will result in being ineligible for the first 15 days of the fall semester.

4. Is not considered to have excessive absences as defined by the district and outlined in the Student Handbook. Athletes must also be in compliance with P.I.A.A. and W.P.I.A.L. attendance regulations.

5. Students cannot participate in any co-curricular activity on the day of their absence from school. Students who are suspended or expelled from school are not permitted to participate in or attend any co-curricular activity. Students who are assigned detention are not permitted to participate in or attend any co-curricular activity during the time of the detention.

#### **IV. DISCIPLINE**

#### **DISCIPLINE POLICY FOR THE BELLE VERNON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Code of Student Conduct is designed to ensure that all students have a safe school environment conducive to learning and growing as students and citizens. Belle Vernon Area School District's mission is to empower each student to succeed in life and contribute to society. One of the ways in which we will achieve this mission is to have a uniform code of conduct that sets high expectations for student behavior.

This Code of Student Conduct outlines not only disciplinary actions but also supports for students when exhibiting behavioral challenges. It is intended to not only keep the school safe and orderly but also to help students receive the support they need and to learn from their mistakes. The Code of Student Conduct requires that students respect each other, staff, and all members of our school community. Students are encouraged to assume responsibility for their behavior and to develop a firm understanding of right and wrong and to act accordingly.

It is important for students and parents/guardians to review this Code of Student Conduct so we are all setting consistent expectations for good behavior and positive citizenship. We appreciate the support of our families in partnering with us to help our students become their very best.

#### **Student Responsibilities**

- Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and homework, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students share responsibility with Administration and Staff to develop a school climate that is conducive to all students receiving a quality education.

- It is responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.
- Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.
- It is the responsibility of the students to comply to the following:
  - Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accordance with them. Students should assume that, until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed in writing, it is in effect.
  - Volunteer information in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property.
  - Dress and groom to meet standards of safety and health, as outlined in district policy and not to cause disruption to the educational processes.
  - Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for the students enrolled therein.
  - Comply with federal, state, and local laws.
  - Exercise proper care when using district facilities, school supplies, and equipment.
  - Attend school daily and be on time to all classes and other school functions.
  - After absence from school, complete and turn in make-up work in a timely manner.
  - Pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by local school authorities.
  - Report accurately in student media.
  - Refrain from obscene language in student media or on school premises.

### **Types of Discipline/Consequences and Interventions Defined**

- Detention – Student is required to remain in a designated setting before, after or during school as assigned by a teacher or administrator.
- In-School Reflection – Exclusion from classes for one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days in a supervised area at school lead by a team of teachers. School assignments and instruction will be provided. This consequence is implemented on a limited basis at the elementary school level. In-school reflection is recommended for use one (1) to three (3) days consecutively only.
- Suspension – Exclusion from school for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days. (See Suspension and Exclusion Policy #233.)
- Expulsion – Exclusion from school by the School Board for a period exceeding ten (10) school days, which may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. (See Suspension and Expulsion Policy #233)

### **Behavioral Contract**

A behavioral contract will be developed by the Administration, upon consultation with other staff, parent/guardian, and the student. It will spell out in detail the expectation for the student, time line of the contract, rewards for successfully following the contract, and consequences for not following the contract.

### **Removal of School Privileges**

Students have several privileges that could be removed based on an infraction of the rules outlined in the Code of Student Conduct. Examples of these include senior privileges, dances, parking permit, and participation in extracurricular activities.

### **Exclusion from School – Suspension or Expulsion (see Suspensions and Expulsions Policy 233)**

- Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days.

- Suspensions may be given by the principal or person in charge of the public school.
- A student may not be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened.
- The parents/guardians shall be notified immediately when the student is suspended. Written notification of the suspension will follow. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be informed, immediately in writing, when a student is suspended.
- When the suspension exceeds three (3) school days, the student and parents/guardians shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements in Board Policy #233.
- Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the ten (10) school day period.
- Students shall be responsible to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the School Board.

Expulsion is exclusion from school by the School Board for a period exceeding ten (10) consecutive school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls. Expulsions require a prior formal hearing or voluntary, and signed waiver of such hearing by the student's parent/guardian.

- If it is determined, after an informal hearing, that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded

from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. A student may not be

- excluded from school for longer than fifteen (15) consecutive school days without a formal hearing, unless mutually agreed upon by both parties in writing. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.
- Students who are under eighteen (18) years of age are still subject to the compulsory school attendance law even though expelled and shall be provided an education.
  - The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents/guardians, through placement in another school, tutorial, or correspondence study, or another approved educational program.
  - Within thirty (30) days of action by the School Board, the parents/guardians shall submit to the school district written evidence that the required education is being provided as described in the above paragraph or that they are unable to do so. If the parents/guardians are unable to provide the required education, the school entity shall, within ten (10) days of receipt of the notification, make provision for the student's education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C.A. 1400 et seq.)

**Exclusion from Classes – In-School Reflection**

- In-school reflection is an exclusion from class assigned by a teacher or principal. It is implemented only on a limited basis in elementary schools.

- A student may not receive an in-school reflection unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the in-school reflection and has been given an opportunity to respond before the assignment to in-school reflection becomes effective.
- The parent/guardian shall be notified immediately by phone or email when the student receives an in-school reflection. Formal written notification of the reflection will follow.
- The student's school entity has the responsibility to make provision for the student's education during the period of the in-school reflection.
- In-school reflection is recommended for use from one (1) to three (3) days consecutively. However, when the in-school reflection will exceed ten (10) consecutive school days, the student and parent/guardian shall be offered an informal hearing which shall take place prior to the eleventh (11<sup>th</sup>) consecutive day of in-school reflection.

### **Hearings**

Education is a statutory right, and students shall be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. In the case of short-term suspension exceeding three (3) days, a student is entitled to an informal hearing with the school principal. In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing.

**Informal hearings.** 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 or to show why the student should not be suspended.

- The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and for students, their

parents/guardians, and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.

- The following due process requirements shall be observed in regard to the informal hearing:
  - Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents/guardians and to the student.
  - Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
  - A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
  - A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.
  - The school entity shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first five (5) days of the suspension.
- 
- **Formal hearings.** A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions, unless a voluntary and signed waiver is received from the parent/guardian. This hearing may be held before the School Board or an authorized committee of the School Board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the School Board. When a Committee of the School Board or a hearing examiner conducts the hearing, a majority vote of the entire School Board is required to expel a student. The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing:
    - Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents/guardians by certified mail.
    - At least three (3) days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the School Board's suspension and Expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student, and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student or parent/guardian may



request the rescheduling of the hearing when good cause is demonstrated for an extension.

- The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parents/guardians request a public hearing.
- The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents/guardians, and may have a parent guardian attend the hearing.
- The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
- The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.
- A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided, at no cost, to a student who is indigent.
- The proceeding shall be held within fifteen (15) school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible.:
  - Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.
  - Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S. C. & 1400 et seq).

- In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.
- Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

**Freedom of Expression**

- The right of public-school students to freedom of speech is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the Commonwealth.
- The School Board respects the right of students to express themselves in word or symbol and to distribute and post materials in areas designated for posting as a part of that expression.
- The School Board also recognizes that the exercising of that right must be limited by the district’s responsibility to maintain an orderly school environment and to protect the rights of all members of the school community. (See Student Expression/Distribution and Posting of Materials Policy 220.)

**Confidential Communications**

Use of a student’s confidential communications to school personnel in legal proceedings is governed by statutes and regulations appropriate to the proceeding. (See, for example, 42 PA.C.S. 5945.)

- Information received in confidence from a student may be revealed to the student’s parents/guardians, the principal, or other appropriate authority when the health, welfare, or safety of the student or other persons is clearly in jeopardy.

**Searches (Policy #226)**

- Students may be subject to searches while in attendance at school and school-sponsored events,

in order to assure the safety of students, staff, and other members of the school community and prevent the presence of contraband.

- School administrators are authorized to search school property such as lockers and desks. Prior to a locker search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. When school administrators have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials that pose a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of students in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning.
- Illegal or prohibited materials seized during a student search may be used as evidence against the student in a school disciplinary proceeding.
- Student personal belongings can be searched when school administrators have reasonable suspicion that there is evidence of a violation of school rules present in the belongings.

**The following offenses will lead to disciplinary action, which may include a student's exclusion from school by suspension or expulsion.**

The following guidelines provide examples of infractions in each of the four levels of discipline and a range of appropriate responses to promote student discipline. The examples are not all inclusive but are intended to provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with a general idea of the seriousness of particular infractions and the levels of response that can be expected. The actual response to a particular incident will be determined by the specific situation in which the incident occurred at the discretion of the administrator.

It should be noted that in the implementation of the discipline policy, consideration will be given to age, developmental stage, and documented exceptionality.

**Level 1 Offenses**

- Rough or boisterous behavior, including running, shoving, pushing and shouting.
- Causing a disturbance in a classroom including behavior that interferes with teaching and learning.)
- Failure to follow a direction from a staff member.
- Lateness to class, study hall, or activity.
- Violation of Dress & Grooming Code (See Policy #221)
- Third unexcused lateness to school within a semester.
- Profanity, abusive language, and/or obscene gestures not directed at a staff member.
- Causing a disturbance in the school and/or school grounds.
- Cheating

**Level 1 Consequences:** For all Level 1 infractions, disciplinary options may include any or all of the following:

- Verbal reprimand.
- Parent/guardian notification.
- Detention
- Referral to appropriate school services.
- Loss of privileges.
- Adjustments to grading in response to cheating.

**Level 2 Offenses**

- Continued Level I violation.
- Defacing or misuse of school property.
- Disrespect of a staff member.
- Forging notes, including electronic communication
- Misbehavior on district transportation, violating bus rules.
- Sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) unexcused lateness to school or more within a semester.

- Failure to follow driving/parking permit instructions.
- Leaving class or assigned activity without permission.
- Failure to serve a detention.
- Cutting class.
- Violation of the acceptable use and electronic devices policies. (See Policies #815 and #237.)
- Possession or use of any tobacco product, e-cigarette, vape pen.

**Level 2 Consequences:** For all Level 2 infractions, disciplinary options may include any or all of the following in addition to Level 1 consequences:

- Conference with student and parents/guardians.
- Detention
- Loss of privileges.
- Community service.
- Referral to appropriate school services.
- Loss of parking permit.
- Suspension of bus-riding privileges.
- In-school reflection
- Suspension

**Level 3 Offenses**

- Continued Level 2 violations.
- Harassment/bullying (See Policy #103 and #249.)
- Profanity or other abusive language directed at a staff member.
- Failure to identify yourself to a staff member.
- Theft
- Possession of stolen property.
- Extortion
- Vandalism
- Fighting
- Hazing (See Policy #247)

- Posting on social media messages/information found to be disruptive to the school environment.
- Leaving school building and/or grounds without permission.
- Threat to student and/or staff

**Level 3 Consequences:** For all Level 3 infractions, disciplinary options may include any or all of the following (possibly including consequences from lower levels as well.):

- Conference with student and parents/guardians
- Referral to appropriate school services
- Loss of privileges
- Detention
- In-school reflection
- Out-of-school suspension
- Community service
- Behavioral contract
- Contact law enforcement
- Fine for tobacco use
- Coach or sponsor-initiated discipline, up to and including removal from the activity or organization.

#### **Level 4 Offenses**

- Repeated Level 3 violations
- Possession, transfer or use of a weapon (See Policy #218.1)
- Setting off a false alarm, making a false 911 call, making a bomb threat or a similar terroristic threat (See Policy #218.2)
- Assault
- Aggravated hazing (i.e., an act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death to the student, as defined by Policy #247.)
- Possession or detonation of fireworks, smoke bombs, stink bombs, and/or similar devices.
- Arson or attempted arson.

- Possession, use, distribution or solicitation to use drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol (See Policy #227)
- Other behavior that would constitute a felony level offense under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Example: Trespassing)

**Level 4 Consequences:** For all Level 4 infractions disciplinary options will include any or all of the following (possibly including lower level consequences as well.):

- Conference with student and parents/guardians.
- Loss of privileges.
- Referral to appropriate school services.
- Behavioral contract.
- Community service.
- Out-of-school suspension.
- Placement in an Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth (AEDY) program.
- Expulsion.
- Contact law enforcement authorities.
- Coach or sponsor-initiated discipline, up to and including removal from the activity or organization.

#### **Definitions and Special Notes**

##### **Tobacco Use**

- Possessing and/or using tobacco in any form in school buildings, on school property and at school sponsored events, including but not limited to, in or as a lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, snuff, chewing tobacco, and smokeless tobacco; or possessing tobacco or selling tobacco in any form or possessing or using tobacco paraphernalia, including but not limited to lighters, matches, e-cigarettes, or vape.

**Possession, use, distribution, or solicitation to use drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol (See Policy #227.)**

The district strongly believes that any form of substance abuse by its students jeopardizes the welfare of the students and the entire student body and therefore, is detrimental to a positive and safe educational environment. Further, the district recognizes the need to take appropriate action in order to avert possible adverse effects upon its students. Drug and alcohol violations will be immediately reported to local law enforcement by school district administration.

The below-listed consequences shall be applied when any student who commits a drug or alcohol offense, as listed:

<b><u>Drug Offense</u></b>	<b><u>10 Day Suspension</u></b>	<b><u>45 Day Expulsion</u></b>
Drug Paraphernalia	Possession of Drug Paraphernalia – 1 <sup>st</sup> offense No Drugs Present	Repeat Offense of Drug Paraphernalia possession. Possession of Drugs
Alcohol	Use or Possession – 1 <sup>st</sup> offense	Repeat Offense
Possession/Use of Drugs		1 <sup>st</sup> or Repeating Offense

Additional interventions and/or consequences that school administration may assign to students who commit drug/alcohol infractions include:

- **SAP referral**
- **Drug and Alcohol Counseling for all**
- **Loss of privileges during suspension/expulsion**
- **Coach or sponsor-initiated discipline, up to and including removal from the activity or organization**

**Vandalism and Defacing School Property**

Defacing school property and vandalism also represent behavior that is detrimental to a positive and safe educational environment. In all cases restitution, including student’s



payment of repair or replacement expenses, will be sought with the application of disciplinary action.

The following definitions shall apply:

- **Defacing School Property:** Minor damages that require minimal repair and costs under a value of \$100 will be considered defacing school property.
- **Vandalism:** Damage that exceeds a minimal repair and costs (i.e., over a value of \$100) will be considered vandalism.

### **Cheating**

The Staff and Administration of Belle Vernon Area School District place premium value on academic honesty because of its paramount importance in our curricular program. The honest accomplishment of academic endeavors is a foundation that students begin to build in our school district and carry with them into the future. Honesty, in academic work, is a vital component of citizenship. For all assignments, exams, tests, and quizzes, students are expected to submit original work conceptualized, prepared, and completed for the particular assignment, exam, test, or quiz. Original work reflects the skills, intellect, and efforts of the individual student. If the student includes work from another source, including the student's work from a prior assignment, whether copied directly or paraphrased, that source must be cited. If students collaborate on assignments, the names of all students who collaborated to produce the work must appear on the submitted work.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, a student copying an assignment or test and submitting it as his/her own; allowing someone to copy an assignment or test and submit it as

his/her own; unauthorized communication with others during an exam or assignment: use of notes, calculators, computers, textbooks, cell phones, or smartphones, or any other electronic device during an exam or assignment; telling others what is on a

test or quiz or providing specific questions or answers; working with others on a project that was assigned individually; or securing answers in any other dishonest manner.

- First Offense – Grade of zero on the assignment and/or other Level 1 consequences
- Second Offense – Grade of zero on the assignment and Level 2 consequence.
- Continued Offense – Grade of zero on the assignment(s) and Level 3 consequences.

#### **Dress and Grooming Guidelines**

The Belle Vernon Area School Board has established a policy for student dress (Policy #221 – Dress and Grooming). Students and their parents/guardians may make decisions regarding dress, but student dress may not disrupt the educational program of the schools or constitute a health or safety hazard. Dress which is disruptive to the learning process will not be tolerated. Sponsors of co-curricular activities have the option of excluding a student from participation when in violation of the dress code.

Any student violating the dress code will be considered insubordinate and be issued a response in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. School administrators have the final responsibility for interpretation and enforcement of district policy on dress and grooming.

1. Skirts, shorts, and skirts may be worn, as long as they are no more than four (4) inches above the top of the knee cap of the student wearing the item.
2. No revealing or provocative clothing is permitted, including but not limited to, midriff exposed and open back, plunging necklines, and see-through garments. Any holes showing skin in jeans or pants can't be more than four (4) inches above the knee cap of the student wearing the item.

3. T-shirts or other apparel which depict any manner of drugs, alcohol, or profanity are prohibited.
4. Under garments must be completely covered with outer clothing.
5. Sunglasses, hats, visors, bandanas, headbands or any other headwear may not be worn in school, unless for bona fide religious or approved medical reasons. Students who require religious or medical accommodations are directed to make these requests with their school principal.
6. Sleepwear may not be worn in school, unless for a specific school sponsored activity with prior approval of school administration.
7. Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times.
8. Chains, spikes and other dangerous ornaments are not permitted.
10. Blankets are not permitted in school.

**Intervention Techniques for Dress Code Violations**

1. Opportunity to acquire acceptable dress.
2. Parent/guardian will be contacted and/or student(s) will be sent home until they return to school properly attired.

**Hazing**

In accordance with Pennsylvania’s Anti-Hazing Law, the district prohibits hazing by any person associated with any school or school organization, including, but not limited to, employees, students, parents/guardians, coaches, activity leaders, sponsors, and volunteers. This prohibition shall apply to acts conducted on or off school property or outside school hours whenever such acts are deemed to constitute hazing as defined by Board policy #247 – Hazing).

Hazing occurs when a person intentionally, knowingly or recklessly, for the purpose of initiating, admitting or affiliating a student with an organization, or for the purpose of continuing or

enhancing membership or status in an organization, causes, coerces or forces a student to do any of the following:

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

Aggravated hazing occurs when a person commits an act of hazing 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.

The district encourages any student who has been subjected to hazing, or any person who is aware of an incident of hazing, to report it to the district. Students should report incidents to teachers, counselors, building principals, other administrators, or their parents/guardians. Other persons should report incidents of hazing to building principals or other administrators. In all cases, any district employee who receives information of a hazing incident must immediately report it to the Superintendent.

No district employees, coaches, activity leaders, sponsors, volunteers, or school organizations shall ignore, condone, or tolerate any form of hazing.

**Policy No. 218.1 WEAPONS**

**Weapons – Possession**

The term shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, pepper spray, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

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

**Policy No. 249 BULLYING**

**Bullying**

As required by act 61 of 2008 (24 P.S. Sec. 13-1303.1-A (a), the district hereby incorporates its policy relating to bullying into this Code of Student Conduct as follows:

**Purpose**

The School Board is committed to providing a safe, positive educational experience for district students. The School Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the 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, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a

school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. 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 this policy, includes cyberbullying.

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

#### **Reports of Bullying**

The School Board encourages students who have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building principals, guidance counselors, teachers, bus drivers, or any district employee. Any district employee who receives a report of bullying shall notify their Administrator/Supervisor.

The School Board directs that reports of bullying be investigated promptly and corrective action taken if such reports are verified. The district shall maintain the confidentiality of all parties, as consistent with legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying.

#### **Consequences for Violations**

1. A student who violates the district's Bullying Policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include:
  - a. Parent/guardian conference
  - b. Counseling within a school
  - c. Loss of school privileges and exclusion from school-sponsored activities
  - d. Transfer to another school building or alternative setting, classroom, or school bus
  - e. Detention

- f. Suspension
- g. Expulsion
- h. Referral to law enforcement officials

#### **Notice and Availability of Policy**

The district shall make this Policy available on the district's website and in every classroom and, further, shall post a copy of the Policy at a prominent location within each school building where such notices are usually posted. The district shall insure that this Policy and the procedures for reporting bullying incidents will be reviewed with students at least once each school year.

#### **Implementation**

The School Board authorizes the Superintendent to develop procedures to implement this Policy, including prevention, intervention, and education programs concerning bullying.

#### **Report of Office of Safe Schools**

The district shall annually provide the Office of Safe Schools with a copy of this Policy and information related to the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention, and education programs. The information required under this section shall be attached to or made part of the annual report required by 24 P.S. Sec. 13-1303-A (b).

#### **Review of Policy 249 (Bullying & Cyberbullying) by District**

The district shall review this Policy every three (3) years.

#### **Rescission of Discipline for First Offenders**

A high school student who was disciplined in accordance with these administrative guidelines may request the Superintendent to rescind such discipline, subject to strict adherence to the following conditions:

- A student may request rescission one (1) time in their high school years.
- The student must not have a Level 4 offense while in high school prior to the imposition of discipline.

- The student's request must be made to the Superintendent in writing during the time that the student is enrolled in high school, prior to graduation.

The student must:

- Complete five (5) hours of community service per day of suspension. Such service must be approved by the principal and the principal must verify completion.
  - Have fulfilled all obligations related to their suspension.
- The student's request shall state why the discipline should be rescinded and may include, but is not limited to: the circumstances that resulted in the discipline; regret for the occurrence; what, if anything, the student learned from such discipline; the commitment to remain free of any discipline throughout high school if rescission were granted.
  - The Superintendent will not hold a hearing, but will consider the request on the basis of the documentary record, the seriousness of the offense, and such further investigation as s/he deems appropriate. At the Superintendent's discretion, they may request a meeting with their parents/guardians.
  - The Superintendent shall consult with the principal for input regarding the request for rescission.
  - The Superintendent shall issue a written decision to the student, parents/guardians, and the School Board granting or denying the request. Such decision shall be final.
  - If the Superintendent grants a student's request for rescission, the student shall be foreclosed from making any future requests; rescission will only be granted on a one-time basis.
  - If a rescission is granted, the district will expunge any information concerning the discipline from the student's records. Expungement shall not include records



maintained by the district to determine that expungement has occurred or are mandated by law.

### **Safe 2 Say Something Procedures**

The district has established procedures for receiving, assessing and responding to reports received from the Safe2Say Something anonymous reporting program of the Pennsylvania Office of the Attorney General. Safe2Say Something reports may be submitted by any individual, including students, parents/guardians, staff and others as a secure and anonymous report about unsafe, potentially harmful, dangerous, violent or criminal activities in a school entity or threat of such activities in a school entity through:

1. A twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week telephone hotline (1-844-Safe2Say) maintained by the Office of the Attorney General's Safe2Say Something Crisis Center;
2. A Safe2Say Something program secure website (<https://www.safe2saypa.org>); or
3. A Safe2Say Something software program application, or "app" accessed through a mobile electronic device.

Safe2Say Something reports, once received, are forwarded to the district's Crisis Team and appropriate action will be taken consistent with established district-wide Safe2Say Something procedures. Reference on-line Safe2Say Procedures at [111.bvasd.net](http://111.bvasd.net) under board policies.

### **Nondiscrimination in School and Classroom Practices**

The district provides an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability. Acts of discrimination are inconsistent with the educational and programmatic goals of the district and are, therefore, prohibited. The prohibition of discrimination extends to conduct that occurs

on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, and on school transportation. Reports of discrimination will be received verbally or in writing. Students should report incidents of discrimination to a teacher, counselor, or their assigned building principal. If a parent/guardian or third party believes that they or others have been subject to discrimination, they are asked to promptly report the incident to the building principal or other school administrator.

### **Policy #252 Dating Violence**

#### **Authority**

The School Board encourages students who have been subjected to dating violence to promptly report such incidents.

The district shall investigate promptly all complaints of dating violence and shall administer appropriate discipline to any student who violates this policy.

#### **Guidelines**

##### **Complaint Procedure**

When a student believes that s/he has been subject to dating violence, the student is encouraged to promptly report the incident, orally or in writing, to the building principal, guidance counselor or classroom teacher.

The building principal shall conduct a timely, impartial, and comprehensive investigation of the alleged dating violence.

The building principal shall prepare a written report summarizing the investigation and recommending disposition of the complaint. The complainant and the accused shall be informed of the outcome of the investigation.

If the investigation results in a substantiated finding of dating violence, the building principal shall recommend appropriate

disciplinary action, as circumstances warrant, in accordance with the Discipline Code.

If a possible violation of the district's harassment policy is implicated, the building principal shall take additional action as necessary to comply with Board policy and state and federal law and regulations.

The district shall document the corrective action taken and, where not prohibited by law, inform the complainant

#### **V. BELLE VERNON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS**

##### **BUS REGULATIONS:**

Students have the responsibility to themselves and their fellow students to board the buses and be seated quickly and quietly. Any student who refuses, does not obey the bus driver, smokes on a bus, is in possession of prohibited articles, is involved in any rowdy behavior or uses rough language at a bus stop or in a school bus will have their bus privileges revoked.

The following rules are enforced at all times. Students failing to comply shall be reported to Administration for disciplinary action.

1. Students are to ride only their assigned bus. If a student wishes to go to a friend or relative's home after school, parents must send a written and signed parental note to the office upon arriving to school.
2. Students are not permitted to push or shove while loading or disembarking.
3. Students should not extend arms or head from an open window nor should they shout any inappropriate language or obscene gestures from an open window.
4. Students should not throw any objects from a bus window.

5. Students riding a school bus are under the direct supervision of the bus driver. Drivers shall have the authority to assign seats to any or all students.
6. NO DRUGS/LOOKALIKE SUBSTANCES, VAPOR DEVICES, ALCOHOL OR TOBACCO PRODUCTS

#### **BUS USE OF AUDIO AND VIDEO EQUIPMENT**

All buses serving the Belle Vernon Area School District transportation needs are subject to being both **audio and video** recorded in order to assist in ensuring that the students are transported in a manner that protects them, as well as the school bus operator from physical injury, verbal abuse, and threats. Such recordings, both **audio and video**, may be utilized in all disciplinary and security investigations of students and adult employees of the Belle Vernon Area School District and its contracted service providers

#### **LIBRARY**

Our library is open to all students. It is designated to serve the needs of students who must complete research work, for reading current periodicals and newspapers and for students who wish to obtain books for assigned or leisure reading. Students who wish to use the library for research must secure a library permit from a subject teacher excusing the student from their assigned study hall so they may work in the library. To read current periodicals or obtain a book for leisure reading, a pass must be obtained from the librarian before the start of the first period. Students who have permission must report directly to their assigned study hall and present the library permit to their study hall teacher before they may be excused to the library. Upon arrival at the library, students must present their permits to the librarian and remain in the library for the duration of the period. Students are responsible for library materials taken out in their name and must pay for any

damaged or lost books. Fines (two cents per day) for overdue books must be paid in order to continue use of the library.

**BVAMS LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT SIGN OUT**

Electronic devices and technology are available for all BVASD students for sign out. Equipment can be reserved for checkout in the BVAMS Library.

Any district-owned equipment issued to a student is done so in support of the student's education at BVA and is to be used by that student for educational purposes only.

Any equipment issued to a student must be returned when due, immediately upon request by the student's teacher, activity sponsor, or the issuing department, or, upon graduation, withdrawal, or dismissal, no later than the student's last day enrolled at BVA, in the same condition as when it was issued. In addition, students are prohibited both from making or allowing anyone else to make unauthorized copies of software, and from installing unlicensed software on a district-owned computer.

The student or the student's parent or guardian is financially responsible for any fees associated with returning equipment late, and for repairing or replacing any equipment issued to the student that is damaged, lost, or stolen due to the negligence of the student. Negligence includes, but is not limited to, failing to exercise proper care in securing equipment from the risk of damage, loss, or theft. Regardless of negligence, the student or the student's parent or guardian is financially responsible for repairing or replacing any damaged, lost, or stolen equipment that the student has taken off-campus without authorization.

**Equipment Sign-Out:**

Students who sign out technology equipment:

1. Are solely responsible for the equipment they check out.
2. Agree to treat equipment with respect.
3. Are responsible for returning equipment by the return date.

*Note: If equipment is broken or lost through neglect, the borrower will be billed for replacement costs.*

**Consequences for not returning technology equipment on time:**

1. Within a week of being overdue: A "friendly reminder" email notification will be sent.
2. A week overdue: Parents will be notified and a non-refundable \$25 late fee will be billed/applied to obligations.
3. More than two weeks overdue: The cost of replacing the equipment will be billed/ applied to student obligations.

The BVASD Technology Department is solely responsible for determining when damaged equipment will be repaired or replaced, for arranging for equipment repairs, and for purchasing replacement equipment. The student's teacher or activity sponsor, a representative of the office that issued the equipment, are jointly responsible for determining whether the student was negligent regarding the security of any equipment issued to him or her that was damaged, lost, or stolen. The student may appeal this determination to the Principal, whose decision is final.

**LOCKERS**

School lockers are the property of the District and are subject to control by the District. Lockers may be entered by District personnel as necessary for school upkeep and maintenance and may be inspected periodically for cleanliness. Lockers may be searched, without a search warrant, upon reasonable suspicion that the locker contains contraband or that the search may reveal evidence of a violation of law or school rule. A locker is assigned to each student. Students are accountable for any damage to their locker and may have to bear the cost for repairs. We strongly urge that students use padlocks or combination

locks thereby keeping their lockers secure at all times. Locker needs are to be done in the morning before homeroom period, after the third period, and before the start of the tenth period. Students should refrain from entering lockers at unspecified times. Locks are available in the Office for student use and must be returned before the last day of school. If the lock is not returned, the student will have an unpaid \$2.00 fee entered on their student record.

### **CAFETERIA AND LUNCH**

All students are to report to the cafeteria where they will remain during the entire lunch period unless excused to go elsewhere. Students are not to stop at restrooms on their way to lunch. Lunches may be purchased on a daily basis in the cafeteria or money can be deposited into the student's lunch account and deducted on a daily basis when the student makes a purchase. Students who exhibit unacceptable behavior in the cafeteria will be seated elsewhere. Continued misbehavior will result in the students' parents being notified.

### **CAFETERIA PROCEDURES**

- Each lunch period is 30 minutes.
- Students are not to enter and leave the cafeteria at will.
- No food should be taken by students from the cafeteria.
- After eating, students must remove all items that they brought to their table.
- Uneaten food and beverage are to be discarded in the waste container.
- Trays with tableware are to be placed in the dishwashing area as directed by school personnel.
- Students will leave the cafeteria only when excused to the restroom or dismissed by the supervisor.
- Students who drop their lunch trays/containers by accident will clean the area.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

Sexual harassment in the Belle Vernon Area School District is forbidden by law and by the district. It is the District's policy to maintain an educational climate and working environment free from unsolicited and unwelcome sexual harassment and intimidation. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, such behaviors as repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, propositions, patting, touching, or pinching, staring at, or brushing against the body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, or the display in the school of sexually suggestive objects or pictures. A good guideline is that any sexual attention should be avoided. Incidents of alleged sexual harassment shall be reported to the building principal. A detailed complaint form is available in the school office.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION AWARENESS NOTICE**

The Belle Vernon Area School District and the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit work jointly to offer effective quality special education programming for the children in our district. The Westmoreland Intermediate Unit (W.I.U. #7) encompasses an area which services 17 school districts within Westmoreland County. The purpose of the Intermediate Unit is to provide special education services and technical assistance in planning, developing, implementing, supervising, and administering special education programs in districts under its jurisdiction whether they are district-operated or intermediate unit operated programs.

The following is a list of the special education services and programs provided by *BELLE VERNON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT*:

- Autism/pervasive
- developmental disorder
- Deaf/blindness
- Detention
- Emotional disturbance
- Hearing impairment
- Instruction in the Home
- Life Skills
- Mental retardation
- Mentally gifted
- Multiple disabilities
- Orthopedic impairment



- Other health impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Speech or language impairment
- Vision impairment including blindness

**REFERRAL PROCESS**

Initially, if a child at the elementary school level (K-5) is recognized by school personnel or parents as experiencing learning or behavioral difficulties, a team convenes and discusses possible interventions to assist that child. Instructional modifications and adaptations are then determined and implemented in the regular education environment. If difficulties persist after interventions are tried, the team then reconvenes and recommends a multidisciplinary evaluation to determine the need of specialized instruction-a referral will be made after trying initial interventions directly to the school psychologist to begin a multidisciplinary evaluation with parent permission. At the other grade levels, a team meets as listed above first. If necessary, a referral will be made after trying initial interventions directly to the school psychologist to begin a multidisciplinary evaluation with parent permission.

Parents can also choose to request an evaluation in writing to the school district administration. The district then evaluates the child without cost to the parents.

The teacher may, based on classroom performance of the child and acting as a representative of the school district, request that the child be referred for evaluation by the district. A parent's permission to evaluate must be granted in writing before an official evaluation can take place. No evaluation of the child may take place without parental permission.

Confidentiality of the information obtained is protected as outlined in *BELLE VERNON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT'S* Student Record Policy.

**THE IDENTIFICATION, EVALUATION AND PLACEMENT**

**Regulatory Authority: 34CRF 300.111(A)(I)(II)(C)(1)(2) and  
22 PA Code 14.121(A)**

1. The Local Education Agency (LEA) has an Annual Public Notice.
2. The LEA adopted and uses a public outreach awareness system to locate and identify all children thought to

be eligible for special education within the LEA's jurisdiction.

3. The LEA's public awareness system includes methods for reaching homeless children, wards of the state, children with disabilities attending private schools, and highly mobile children, including attending private schools, and highly mobile children, including migrant children.
4. The LEA conducts public awareness activities to inform the public of its special education services and programs and the manner in which to request them.
5. Written information regarding services and programs and how to request them is published in the LEA Handbook and LEA website.
6. The LEA's public awareness effort includes information regarding potential signs of development delays other risk factors that could indicate disabilities.
7. The LEA provides Annual Public Notice to the parents throughout the LEA of child identification activities.
8. The annual Public Notice is published or announced in newspapers, electronic media and other media with circulation adequate to notify parents throughout the LEA.
9. The Annual Public Notice informs parents of child of identification activities and procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities

Please review the following Draft of the Annual Public Notice

**ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION  
SERVICES AND PROGRAMS, SERVICES FOR GIFTED  
STUDENTS AND SERVICES FOR PROTECTED  
HANDICAPPED STUDENTS**

Notice to Parents:

According to state and federal special education regulations, annual public notice to parents of children who reside

within a school district is required regarding child find responsibilities. School districts, intermediate units and charter schools are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information related to Section 504 Chapter 15 services, the parent may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education

Circular entitled Implementation of Chapter 15. Also, school districts are required to conduct child find activities for children who may be eligible for gifted services via 22 PA Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding gifted services, the parent may refer to 22 PA Code Chapter 16. If a student is both gifted and eligible for Special Education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence.

This notice shall inform parents throughout the school district, intermediate unit and charter school of the child identification activities and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children. In addition to this public notice, each school district, intermediate unit, and charter school shall publish written information in the handbook and on the website. Children ages three through twenty-one can be eligible for special education, the parent should contact the appropriate staff member identified at the end of this public notice.

Children age three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and as a result, need Special Education and related services. Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least three years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (1) The child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas, or

(2) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional and self-help. For additional information you may contact (or insert MAWA contact).

**EVALUATION PROCESS:**

Each school district, intermediate unit, and charter school has a procedure in place by which parents can request an evaluation. For information about procedures applicable to your child, children, information, screenings and evaluations requested, may be obtained by contacting the intermediate unit. The addresses of these entities are as follows:

Westmoreland Intermediate Unit  
102 Equity Drive  
Greensburg, PA 15601-7190  
1-800-327-9487  
724-836-2460

BVSD Special Education Department

**PROCESS - THE EDUCATION OF  
EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) sets forth the following minimum procedures that must be followed in the identification, evaluation and educational placement of exceptional children.

STEP 1: A child is recognized by school personnel and/or parents as possibly being exceptional and in need of special education.

STEP 2: At all grade levels a team convenes to discuss possible interventions to see if the learning and/or behavioral problem(s) can be corrected within the regular education environment. Instructional modifications within the regular classroom are implemented to ascertain if the problem can be

corrected within the regular education utilizing appropriate modifications and adaptations. If difficulties persist despite interventions, the team recommends and makes a referral to the school psychologist to begin a multidisciplinary evaluation with written parent permission.

STEP 3: An evaluation to specifically determine the child's exceptionality, educational strengths, weaknesses and needs is scheduled by the school with prior knowledge and written approval by the parents. If agreement to evaluate is not achieved, either the school system or parents may initiate the procedural safeguard system. The evaluation procedures and materials must be selected and administered so as to not be racially or culturally discriminatory.

STEP 4: A meeting with the parents, school personnel, and if appropriate the child, is scheduled to discuss the results of the Evaluation Report (ER). Signatures are required indicating agreement or disagreement with the report. Those disagreeing are encouraged to write a dissenting opinion.

STEP 5: If child is deemed exceptional, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed based upon that evaluation. From this IEP team meeting or others that follow, the child's (IEP) will be developed, written and agreed to by the school, parents, and the child (entire IEP team) where appropriate. The IEP Team determines appropriate educational placement while maintaining Least Restrictive Environment.

STEP 6: When an IEP is agreed to by the parents and school, then the parents are issued a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP) to sign. The education to be provided to the child will be in conformity with the IEP. If for any reason the school and parents cannot agree on the appropriateness of the IEP, either party may initiate the system outlined in the procedural safeguards.

STEP 7: At least annually, each child's IEP and his/her school performance in relation to it will be reviewed for the purpose of specifying the future educational program for the child.

STEP 8: At least every three years, a multidisciplinary reevaluation is conducted to review a child's program and eligibility for special education. In the case of a child diagnosed intellectual disability, an evaluation will take place at least every two years.

<p style="text-align: center;">PROVISION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING SERVICES</p> <p>Belle Vernon Area School District parents are not charged for psychological counseling services that students require if the service is a necessary related service.</p>
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**FAMILIES IN TRANSITION & EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS POLICY**

Homelessness exists in our community. A combination of high housing costs and poverty causes many families to lose their housing. Many young people leave their homes due to abuse, neglect and family conflict. Children and youth who have lost their housing live in a variety of places, including motels, shelters, shared residences, transitional housing programs, cars, campgrounds and others. Their lack of permanent housing can lead to potentially serious physical, emotional and mental consequences. Belle Vernon Area School District will ensure that all children and youth receive a free appropriate public education and are given meaningful opportunities to succeed in our schools. Belle Vernon Area School District will also follow the requirements of the McKenney-Vento Act.

It is the policy of our District to view children as individuals. Therefore, this policy will not refer to children as homeless; it will instead use the term ***children and youth in transition***. Under federal law, children and youth in transition must have access to appropriate public education, including Sapphire Community Portal and be given a full opportunity to meet state and local

academic achievement standards. They must be included in state- and district-wide assessments and accountability systems. Our schools will ensure that children and youth in transition are free from discrimination, segregation and harassment.

**STATE LAWS GOVERNING STUDENT EMPLOYMENT:**

1. The hours of employment during the school term for 14 and 15 year olds:
  - a. Maximum 3 hours on school days
  - b. Maximum 18 hours per week
  - c. Maximum 8 hours on non-school days.
  - d. Night work - may not work after 7:00 p.m. or before 7:00 a.m.
  - e. Summer - Maximum 8 hours per day; 40 hours week.
2. The hours of employment during the school term for 16 and 17 year olds:
  - a. Maximum 8 hours on any given day. Maximum 28 hours per week- Monday through Friday. An additional 8 hours on Saturday and Sunday is permitted for a maximum of 44 hours per week.
  - b. May not work after 12:00 midnight Sunday through Thursday or before 6:00 a.m. any day. Exception: Preceding non-school day 1:00 a.m. No limits during summer months. Working papers may be secured in the High School main office.

**INTERNET USAGE FOR THE BELLE VERNON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Belle Vernon Area School District provides Internet access to students. We are pleased to provide this supervised opportunity to your child and believe that the Internet can offer vast and extended educational resources to enhance your child's education.

The Internet is an electronic highway that connects computers all over the world. It allows users to communicate with each other through E-mail, explore library and museum holdings, search educational resources, and transfer files on the Internet

to local computers. The Belle Vernon Area School District is providing Internet access only for educational use. The use of the Internet technology will be strictly for educational purposes, curriculum activities or classroom learning projects that support the goals, objectives and academic standards of the Belle Vernon Area School District. With this educational opportunity also comes responsibility. An Internet Access User policy and Ethics Code has been established in accordance with the Westmoreland Intermediate Unit's commitment to "appropriate educational use." Accordingly, the Belle Vernon Area School District requires all Internet users to agree to the Belle Vernon Area School District User Policy for Internet Access. It is the responsibility of your child to comply with this policy and code. Failure to do so can result in the suspension of your child's Internet access privileges and possible prosecution under State and Federal law for applicable violations. All students will be given a computer login ID and password. It is forbidden to use another student's login ID or to let anyone use yours. Each student will be held accountable for any infractions occurring with their assigned login ID and password.

#### **IV. PROGRAMS**

##### **LUNCH PROGRAM:**

The Belle Vernon Area School District is a member of the National School Breakfast/Lunch Program. Breakfast and lunch are served daily at the cost of \$1.15 and \$2.45 respectively as of July 12, 2017. As a member of the NSBP and the NSLP, families may apply for the free and reduced program. Those who currently are registered with SNAP will automatically be placed into the program and confirmation will be sent in July 2016. Applications will be available for the first week of August and will be available along with other information on the website at [www.bvasd.net/bvacafe](http://www.bvasd.net/bvacafe).

For further information, please contact Dave Bashada FSD.  
Email:[dave.bashada@bvasd.net](mailto:dave.bashada@bvasd.net)

For any further information, please contact: Dave Bashada, FSD  
Email: [dave.bashada@bvasd.net](mailto:dave.bashada@bvasd.net). A breakfast program is offered.



Students who wish to purchase breakfast are to go directly to the breakfast line upon arrival to school. All students are to complete breakfast and clean their tables before 7:55 a.m.

#### **STUDENT MEAL CHARGING**

##### *Purpose*

The Belle Vernon Area School District (the school district) is committed to providing nutritious meals to all students. The district must establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial burden on the food service department and school district. The goals of this policy are:

1. To establish a consistent and official district policy regarding meal charges and collection of charges.
2. To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
3. To support positive situations with district staff, district business policies, students and parent/guardian to the maximum extent possible.
4. To establish policies that are age appropriate.
5. To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

#### **VII. COUNSELING OFFICE**

##### **COUNSELING OFFICE**

Individual counseling is a private, confidential service provided to students who may be experiencing difficulty in any realm of life. Group counseling are also provided when appropriate or necessary. Information services are available to students as an aid in exploring the self and the world of work. The testing program has been developed as a tool to create a realistic profile of individual students to help them make sound decisions concerning their goals and lifestyles.

### **PROVISION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING SERVICES**

Belle Vernon Area School District parents are not charged for psychological counseling services that students require if the service is a necessary related service.

### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (S.A.P.)**

S.A.P. is a formal, consistent and systematic approach to the early identification of students who are at risk due to drug/alcohol, mental health or personal problems. This program provides for intervention with and referral of these students to appropriate services as well as support for students returning to school after treatment. The S.A.P. also works to prevent student problems through awareness campaigns, fostering a positive school climate and a promotion of personal wellness in all students. Thus, S.A.P. is an intervention, not a treatment program that integrates a process of information gathering, intervention and referral through a Core Team of trained school personnel who meet regularly to identify, intervene with, and motivate at-risk students into seeking appropriate help through the S.A.P. The Core Team will be assisted in its referral efforts by a Core Team Liaison, representing both the mental health and drug and alcohol treatment systems.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is a valuable tool which we encourage. Homework assignments teach good study habits, improve skills, contribute to development of self-discipline, and increase responsibility. Homework serves as preparation for classroom instruction and enhances the knowledge learned therein.

## **VIII. MEDICAL**

**ILLNESS AT SCHOOL** Students should report illness to their classroom teacher. The health room is used for emergencies only, and at the discretion of the nurse or principal. **Students must have a pass from their subject teacher before reporting to the office for illness.**

### **ACCIDENTS**

Students are to report accidents to their respective teachers. School accident insurance may be purchased at the beginning of the school term. The school district is not responsible for medical expenses of injuries suffered at the school.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

Our school nurse provides these general health screening services:

- Vision
- Hearing (7<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Height and weight

The nurse assists the school physicians with dental and physical screenings. Except in cases of emergency, students must secure a pass from their teacher before visiting our school nurse who is in our building.

### **EMERGENCY CARE – STANDING ORDERS Dr. Marc Cordero, M.D., School Physician**

Children's Acetaminophen...Minor Pain/Fever  
Ibuprofen...Minor Pain/Fever  
Diphenhydramine HCl... Allergic Reaction  
Calcium Carbonate Antacid.... Dyspepsia  
Collyrium Eye Wash...Ocular Irritations  
Saline Contact Solution...Contact Lenses  
Hydrogen Peroxide...Antiseptic  
Isopropyl Alcohol...Antimicrobial  
Bactine...Antiseptic  
Bacitracin Ointment...Wound Care, Antibacterial  
Caladryl...Skin Irritation, Contact Dermatitis  
Epi-pen Auto-injector 0.3 mg...Anaphylaxis  
Silver Sulfadiazine 1% Cream...Burns  
Glucagon Emergency Kit...Severe Hypoglycemia  
w/Unresponsiveness

Glucometer / Blood Glucose Testing...Management of Diabetes Mellitus  
Glucose Tablets/Gel ...Hypoglycemia  
Cepacol Lozenges...Minor Sore Throat,Cough  
Oral Anesthetic...Toothache, Stomatitis  
Oxygen PRN @ 4 L/min...Cardiac/Respiratory Distress  
AED...Cardiac Arrest  
Ambulance Transport (R/WNES)...Serious Accident and/or Illness

## **IX. GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ASSEMBLIES:**

Assembly activities are held as frequently as possible and when pertinent. These programs are meant not only to provide enjoyment for the students, but also to add to their educational and cultural experience. Much effort goes into scheduling, planning, fund-raising, and implementing these events. While all students may not have a keen interest in particular subjects, it is hoped that they will approach all presentations with open minds. Students' best behavior and cooperation at these activities will insure their continuation. The following rules apply for all assemblies:

- Students will be seated by grade level and class.
- No switching seats or leaving seats empty.
- Remain seated - no standing or sitting on backs of chairs.
- Food, beverages or chewing gum are not permitted.
- At the assembly's conclusion all students will remain seated until dismissed.

### **AWARDS**

At the end of each school year, members of Belle Vernon Area's student body receive awards and commendation for participation in various academic and athletic activities. During our awards ceremonies students with perfect attendance are given special recognition and certificates of academic achievement are issued to students who attained honor roll

status all four nine-week periods. Eighth grade members of our band, chorus, student council, newspaper staff, yearbook staff, art club, drama club and other organizations receive awards for their membership. Students who participated in the Spelling Bee and Gifted competitions are recognized for their achievements. The American Legion awards for patriotism are presented by representatives of the Belle Vernon and Fayette City American Legions to an eighth grade girl and boy from each respective area. Distinguished Leopard awards are issued to a boy and girl from each grade level, having been chosen by their teachers for qualities among which are honor, scholarship, service, loyalty, leadership, and courage.

#### **BACK PACK and BOOK BAG POLICY**

Students may carry back packs or book bags into school. Back packs and book bags must remain in the student's locker until dismissal. Students will have access to the lockers at designated times throughout the day. Back packs and book bags will be subject to security searches.

Students will be permitted to carry gym clothes in a bag, but said bags are to be placed in their lockers until they have PE, or after they have PE. PE lockers are provided.

No student will be permitted to carry back packs, book bags or similar items in the halls, classrooms, cafeteria, library, etc., during the school day except to store the items in the locker at the onset of the day.

#### **BOOKS**

Students are responsible for all books issued to them. Lost or destroyed books will result in the student accruing fees and the student will subsequently be placed on the no privilege list. Students are required to bring books to classes, including study halls.

Lockers are not to be visited during change of class. Students should take everything needed for each session from your locker in the morning before homeroom period, before the fourth period and before the ninth period.

#### **CLASS EXCUSAL FOR LAVATORY PURPOSES**

Students must ask permission from their teachers and be signed out in order that they may be excused from class. While excused, students must carry their agenda books signed by the teacher.

#### **DANCES**

Student dances are announced on the Belle Vernon Area website [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net). Also, flyers are posted in each classroom throughout the school during the week of a dance. Information regarding rules and regulations governing dances is also posted in each classroom. Tickets are sold on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday the week of the dance. No tickets are sold the day of the dance. The price of a dance ticket is \$3.00 which includes all refreshments and snacks. When purchasing a dance ticket, each student must present their entire Agenda Book with the proper signature of a parent or guardian on the appropriate line of the form found in this agenda book. Written permission notes from parents are not acceptable - the Agenda Book must be signed and presented.

#### **DANCE RULES**

Our school dances are optional activities and are chaperoned by staff. Total student behavior and adherence to the following rules

determines whether dances will continue to be held.

- Students must be up to date in all class work and assignments to attend the dance.
- Only students who are presently enrolled at Belle Vernon Area may attend all yearly dances.
- Dance hours are from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM.
- Students will not be admitted until 7:00 PM and no one is permitted to leave the dance before 10:00

PM. Parents are requested to arrive at our school promptly at 10:00 PM for their child. Exceptions must be made in writing.

- Students must make arrangements for rides home before coming to the dance. No calls are permitted from the office phone.
- Students are expected to be in attendance the entire day of the dance.
- When entering the dance, students must have their tickets and be orderly. Pushing, shoving or cutting in line makes everyone wait longer.
- The entire ticket must be presented for admittance to the dance.
- Hats or coverings on top of heads are not permitted. No masks may be worn.
- Students are not to exhibit any displays of being overly affectionate toward each other.
- Only one person at a time may be seated on a chair.
- Normal rules of conduct and behavior, including the dress code that is in effect during the school day will apply at the dance.
- All coats will be placed on tables in the lobby. The coat area and hallways are off limits during the dance. No one is permitted in the office.
- Once in the cafeteria, students are not allowed to go out into the hall and are not to ask permission to do so.
- Students who are granted permission to use restroom facilities must use the rear cafeteria door to be excused.
- No one is permitted on the stage nor to touch the disc jockey's table.
- No standing in front of the speakers.
- No tickets will be sold the day of the dance.
- Tickets are not transferable from one student to another.
- Students not attending the dance are not permitted on school grounds.
- While dancing, students are not to bump into others.

- Lifting others, jumping or dancing wildly are hazardous and not permitted.
- Chairs may not be moved from stacks.
- There is to be no sliding nor riding chairs; no standing or placing feet on chairs.
- Grouping together to form a long chain of students is not allowed.
- Those not dancing are to remain around the perimeter of the dance area - not in the middle of the room.
- Pushing, shoving or cutting in line for refreshments causes everyone to wait longer before they may eat.
- Making a mess with refreshments deducts from dance time.
- Students who do not comply with dance regulations or fail to maintain proper conduct will be removed from the dance area and will not be permitted to attend future dances.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION FOR  
STUDENTS TO PURCHASE BELLE VERNON AREA DANCE TICKETS**

**STUDENT NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **HOMEROOM #** \_\_\_\_\_

In order to purchase a dance ticket, each student must bring their entire Agenda Book (no pages are to be torn out of the agenda book) with the proper signature of a parent or guardian on the line corresponding to the dance. Students and parents are asked to thoroughly review the articles **Dances and Dance Rules** in this Agenda Book. To attend the dance, all class work and assignments must be up to date. By signing on the appropriate line, I have given permission for my son/daughter to purchase a dance ticket for the designated date.



<u>DANCE #</u>	<u>PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
<u>1</u>	_____	_____
<u>2</u>	_____	_____
<u>3</u>	_____	_____
<u>4</u>	_____	_____
<u>5</u>	_____	_____

*All signatures must be on this page — written notes will not be accepted*

**EARLY DISMISSAL REQUESTS**

Students who must be excused earlier than our normal dismissal time must obtain a permit from our office by presenting a written request signed by their parent/ guardian on the morning of the proposed dismissal. We strongly discourage requests to release students from school so they may attend events in which younger siblings are involved. Parents/guardians are required to enter our school's office and sign a form before the student may be released for an early dismissal.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES ~ AWAY FOR THE DAY PROCEDURE:**

**Science supports an "Away for the Day" policy. When students do not have the freedom of accessing their phones during school hours, they are more engaged socially and academically.** Use of electronic devices, some of which include cellular phones, Ipods, Mp3 players, and/or smart watches, etc. may be used before and after school only. Cell phones, smart watches and any other communication devices are to be placed in student lockers from the start of homeroom until after the last period of the day. Texting and videotaping are not permitted anytime during the school day. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a detention and confiscation of the phone. The cell phone may be retrieved by the parent at the end of the day. This policy is in effect throughout the entire school day. Requests to use the phone or cell phone will be screened and the conversation

monitored. Students are to make arrangements to go to friend's home BEFORE they arrive at school that day. Upon suspicion or determination that a student is using an electronic device and/or cellular phone in his or her possession, the student will be requested to voluntarily surrender the item(s). The electronic device will only be released to the parents/guardians of the student. Student's denial of possession of electronic devices or resistance to comply with a directive to relinquish the item(s) will result in a search of the student's possessions and/or person, suspension and school officials will immediately summon the local police department if warranted.

Use of devices to read eBooks may be permitted with Principal permission only. Misuse of said devices will result in denial of use.

**EMERGENCY CARD:**

A new card must be completed each year. Please complete the front and back of the emergency card. Any change of information, such as address, telephone number, employment, emergency numbers, should be reported to the school office immediately. Please be sure that friends or relatives who are listed on the emergency card are in the immediate area and are aware they might be called upon to transport or give assistance to your child if you are unavailable.

**FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drill regulations and directions are posted near the door of each classroom. The fire drill signal is much different from other bells or buzzers. When the signal sounds, students must leave everything and line up quickly and quietly, following the leaders out the proper exits in a single file to a distance of at least 50 feet from the building. Remember, the key to an efficient fire drill - Quickly and Quietly. Talking or horseplay during fire drills will not be tolerated.

### **FOOD AND DRINKS & OPEN CONTAINER POLICY**

Open containers are prohibited from being carried into the school building. Open Containers is defined as any drink container that was previously open prior to entry into the school, i.e. coffee cups, sports drinks, energy drinks, etc.

Open food and drinks are to be consumed in the cafeteria and **NOT** carried to other parts of the school. No food or drinks are permissible in any classroom due to students with severe allergies. Water is permitted.

**No open containers will be permitted to leave the cafeteria area during breakfasts or lunches.**

If, at any point, a student is asked to throw away food or drinks, or put away open containers, the student must comply. Any disrespect in this matter will lead to further disciplinary action.

### **LOCKDOWN AND EVACUATION:**

Students will be educated in the ALiCE Safety Protocol in regards to how to respond if and when an intruder should enter the building. ALiCE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate (Not a linear response).

At the sound of an Alert, all work is to be stopped. Students and staff are expected to respond in a common sense manner to improve survivability by either Locking Down and Barricading, Evacuating or Countering based on the Information that they receive.

### **FUNDRAISER:**

Usually in September or October, BVAMS undertakes a major fund raising event. Money earned from the fund-raiser is used to pay for student activities such as assemblies, yearbooks, awards, clubs, dances, and prizes associated with the program itself. These incentive prizes are earned by students based upon their level of participation in the sale. Students may also earn discounts on the price of their yearbook. One-third, two-thirds,

or totally free discount levels are offered based upon the student's level of participation. Last year the cost of a yearbook for those who earned no discount was about \$50.00. At the start of the program students are given papers explaining all aspects of the program including prizes, deadlines and responsibilities. A more detailed list of expenditures is provided at that time also.

**HALL TRAFFIC:**

Upon arrival at school, students must report directly to the gymnasium, their homeroom, or to the cafeteria (if eating breakfast). Particular attention must be paid to our traffic rules. Students must move in an orderly fashion while changing classes and use the appropriate stairs as designated. Loitering, getting drinks from fountains, stopping in restrooms, or waiting for classmates is not permitted. There will be no running at any time, however, STUDENTS SHOULD WALK WITHOUT DELAY. During inclement weather, students should be extremely cautious while walking inside and outside the school since floors and walkways may be slippery.

While changing classes, the stairs near the office are to be used for up traffic; the stairs at the opposite end of the corridor are to be used for down traffic.

**LOST AND FOUND:**

Articles found in and around the school should be turned into the Middle School Office or the lost and found box in the lobby.

**MATERIALS DELIVERED TO SCHOOL**

When a student arranges to have items delivered to the school office from home, it is the student's responsibility to retrieve the material. Office personnel will not interrupt class to inform students of these deliveries.

**PUBLICATION OF STUDENT NAME AND PHOTO**

Parents who do not want their child's name or photo published must notify the building principal in writing indicating that they

do not give permission to have their child's name or photo published.

**SCHOOL CLOSINGS:**

Information regarding necessary school delays or cancellations is broadcast on radio station KDKA (1020 AM), Froggy 94.9, 98.3, 103.5, 104.3 FM and television stations KDKA, WPXI, and WTAE. (www.KDKA.com) The district's website (bvasd.net) will list notifications. Each family should have an alternative contingency action plan for their children in the event that an early dismissal should occur. Please be certain that you have made necessary arrangements for the care of your child should circumstances arise that will cause your child to arrive home before a parent or guardian. Students and parents will be notified (called, E-mailed) via School Messenger of school cancellations and delays as soon as this information is available.

**SCHOOL MESSENGER:**

Belle Vernon Area School District has partnered with School Messenger to bring a new messaging service to parents and students.

Where applicable, the Administration will make use of Twitter to communicate important information.

The District will be sending automatic phone calls and emails to parents regarding Emergencies, Attendance, Cancellations, and Delays at school. Updates might relate to any district information or events.

Be sure your contact information including primary phone number, alternate phone number and email address is current with the school.

Learn more at

[www.schoolmessenger.com](http://www.schoolmessenger.com)

<http://www.bvasd.net/schoolmessenger>



### **SCHOOL TELEPHONES**

The office telephone is restricted to school personnel. In cases of illness, school personnel will make the necessary calls. Transportation arrangements for special events, etc. should be made prior to coming to school. Students must attain permission from office staff in order to use the office phone to call their parent/guardian.

### **SHOWING OF AFFECTION**

Public display of affection in school is not permitted. Such conduct will require notification of parents. Kissing and caressing are strictly prohibited.

### **STUDENTS STAYING AFTER SCHOOL:**

Parents picking up students after school should arrive at 2:50pm. Students are NOT to remain on school grounds after dismissal unless involved in an authorized school activity. Any student staying after school to attend a school sponsored activity MUST have written permission from their parent/guardian. The permission note must be presented to the office no later than morning homeroom of that day.

### **STUDENTS LEAVING SCHOOL AS A WALKER:**

Student must have a note signed and dated by parent/guardian giving them permission to be dismissed as a walker. The note must be presented to the office no later than morning homeroom of that day.

### **STUDENT VALUABLES**

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money or valuable property to school. Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property. In physical education class check your watches, jewelry, and/or other valuables with the teacher. Students have the option of borrowing a lock from the office if necessary.

**TAKE YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY:**

Take Your Child To Work Day will be counted as an educational trip with the submission of the proper excuse form.

**VISITORS:**

Visitors will be permitted to enter the Belle Vernon Area Middle School to conduct school business. All visitors are required to sign in with proper identification in the office and must obtain a visitors pass from the Middle School Office. Requests should not be made to bring visitors from other schools or out of town friends or relatives during the regular school day. Students are not permitted to bring their children or any other students not currently enrolled in the Belle Vernon Area Middle School to school at any time during the regular school day. Also, former students are not permitted to visit teachers during the course of the school day but may do so after dismissal at 3:00 p.m.

**DISCLAIMER POLICY:**

This and any such book is only a representation of established policies at the time of publication. New policies may be adopted and others may be amended, as the need arises.

**SURVEILLANCE:** Students may be recorded by video camera during the school day and on school buses.





**GUARDIAN REVIEW**

I have reviewed the contents of this Agenda Book for this school year.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

**\*Students are advised to be careful with their Agenda books.  
Replacement books cost \$5.00.**

***To be read and signed by parents or guardians of students  
who are under 18:***

As the parent or legal guardian of the above student, I have read, understand and agree that my child or ward shall comply with the terms of the School District’s Acceptable Use and Internet Policy for the student’s access to the School District’s computer network and the Internet. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision of my child’s or ward’s use of his or her access account if and when such access is not in the School setting. I hereby give permission for my child or ward to use the building-approved account to access the School District computer network and the Internet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

**TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT SIGN OUT  
PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT  
(As found in detail on page 41.)**

**Equipment Sign-Out:**

Technology equipment is available for all BVASD students for sign out. Equipment can be reserved for checkout in the BVAHS Library

Students who sign out technology equipment:

- 4. Are solely responsible for the equipment they check out.
- 5. Agree to treat equipment with respect.
- 6. Are responsible for returning equipment by the return date.

*Note: If equipment is broken or lost through neglect, the borrower will be billed for replacement costs.*

**Consequences for not returning technology equipment on time:**

4. Within a week of being overdue: A "friendly reminder" email notification will be sent.
5. A week overdue: Parents will be notified and a non-refundable \$25 late fee will be billed/applied to obligations.
6. More than two weeks overdue: The cost of replacing the equipment will be billed/ applied to student obligations.

**Please Print:**

**STUDENT NAME:**

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**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE:**

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**DATE:**

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### **PEST MANAGEMENT (INTEGRATED)**

The Belle Vernon Area School District uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach for managing insects, rodents and weeds. Our goal is to protect every student from pesticide exposure by using an IPM approach to pest management. Our IPM approach focuses on making the school building and grounds an unfavorable habitat for these pests by removing food and water sources and eliminating their hiding and breeding places. We accomplish this through routine cleaning and maintenance. We routinely monitor the school building and grounds to detect any pests that are present. The pest monitoring team consists of our building custodians, office, and teaching staff and includes our students. Pest sightings are reported to our IPM coordinator who evaluates the “pest problem” and determines the appropriate pest management techniques to address the problem. The techniques can include increased sanitation, modifying storage practices, sealing entry points, physically removing the pest, etc.

From time to time, it may be necessary to use chemicals to manage a pest problem. Chemicals will only be used when necessary, and will not be routinely applied. When chemicals are used, the school will try to use the least toxic products when possible. Applications will be made only when unauthorized persons do not have access to the area(s) being treated. Notices will be posted in these areas 72 hours prior to application and for two days following the application.

Parents of guardians of students enrolled in the school may request prior notification of specific pesticide applications made at the school. To receive notification, you must be placed on the school’s notification registry. If you would like to be placed on this registry, please notify the district in writing. To be placed on this registry, parents must notify the district in writing. Please include your name(s), student’s name(s), student’s room number(s), address, day phone number, evening phone number, to contact you by U.S. Mail or contacted by phone.

If a chemical application must be made to control an emergency pest problem, notice will be provided by telephone to any parent or guardian who has requested such notification. Exceptions to this notification include disinfectants and anti-microbial products; self –containerized baits placed in areas not accessible to students, and gel type baits placed in cracks, crevices or voids; and swimming pool maintenance chemicals. Each year the district will prepare a new notification registry.

**Important Reference Information**

**Belle Vernon Area School District Home Page –  
<http://www.bvasd.net>**