

PARENT / TEACHER / STUDENT HANDBOOK

FOR

TUNKHANNOCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS



2009 / 2010

Evans Falls Elementary
2055 SR 29S
Tunkhannock PA 18657

Phone: 570 / 298-2194
Fax: 570 / 298-2514

Mehoopany Elementary
400 Scottsville Road
Mehoopany PA 18629

Phone: 570 / 833-2649
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TUNKHANNOCK AREA
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
2009-2010
STUDENT HANDBOOK

This handbook may be viewed on the district website:
www.tasd.net

Mill City Elementary
RR 2
Dalton PA 18414

Phone: 570 / 378-2525
Fax: 570 / 378-3580

Roslund Elementary
99 Digger Drive
Tunkhannock PA 18657

Phone: 570 / 836-8270
Fax: 570 / 836-5622

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Tunkhannock Area School District

Mission Statement

**“TO MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL
OF ALL STUDENTS THROUGH
MOTIVATION, GUIDANCE,
AND EDUCATION.”**

September 2009

Dear Parents / Guardians / Students:

This handbook will provide you with some necessary information concerning procedures and guidelines utilized in the district's elementary schools – Roslund, Mehoopany, Evans Falls and Mill City. It has been compiled to provide you with some initial information; however, there are areas that may need further clarification by school personnel. Please request assistance at any time.

Parents and guardians, we strongly urge you to sit down with your child and discuss the contents of this booklet and what is expected of your child. Your child's teacher discussed the booklet with students prior to bringing it home to you. Specifically review the sections on attendance, grading, dress code, discipline and school bus procedures.

Continuing our concerns with safety we again ask that you very specifically review the medication procedures in the handbook. PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY AND ALL MEDICATION **MUST** BE TRANSPORTED TO AND FROM SCHOOL BY THE PARENT, GUARDIAN OR A DESIGNATED ADULT. STUDENTS MAY NOT CARRY MEDICATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL.

Periodically throughout the year, students are photographed or videotaped in school as part of a school project or activity. Pictures/videotaping will be for educational use only. Please notify the school in writing if you do not want your child included in pictures/ videotapes.

We hope that the directives and information contained in this handbook will foster communication between school and home and ultimately increase student achievement.

Parents are also reminded that they may utilize EdLine to monitor the academic progress of your child/children.

Please be sure to refer to the school calendar for important dates for the 2009–2010 school year. We are looking forward to a successful year!

Sincerely,

Mr. Patrick Mulhern
Elementary Principal

Mr. Joseph Moffitt
Elementary Principal

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

COMPLETION OF SCHOOL WORK ON TIME

It is each student's responsibility to fully complete classroom work and homework and return it to the teacher on the date and time designated. If homework assignments or classroom work is not completed, teachers can lower grades for assignments and projects.

Students who are ill will be given the additional day or days to complete assignments. If a student is excessively ill, the teacher may extend the length of time for completion of assignments.

When a student begins to demonstrate that assignments are not being completed, teachers will notify the parents/guardians of the student to alert them of the problem.

The teaching staff will determine if additional time is required for a student to make-up a missed test.

PROMOTION / RETENTION (School Board Policy #215.1)

The promotion/retention decision should be an individual matter for each child, and should include consideration of child factors, such as age and maturity, school and family factors in addition to academic achievement. In the early grades, reading achievement is an important factor. Additional factors such as ability, social and emotional awareness, maturity and chronological age are part of the decision to retain a student.

Decision on retention of individual students will be made according to the following guidelines:

KINDERGARTEN:

The process to determine kindergarten retention would include a meeting of the teacher, parents, and/or guidance counselor or elementary principal.

GRADES ONE AND TWO:

1. Failure of reading and/or math.
2. The recommendation of the classroom teacher considering the factors listed on page two.
3. A meeting with the parents, teacher, guidance counselor and elementary principal to discuss the student's academic achievement.

GRADES THREE AND FOUR:

1. Failure of math.
2. Failure of one major subject and two minor subjects: Science, Social Studies, and Spelling.
3. A meeting with the parents, teacher, guidance counselor and elementary principal to discuss the student's academic achievement.

END OF YEAR CERTIFICATES

At the end of each school year certificates may be awarded for: Attendance, Physical Fitness, Accelerated Reader, and in other selected areas.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Tunkhannock Area School District has implemented an automated phone system designed to provide parents/guardians with information in case of emergencies or unscheduled early dismissals. We must have current parent/guardian contact information for this system to work successfully. *IT IS THE PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP THE SCHOOL UPDATED WITH ANY CHANGES IN YOUR ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, OR ANY OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION. PLEASE NOTIFY THE MAIN OFFICE SECRETARY OF YOUR SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY SHOULD THIS INFORMATION CHANGE.*

TESTING / EVALUATION

Elementary students will receive the following assessments during the school year:

Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2: DIBELS (Fall, Mid-year, and Spring)

Grade 2: Stanford Achievement Test (Spring)

Grade 3: Otis-Lennon School Ability Test (Fall), Pennsylvania System State Assessment (Spring)

Grade 4: Pennsylvania System State Assessment (Spring)

Results will be shared with parents when available. Other assessments may occur with parental permission and / or notification.

In compliance with state and federal law, the Tunkhannock Area School District will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability, which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all-eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

Any initial questions should be directed to the building administrators.

CHILD STUDY TEAM (CST) PROCESS

The Child Study Team (CST) is organized by the school guidance counselor to provide academic/behavioral support for students in need, and their teachers. Students are recommended for assistance by the teacher or their parents. The team recommends appropriate strategies for students and these changes are then monitored for a 30-45 day period of time to determine their success. The CST team then reconvenes to determine the amount of progress the student has made and will make further recommendations when necessary.

DISCIPLINE / BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

ITEMS THAT STUDENTS ARE NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL

Our schools support a safe and effective teaching/learning environment. The following items are **NOT** to be brought to school by students:

- gel pens, noxious glue, etc.
- s squirt guns and any water holding device
- glass containers (use plastic)
- items that any organizations have for sale (all selling of items, including PTA/PTO shall be completed outside of school)
- radios, musical devices, cell phones, hand held computer games
- knives or any weapons or look alike weapon (subject to disciplinary action)
- toys (teacher permission only)
- scooters, skateboards, roller skates, heeies and hard baseballs
- items of monetary or sentimental value are discouraged from coming into school

Items that do not belong in school and disrupt the educational process will be confiscated by the teacher. Parents may make arrangements to pick up these items with the teacher. Any item not picked up will be discarded at the end of the school year.

TUNKHANNOCK AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL **EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIOR PHILOSOPHY**

It is the philosophy of the Tunkhannock Area Elementary Schools that positive student behavior is best accomplished by positive disciplinary procedures. The ultimate goal of this or any discipline policy is self-discipline that is best fostered in an atmosphere that is conducive to living, teaching and learning. It is recognized that it is the responsibility of the total school community to exemplify self-discipline and to provide positive role models for students in their charge.

Everyone has the right to expect that the environment shall be safe, pleasant, and well organized. The climate should produce security and consistency through the establishment of reasonable rules and guidelines that are based upon mutual respect, cooperation and courtesy.

GENERAL BEHAVIOR RULES FOR SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM

1. Students are to show respect at all times for all school personnel and fellow students.
2. Students will use proper language at all times.
3. Students should be where they are supposed to be, on time, and with the proper materials.
4. Students should not participate in any activity (fighting, threatening, teasing, cheating, stealing, etc.), which interferes with the rights of other people or disrupts orderly procedure.
5. Students should enter and leave all areas of the school building in an orderly manner.
6. Students are to respect all school property and the property of other students.
7. Students will follow classroom rules as expected by classroom teacher.
8. Any jewelry, dress, or personal grooming habits that negatively impact the academic environment may be considered a disciplinary offense and may be subject to disciplinary action. This would include **tattoos** of any kind (permanent or sticker) and any type of temporary hair colors.

9. For safety within the school building and on the playground, shoes are to have an enclosed heel that is no higher than 1 ½ inches.
10. Students will always be held accountable for damaging school property.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR RULES

1. Students are to remain seated until excused.
2. Students are to talk in a normal tone – no shouting.
3. Students are not to push or fool around while in the cafeteria.
4. Students are not to throw food, papers, etc.
5. Students are to clean up their eating area when finished.
6. Students should respect the adults in charge of the cafeteria.

PLAYGROUND BEHAVIOR RULES

1. Appropriate dress is required for all weather conditions.
2. Students are to play in a safe manner – no games involving physical contact.
3. Students are not to throw stones, snowballs, etc.
4. Students are to use all equipment in a safe manner – i.e. no standing on slides, jumping from swings, swinging sideways, etc.
5. Students may not re-enter building without permission.
6. Students must report any playground injury to the teacher on duty.
7. Students are to line up immediately when whistle or bell denotes recess has ended.

BUS BEHAVIOR

School bus safety is of utmost concern to all. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Students are to show the same respect for drivers as they do their classroom teachers. Students are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with Tunkhannock Area School District's Transportation and Safety Policy.

SUMMARY

Students who disobey these rules will face one or more of the following consequences:

1. Verbal reprimand from the teacher.
2. Isolation from the group (in class, in hallway, in office where applicable).
3. Parent phone call by teacher.
4. Loss of school privileges such as recess, programs, field trips, etc.
5. Student referral to guidance counselor or principal.
6. Parental conference with all concerned parties.
7. Severe or repeated student misbehavior may result in a suspension from student activities or school.

“NO – BULLYING” PROGRAM (See School Board Policy #249 in appendix)

The elementary buildings will be taking a firm approach to all bullying behaviors.

Bullying is defined as a pattern of repeated harmful behavior by a person with more physical or social power toward a less powerful person. This may include a wide variety of behaviors, with deliberate intent to hurt, embarrass, or humiliate the other person. Researchers have identified four (4) forms of bullying:

Physical Bullying (Direct Bullying) *

The most commonly known form includes hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing and taking personal belongings.

Examples:

- Punching/slapping/elbowing/shouldering (slamming)
- Pushing/shoving
- Kicking
- Stealing, damaging or defacing belongings/property
- Restraining
- Pinching
- Flushing someone's head in the toilet
- Forcing someone into his/her locker
- Attacking with spit wads
- Sexual harassment
- Pulling clothes down or off
- And more!

Verbal Bullying (Direct Bullying)

Includes taunting, malicious teasing, name-calling, and making threats.

Examples:

- Name-calling
- Insulting remarks and put-downs
- Repeated teasing
- Racist remarks/harassment
- Sexual bullying and sexual harassment
- Threats and intimidation
- Whispering about someone behind his/her back
- And more!

Indirect Bullying Behaviors (Social/Relational)

Involves spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, and engaging in social exclusion or intimidation.

Examples:

- Destroying and manipulating relationships (turning someone's best friend against him/her, etc.)
- Destroying reputations (gossiping, spreading nasty and malicious rumors and lying about someone)
- Making someone look foolish (public humiliation)
- Intimidation
- Hurtful graffiti
- Excluding someone from a group (social rejection/isolation)
- Negative body language (facial expressions, glares and dirty looks, turning your back to someone)
- Nasty jokes and notes passed around
- Hate petitions (promising to hate someone)
- Stealing boyfriends or girlfriends
- And more!

Cyber-Bullying

Forms of verbal and psychological bullying may also occur on the Internet through email, instant messaging, or personal profile websites such as MySpace or FaceBook. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher or employee of the district by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website posting (including blogs). All forms of cyber-bullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive to the educational process of the district, offenders shall be the subject of appropriate discipline.

Examples:

- Cyber bullying (negative text messages on cell phones, e-mail, voice-mail messages, etc.)

Bullying will not be tolerated and will clearly be recognized as an infraction of the district discipline policy. Consequences will be assigned based upon the severity and frequency of the bullying offense. Administrative discretion may be used when determining the level of misbehavior of specific incidents. All disciplinary actions are subject to administrative discretion.

Consequences for Bullying are as follows:

First Offense - Verbal warning by teacher, parent notified.

Second Offense - Sensitivity training, referral to guidance counselor, parents notified by counselor.

Third Offense - Referral to Principal, one day in –school suspension, parent to receive written notice.

Fourth Offense – Referral to Principal, one day of in school suspension, plus one-day external suspension, written notification.

Fifth Offense - Three days external suspension, written notification.

Additional offenses referred to Superintendent of Schools.

Reprisal

Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying or extortion or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or hearing may be subject to disciplinary action.

Students should immediately report incidents of hazing and/or bullying to school personnel. School district administrators will investigate all reports of hazing and/or bullying and will issue appropriate discipline to any individual who violates this policy. School administrators shall inform all parties of administrative actions.

Our elementary students will utilize one of the following school pledges during daily opening exercises:

Primary Students (K-1-2):

I am a smart, special and valuable person. I respect myself and I respect others. My words and actions are kind and honest. I accept only my best in all that I do. I am proud to be me.

Intermediate Students (3-4):

We the students of _____ Elementary School agree to join together to stamp out bullying at our school. Bullying can be pushing, shoving, hitting, name calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, or excluding someone.

No one at _____ Elementary School has the right to hurt anyone with words or actions. Everyone has the right to report unsafe behavior to a grownup.

I am a Buddy Not a Bully *

I am a buddy not a bully you see
Being cruel to others is just not me.

I will be nice to my classmates every day
I won't push, hit or pick on them in any way.

I won't be a bully and call people names
And I'll include everyone when we play our games.

I will respect myself and others at school
Because bullying others is just NOT cool!

* Contributed by an elementary staff member

**DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR
SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION**

The Board recognizes that exclusion from the educational program of the schools, whether by suspension or expulsion, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student in this district and one that cannot be imposed without due process. The Board may, after a proper hearing, suspend a child for such time, as it deems necessary or may permanently expel him/her.

LEVELS OF MISCONDUCT

Level I – Minor misbehavior on the part of the student, which impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school. Examples of this type of misbehavior include, but are not limited to:

- A. Unexcused lateness to school (failure to report to the office when late to school)
- B. Unexcused lateness to class
- C. Cutting class (cutting class period shall lead to "0" grade for any test, quiz or other classroom activity)
- D. Leaving class without permission
- E. Unauthorized use of parking facilities
- F. Disrespectful speech or action
- G. Horseplay or pushing
- H. Running or wandering in the hall

- I. Wearing head coverings in the building
- J. Agitating or teasing classmates
- K. Unruly behavior in the cafeteria
- L. Disorderly behavior during assemblies
- M. Public displays of affection

Level II – Misbehavior whose frequency or seriousness requires that it be classified at a higher level where a different set of disciplinary responses should be applied – the reason being that these actions interfere with the rights of others in the system and the smooth operation of the educational process. Examples of this type of misbehavior include, but are not limited to:

- A. Repeated misconduct of a Level I nature
- B. Defacing school property
- C. Failure to follow rules and regulations established by the school and/or misconduct on field trips, on the way to or at athletic events, school sponsored programs or any other trip or program involving students leaving school property
- D. Forgery
- E. Insubordination, open defiance of authority – failing to complete a reasonable request by administrator, teacher or other school personnel, such as failing to properly identify oneself upon request
- F. Leaving the school building without permission at any time during the school day
- G. Obscene conduct or language
- H. Returning to any school property without permission while on suspension
- I. Truancy
- J. Cheating to gain academic advantage

Level III – Misconduct which may be disruptive of the educational process or which involve acts that are so serious that they may represent a direct and immediate threat to the welfare of others – furthermore these acts may also violate state penal laws. Examples of actions that may violate the state penal laws include, but are not limited to:

- A. Arson
- B. Assault and battery
- C. Fighting
- D. Disorderly conduct
- E. Extortion (to obtain something by force or threat of doing harm)
- F. Indecent exposure
- G. Theft/possession/sale of stolen property
- H. Leading or participating in a riot in the school
- I. Possession or use of knives, firearms, fire crackers, cherry bombs, smoke bombs, or other weapons
- J. Terrorist threats (Policy #218.2)
- K. Unauthorized use of school fire alarm system
- L. Vandalism – malicious destruction of school property or individual property
- M. Violation of state vehicle code
- N. Violation – student use and/or distribution of any drug (penalties are provided under Policy #227 approved by the Tunkhannock Area Board of Directors)
- O. Violation of the school tobacco policy (penalties are provided in school tobacco policy approved by the Tunkhannock Area Board of School Directors)
- P. Possession and/or use of pagers/beepers/cellular phones within the school unless approved by the administration for the individual student with the following exceptions:
 - 1. Medical emergency

2. Fire company
3. Ambulance
4. Other rescue squad

Administrative discretion may be used when determining the level of misbehavior of specific incidents. All disciplinary actions are subject to administrative discretion.

Temporary Suspension

Although detention is the usual penalty for a Level I violation, under certain circumstances, as determined by the principal, the student may be suspended for a period of time up to three days with notice of the reason for which he/she is suspended. A meeting with parent(s) may be held.

A student may be suspended for a period of time up to three days in internal or external suspension for a Level II violation with notice of the reasons for which he/she or guardian must contact the school administrators before the student will be readmitted.

A Level III violation will result in an automatic three-day suspension. A conference shall be held with the student and parent within the three-day period.

Full Suspension

A student may be suspended up to ten school days by the principal. The student and his parent(s) shall be required to attend an informal hearing during the first three days of temporary suspension.

Expulsion

The Board may permanently expel from the rolls of this district any student whose misconduct and disobedience is such as to warrant this sanction. No student shall be expelled without an opportunity for a formal hearing.

The student under 17 years of age who is expelled has forfeited his/her right to an education in the schools of this district, but has not been excused from compliance with the compulsory attendance statutes.

Formal hearing (Refer to P.G. 219)

Students suspended for a period of time longer than a temporary suspension shall be afforded a formal hearing which shall take place within three weeks after the suspension occurs, but delay of such hearing shall not operate to delay return to school.

The formal hearing shall observe the due process requirements of notification of the charges in writing to the student and his/her parent(s).

The Superintendent shall develop rules and regulations to implement this policy which shall include the publication of standards of behavior to all students in accordance with Board policy on student discipline and procedures that insure due process in the deprivation of a student's right to attend school and comport with this policy.

1. Exclusion from school may be affected by temporary suspension, full suspension, or expulsion.
 - a. "TEMPORARY SUSPENSION" shall mean exclusion from school for an offense for a period of up to three school days, by the administrator, without a hearing
 - b. "FULL SUSPENSION" shall mean exclusion from school for an offense for a period of up to ten school days (except as provided in paragraph 3 hereafter), after an informal hearing is held with the student and the student's parent(s).
 - c. "EXPULSION" shall mean exclusion from school for an offense for a period exceeding ten school days and may be a permanent expulsion from the school rolls, when decided by the Board of School Directors after a proper hearing.
2. Students shall be permitted to make up, with out penalty, exams and work missed while being disciplined by temporary or full suspension.
3. If, when expulsion proceedings are initiated, it is determined, after an informal hearing, that a student's presence in his or her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others, and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the periods of "FULL SUSPENSION", the student may be excluded from school for more than ten school days, provided the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed.
4. The Board may authorized its school solicitor to serve as hearing officer on its behalf in student discipline cases where expulsion from school is not expected to be recommended by the administration. The officer's recommendation shall be ratified at the next scheduled Board meeting following the hearing.

SCHOOL BUS BEHAVIOR

Safety and the proper attitude in bus transportation as well as in all phases of the school program are a prime concern to all people associated with the Tunkhannock Area School District.

According to the School Laws of Pennsylvania, the Board of School Directors may provide free transportation for resident pupils. Transportation for students on a school bus is considered a privilege, which may be revoked. Any behavior by a student or a group of students which infringes upon the rights of other individuals who might be riding on the bus or which endangers the safety of all passengers by interfering with a bus driver's ability to maintain control of the vehicle will not be tolerated.

The safety of all who utilize school bus transportation in the Tunkhannock Area School District is imperative. Only through the cooperation of parents, students, teachers, school bus drivers and administrators of the school district can this aim be achieved.

Parent Responsibilities

1. Have children ready to board the school bus at the designated time.
2. Impress upon children the importance of safety when approaching a school bus stop, while waiting for the bus to arrive, and while boarding the bus.
3. Parents are asked to familiarize their children with the obligations and courtesies of public transportation. Parents should understand the student's responsibilities and penalties for misbehavior.

4. Parents who witness an alleged violation of the Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle Code should report the incident to the Director of Transportation and the respective police department.
5. Parents must request in writing permission from the building administrator for a student to get off the bus at a stop other than the normal, designated stop.
6. Students suspended from riding their respective bus will be considered truant if parents do not provide alternative transportation.

Student Responsibilities

1. Students may not be left off the bus at any stop other than designated stop except by prior permission by a written note approved by the building administrator.
2. Students may not take a guest home on a regular bus run unless it is cleared through the driver that there is adequate seating on his bus and a written note is also presented to the driver from the parents and approved by the building administrator.
3. **Respect the driver's authority and observe requests made by the bus driver.**
4. Wait at the bus stop in an orderly fashion, off the road, and away from the traffic. Parents are responsible for the behavior of your child while waiting at the bus stop.
5. Wait in an orderly fashion to board the bus when it arrives. Do not walk toward the door until the bus stops and the door is opened. (For example, no pushing.)
6. Go directly to a seat and remain seated. Don't stand until the bus comes to a full stop at the place where you wish to leave the bus.
7. Keep your arms and legs out of the aisle.
8. Keep your hands, head, books, and bundles inside the bus. Do not eat, drink, smoke or litter on the bus.
9. Talk quietly. Order on the bus is necessary for the driver to be able to hear horns and other traffic sounds.
10. Before leaving or entering the bus, look carefully both ways if you cross the road. Walk at least ten (10) feet in front of the bus.
11. Refrain from willfully destroying or marking any part of the bus.
12. Refrain from fighting, fooling, or annoying other students. Throwing objects on the bus or out of the windows will not be permitted.
13. Refrain from using profane or obscene language.
14. Students are to sit in seat with feet on the floor facing the driver.

Disciplinary Regulations

If any rules are disobeyed, the following disciplinary action will be taken:

First Offense – A warning to the student by the driver. If the infraction is of a serious nature, the driver may choose to report the student to the building administrator on the first offense.

Second Offense – The driver will contact the administrator regarding the incident.

Third Offense – Bus conduct report will be filled out and a conference would be held with the building administrator, student, parent, and driver if possible. Based on the seriousness of the infraction, suspension of riding privileges could be anywhere from one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days. During the time a student is suspended from riding a bus, he may not ride any other bus in the district.

Fourth Offense – Bus conduct report will be submitted to the building administrator. A conference will be held with the building administrator, student, parent and driver if possible. Based on the seriousness of the infraction, suspension of riding privileges could be over ten (10)

Staff hours:	
Mill City	7:20 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.
Evans Falls, Mehoopany:	7:25 a.m. to 2:55 p.m.
Roslund:	7:50 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.

EXCUSES FOR ILLNESS

Excuses for illness are to be sent to the student's homeroom teacher. ***The excuse must include:***

- the student's first and last name
- the dates of absence
- the reason for absence
- the signature of the parent

Reminder notices are sent, if needed. After the final notice (the third) for each excuse the student will begin to lose privileges until an excuse is submitted.

The Elementary Principal may require parents to submit a doctor's certificate for absences as explained below.

If a student is absent for 3 consecutive days, a doctor's certification (excuse) may be required to be sent to the school. This certification must include:

- the student's first and last name
- the dates of absence
- the reason for absence
- the signature of the physician

Board Policy requires excuses to be returned within three (3) days of absence, otherwise the absence may be considered unlawful. Parents/guardians of students who have accumulated more than three unlawful absences in a school year are liable for a fine by the district magistrate. Upon the accumulation of three (3) unlawful absences, a certified letter of warning will be sent to the parent/guardian. Once found guilty by a magistrate for failure to send a child to school, a parent is again liable for a fine for each and every unlawful absence during the students remaining school years. Please note that it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that all excuses are returned within three (3) days as noted in Board Policy.

Tunkhannock Area School District Policy identifies the following reasons for lawful and excused absences:

1. illness (limit 10 days without a doctor's note) A letter of notification that ten (10) days have been accumulated and that a doctor's excuse is necessary will be sent to the parent/guardian.
2. required court appearance
3. death in the family or near relative
4. approved family / educational trips
5. religious holiday
6. impassable roads
7. college / post-secondary visits

The following are examples of situations that would constitute an unexcused and/or unlawful reason for missing school:

1. employment
2. unapproved trips or vacations

3. hunting or fishing
4. oversleeping
5. vehicle problems
6. failure to complete assignments
7. absences not excused by a medical doctor after 10 days of absence in a school year
8. shopping
9. visiting relatives
10. missing the bus
11. preparing for a social function
12. previous day or evening athletic or activity event

TARDINESS

Students who arrive after the designated starting time for school will be considered tardy. Students late due to busing problems will not be tardy. A written excuse for half and full days of absence is, of course, required.

Outlying Buildings (Evans Falls, Mill City and Mehoopany)

Tardy:	Arrival after 8:00A.M. but prior to 10:00 A.M.
½ Day Absence:	Arrival after 10:00 A.M. Departure prior to 10:45 A.M.

In Town Building (Roslund)

Tardy:	Arrival after 8:20 A.M. but prior to 10:30 A.M.
½ Day Absence:	Arrival after 10:30 A.M. Departure prior to 11:00 A.M.

Students chronically late to school, beyond 6 times per semester, will be referred to the district's home and school visitor and/or local magistrate for failure to comply with the attendance policy.

Excessive tardiness minutes can be accumulated and be considered as illegal absences.

TRIPS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

Parents/guardians may apply to the elementary principal to have their child released from school for trips and vacations. The following shall be met to permit a trip to occur:

- the parents/guardians must, in writing, notify the classroom teacher and the Elementary Principal of the dates and destination of the trip. **THIS NOTICE MUST BE GIVEN TO THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL AT LEAST FIVE DAYS PRIOR TO THE DEPARTURE DATE OF THE TRIP.**
- a trip (vacation) may not exceed **5 cumulative days per school year**. (Board Policy 204)
- school assignments missed must be completed by the student within the same number of days of absence – advanced notice of 5 days will allow teachers to prepare for missed assignments.
- teachers will determine what work will be sent with the student for him/her to complete during the trip.
- the Elementary Principal, at his/her discretion, may in special circumstances waive these guidelines.

REQUESTING ASSIGNMENTS FOR ABSENT STUDENTS

Parents are expected to make the following arrangements when your child is absent from school: Parents/guardians must call the school PRIOR to 9:00 a.m. on the day a student is absent to receive assignments for that same day. These assignments may be picked up at the school office no earlier than 2:30 p.m. (3:00 p.m. – Roslund). This process will allow the staff members' time to organize the assignments for absent students. Some assignments may need teacher direction prior to assigning them; therefore, these materials will be presented to the student upon return to school.

ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL

ARRIVAL

Parents are urged to recognize that coverage of students by elementary staff does not begin until 7:25 a.m. at Mill City; 7:30 a.m. at Evans Falls and Mehoopany; and 7:50 a.m. at Roslund. Students, therefore, should not arrive prior to coverage time. Parents of students who arrive early will be contacted so that students are not left at the school unattended prior to these times.

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

Students may leave school early (prior to regular dismissal) for doctor's appointments and family emergencies, only. Leaving early for other reasons is strongly discouraged. If leaving early becomes excessive or flagrant, parents/guardians will be contacted. Illegal days for non-acceptable absences will be issued to parents when excessive/flagrant days of absence occur.

END OF THE DAY DISMISSAL

Requests to leave school early:

If your child will be picked up by you at the end of the day, **please send a note to your child's teacher in the morning stating that you will pick up your son or daughter in the office.** No parent is to go directly to his or her child's classroom. All visitors must report to the office.

Any emergency request for early dismissal by phone must be received 30 minutes before the official dismissal time to ensure arrangements can be made by school staff. School officials cannot guarantee that requests after that time can be fulfilled.

Appointments:

Parents are urged to leave their children in school all day. Every effort should be made to schedule doctor or other appointments after school hours, on regularly scheduled early dismissals, and on school holidays whenever possible. If a child needs to be dismissed early, he/she should bring a note to his/her teacher stating the time and reason. Parents must sign the child out in the school office.

Bus Transportation:

All students are expected to ride on their assigned bus only. Any request to ride a different bus must be made in writing by the parent/guardian and submitted to the office prior to the approval for a bus change. Students will be allowed off the bus only at school, home and locations requested in writing by parents. Due to safety concerns, the school and our bus drivers will be unable to honor verbal requests made by any students.

Students will board buses at:

2:20 p.m. Mill City, Evans Falls and Mehoopany

2:40 p.m. Roslund

Note: Students who walk home or are picked up by parents' daily are dismissed *after* the buses have safely departed the parking lot. For safety reasons, we ask that "car line" students always enter pick up cars from the curb side.

EARLY DISMISSALS

Planned Early Dismissals will occur on November 2, November 25, January 21 and the last student day of the 2009 – 10 school year. On these days Evans Falls, Mill City and Mehoopany will dismiss at noon and Roslund at 12:45 p.m.

Weather Related Early Dismissals can occur periodically. Mill City, Evans Falls and Mehoopany will dismiss first. Dismissal at Roslund will occur one hour later.

When weather or another emergency forces school to close, your source of information will be local TV and radio stations. Parents are expected to make arrangements for the supervision of their child in the event of cancellation, early dismissal or late start. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL.** It is important the school telephone lines be kept open for directions and/or emergency information from Central Office Staff. Our district Hotline number will provide the most current information at 836-2466, or you may check our website at www.tasd.net.

DELAYED SCHOOL OPENINGS

Inclement weather or other issues can cause a delayed opening of one or possible two hours. Local radio and television stations will carry information about these delays. Please note students will be expected to be in attendance when bus transportation is provided by the district.

MEDICAL / NURSING

SCHOOL NURSE RESPONSIBILITIES

For the safety of all students, faculty and staff it is recommended that all open cuts be covered with Band-Aids or bandages. Because of the large population of students it is recommended that all bandage changes take place at home. The school nurse will cover any new wounds which occur at school.

MEDICATION

All medication must be brought to school and taken home by the parent, guardian or designated adult in a container or package appropriately labeled by the physician or pharmacy according to current standards, detailing the name of the drug, the dosage and the time interval medication is to be taken. Written permission from the parent or guardian requesting the school district to comply with the physician's orders must accompany the medication. The Superintendent has delegated the nursing department and staff for the implementation of this procedure.

COMMUNICABLE INFECTION

School Nurse Responsibilities

Students who contract or are suspected of having the communicable diseases of head lice, scabies or pink eye are excluded from school according to Department of Health and Pennsylvania School Laws (See Board Policy #209.4 and #210a. in appendix)

When the student returns to school, the following procedures are to be carried out:

1. Parents have the option of taking their child(ren) to their own family physician or to the Pennsylvania Department of Health. A note from the physician or Department of Health official may be submitted to the school indicating the problem has been treated and they may be re-entered in school.
2. If the parent used an over-the counter medication, the student must be examined upon re-entry to school by school personnel.
3. School personnel will keep a file on these students and will re-examine the student again in seven (7) days. It will be the responsibility of the school personnel assigned to the building to make the 7-day check.
4. When students are treated at home, they are to be transported back to school by the parents who must remain at the school until the student is re-examined and it is determined the student is cleared of the infection.

NOTICES TO PARENTS

The Tunkhannock Area School District does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected category. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state law including the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act and federal law, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Confidentiality: All information gathered about your child is subject to the confidentiality provisions contained in federal and state law. The Tunkhannock Area School District has policies and procedures in effect governing the collection, maintenance, destruction and disclosure to third parties of this information. For information about these policies and procedures, as well as rights of confidentiality and access to educational records you may contact, in writing, the guidance counselor of your child's building, any building principal or the Assistant Superintendent.

School Records: Parents / legal guardians may inspect information contained in the permanent record for their child. These files are located in each elementary office.

A recent state law mandates that every district develop an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approached for managing insects, rodents and weeds. IPM mandates a least toxic approach to addressing any pest management issue.

The Tunkhannock Area School district will comply with all requirements of this IPM law including using chemicals only as a last resort and only when students are not in the building. Also postings would be done as required and you may receive personal notification if you so

desire. Send your name, address and phone number or e-mail address to: Assistant Superintendent - IPM Coordinator, 41 Philadelphia Avenue, Tunkhannock, PA 18657.

UPDATED INFORMATION / EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

- * **Please notify the office of any personal information changes so that our computer data can be updated and current at all times.**
- * **It is imperative that we have correct phone numbers for custodial parents AT ALL TIMES; we must also have emergency phone numbers for crisis situations.**
- * **Copies of all court-ordered decrees and custody papers should be current so that they may be included in applicable student's cumulative records.**

VOLUNTEERS / PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We encourage parent involvement in our total school program. When you choose to volunteer in some capacity, we respectfully request that you refrain from wandering halls or visiting classrooms unannounced.

SCHOOL / CLASSROOM VISITATION

CLASSROOM VISITATION

Parents and guardians are permitted to observe actual classes using the following guidelines:

- a two day notice is expected to the teacher
- the length of visitation will not exceed one hour
- young children may not accompany the parent/guardian
- observations should start at the beginning of a period or activity

During American Education Week "special" times are set aside for observation.

Students may not bring younger brothers, sisters, relatives or friends to school for the purpose of visiting.

SCHOOL SECURITY

Each School is equipped with a camera security system. Visitors are to enter the school through the main entrance. When arriving at the main entrance, please press the buzzer button "gently" and the building secretary will unlock the door. Visitors are to report directly to the main office upon admittance, sign in and obtain Visitor's Badge. Visitors are asked to sign out before leaving.

LOST AND FOUND

Each elementary school has a designated spot for lost and found items. Students may come to the office and inquire about lost items or may add found items to the trove. Students should only check during non-instructional times. Please note schools and/or school personnel cannot be held responsible for finding and returning lost items.

CAFETERIA AND MENUS

Menus are distributed monthly. Menus may be viewed on the district web site.

Parents may deposit money into an account in their child's name. When there is a purchase the account will be debited. Please make every effort to keep your account(s) up to date. We do not like to contact parents inquiring about delinquent accounts. Families may apply for free and reduced meals at any time during the year. Parents are responsible for all costs until they receive confidential approval. Applications are sent home each year. To promote healthy eating, salads are available. Ice cream will no longer be served on our school lunch menu.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Statutory Citation: Title I, Part A, Section 1111 (h)(6)(A)

Final Regulation: CFR 200.61

Districts receiving funds under Title I, Part A shall, at the beginning of each school year, notify the parents of each student attending any school receiving funds under this part that parents may request, and the district will provide the parents on request (in a timely manner), information on the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including, at a minimum, the following:

1. whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. the baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and
4. whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

QUESTIONS / CONCERNS – WHO TO CONTACT

PARENT'S QUESTIONS / CONCERNS FOR SCHOOL PERSONNEL

In order to facilitate positive school efforts, parents/guardians are requested to direct questions or concerns to the following personnel for initial contact:

Student Registration / Withdrawal & Bus Route Information / Questions –
Mrs. Karin DeLancey – 836-8221

Bus Changes / Address Changes - Mrs. Karin DeLancey – 836-8221

Taxes, Bills
Technology
Title IX Coordinator
Truancy

Business Office 836-8226
Joseph Kormis 836-8206
Morris Jackson 836-8264
Principal/ Home and School *
Visitor / Resource Officer

* Note: Phone numbers for offices with an asterisk may be located in the preceding paragraph.

POLICIES RELATED TO STUDENTS

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY #222 & #227 **DRUG / TOBACCO / ALCOHOL / CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE**

Students found to be in possession of or using any form of controlled substance will be disciplined to the fullest extent of the Tunkhannock Area School District policy. Such matters may also be referred to the Pennsylvania State Police for disposition.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT POLICY

Tunkhannock Area Board of Education policy regarding discipline and corporal punishment was adopted December 12, 1974.

Parents who do not wish to allow the professional staff of the schools to discipline their child by use of corporal punishment (padding on the buttocks) may exclude their son/daughter by writing a letter to exempt their child from the use of corporal punishment.

However, even when a parent prohibits corporal punishment, teachers and school authorities may use reasonable force, including corporal punishment:

- to quell a disturbance
- to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects
- for the purpose of self-defense
- for the protection of persons or property

Students can further be given alternative corrective measures to corporal punishment. These may include in school and out of school suspension and/or expulsion from school.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY #204 **STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY** (See School Board Policy #204 in appendix)

This policy clearly defines school attendance regulations established for all students by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, which must be enforced by all schools in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY #237
ELECTRONIC DEVICES

(See School Board Policy #237 in appendix)

This policy prohibits possession of telephone paging devices by students on school ground, on buses and other vehicles provided by the district, and at school sponsored events.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY #248
HARASSMENT POLICY

This policy prohibits sexual harassment. It is illegal and against district policy for any student, male or female, to sexually harass another person. The specifics of this policy are available by contacting your elementary school office.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY #222
NO SMOKING POLICY

The Tunkhannock Area School District maintains a NO SMOKING policy both in buildings and on school grounds. This policy is in effect at all times.

BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY #218A
WEAPONS POLICY

Possession of weapons, explosives, and noxious or irritating gases is forbidden on district property or school buses. Students are liable for disciplinary and/or legal action for assisting with, aiding or possessing times listed in this policy.

MISCELLANEOUS

CHANGE OF ADDRESS / TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Please notify the school office immediately of any changes in address or telephone numbers. Emergency numbers must be kept current.

ACCESS TO SCHOOL RECORDS

Parents/legal guardians may inspect information contained in the permanent record for their child. These files are located in each elementary office.

GUARDIANS / PARENTS / STUDENT
RESPONSIBILITY FOR LIBRARY/TEXTBOOKS

Students are expected to maintain the textbooks issued to them in good condition, to return the books when requested and to pay for them if damaged or lost. Parents, as legal guardians, are responsible for the school materials given to their child.

APPENDIX

SCHOOL CALENDAR / IMPORTANT SCHOOL DATES

CONDITIONS AND RULES FOR USE OF THE INTERNET AND COMPUTERS

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

* ATTENDANCE

* DRESS AND GROOMING

BULLYING

COMMUNICABLE CONDITIONS

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

- * In addition to the Tunkhannock Area School District Policy on attendance, state regulations may also apply.
- * Elementary physical fitness teachers may have their own rules and regulations on proper gym attire.