

*Revised: 8/12/19*

*Elizabeth Forward  
School District*

Elementary  
Student/Parent  
Handbook

**Upon receipt of this handbook, please sign and return the acknowledgement form on the last page of this document to your child's teacher.**

**We appreciate your cooperation.**

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Please sign and return the acknowledgement form for this Handbook and return it to your child's teacher. It is required for the file.

Thank you!

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 Elizabeth, PA 15037  
 Phone: 412-896-2318  
 Fax: 412-751-0692

Health Office: 412-896-2319

**Greenock Primary**

1101 Greenock-Buena Vista Road  
 McKeesport, PA 15135  
 Phone: 412-896-2324  
 Fax: 412-751-3818

Health Office: 412-896-2325

**Mt. Vernon Elementary**

2400 Greenock-Buena Vista Road  
 McKeesport, PA 15135  
 Phone: 412-896-2327  
 Fax: 412-751-3818

Health Office: 412-896-2327

**William Penn Elementary**

392 William Penn Road  
 Monongahela, PA 15063  
 Phone: 412-896-2330  
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Health Office: 412-896-2331

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# Anti-Bullying Rules

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will try to help students who are bullied.
3. We will include students who are left out.
4. If we know someone is being bullied we will tell an adult.

## Attendance & Absences

Regular school attendance is a major contributor to school success. The EFSD Policy #204 is available on the website to help parents/guardians understand our attendance policy/procedures and the laws that govern them.

The Board considers the following conditions to constitute reasonable cause for absence from school:

1. Illness
2. Religious holiday
3. Medical/dental appointments
4. Court appearances
5. Death in family
6. Approved family educational trips
7. Approved educational tours and trips

### Reporting Absences/Excuses

Upon the students return to school a parent/guardian must submit a written explanation within three (3) school days of the absence. If a parent/guardian fails to submit an excuse, the absence will be PERMANENTLY counted as unexcused/unlawful.

## School Notification for Unexcused/Unlawful Absences

- The district's attendance policy will be distributed yearly to parents/guardians.
- Upon the first unexcused/unlawful absence, written notification will be mailed home.
- Upon the third unexcused/unlawful absence, written notification will be mailed home.
- Upon the fourth unexcused/unlawful absence, parents will be invited to attend an Attendance Improvement Plan Meeting.
- Upon the sixth unexcused/unlawful absence, a magistrate citation will be issued.
- After a student accumulates eight (8) days of absences, a letter will be mailed home informing parents/guardian of the potential need for a medical excuse.
- After a student accumulates ten (10) days of absences, a letter may be mailed home, informing parents/guardian of the need for a medical excuse for any additional absences.

## Tardiness to School (Elementary Level)

Parents/Guardians will be notified regarding attendance concerns.

- Seven (7) non-medical tardies – Students may be assigned an after-school detention.
- Subsequent after-school detentions will be assigned at the principal's discretion.
- Fifteen (15) non-medical tardies – A magistrate citation will be issued.

## **Early Dismissals**

Students will be permitted to leave school early with a written parent request up to five (5) times in a school year unless there is documented medical reason for additional early dismissal. Unless the medical excuse is recorded, the absence will be unexcused/unlawful.

## **Family Educational Trips**

The parent/guardian must complete the Educational Trip Request Form provided by the school district, which will indicate the school days to be missed and the destination of the trip. The request should be made at least five (5) school days prior to departure. The principal must approve the absence prior to the vacation.

- The student shall give completed assignments to his/her teachers and arrange for the completion of additional assignments and/or tests.
- All academic work shall be completed within a time period not exceeding the number of days absent as a result of the trip.
- If a student requires a medical excuse due to excessive absences, the vacation request will be denied.

The Vacation Request Form is available on the district website or through the school office.

## Birthday & Party Treats

While it is not necessary, some students choose to bring in treats for a birthday celebration. Non-edible treats are preferred for those who would like to send them. Examples: stickers, pencils, glue sticks, erasers, bracelets. Any edible treats must be individually wrapped and the ingredients must be clearly printed on each individual package. This includes packages of fruits and vegetables (apple slices, mini-carrots, etc.). No homemade items will be permitted. Bakery items will only be permitted if they are individually wrapped and each package marked with the ingredients. *Approved snacks and treats are also available for purchase from our Food Service. If you wish to do so, the order form is available through the school office and the treats will be delivered to your child's classroom.*

**NOTE:** Some classroom teachers may need to further limit food treats when there are serious concerns relative to food allergies in their classroom. Please be understanding about this.

## Party Invitation

Students are NOT permitted to bring in birthday party invitations to distribute to classmates. The PTO has created a School Directory with the list of names, home addresses, email addresses and phone numbers of families who wish to share that information with their class.

## Bus/Transportation

Students are only permitted to ride the bus to which they are assigned, both to and from school. This practice is in place with the safety, health and welfare of students in mind. Emergency information is available to the driver of the bus to which your child is assigned.

Please contact the school office regarding any temporary or permanent changes to your child's transportation needs. There is a form required by the district for such requests.

Students are expected to follow all school rules while they are on the bus. In addition, the following should be observed at all times:

## Bus Rules

- Listen to the driver and follow directions.
- Stay in assigned seat.
- Use quiet voice.
- No eating or drinking on the bus.
- Keep head, hands, and feet inside the bus.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Keep the bus clean (use the trash can).

Students occasionally need reminders. Students who are non-compliant with directions and reminders from the bus drivers will be reported to the principal.

## Communication

Regular communication between home and school is an expectation. Classroom teachers send home regular communication with students. The district website offers helpful information for parents and students. Many of our teachers also have classroom websites you will find useful. Please contact your child's teacher by phone or e-mail regarding any concern you may have.

If you wish to speak to your child's teacher please call the school between 8:20 am - 8:50am or after dismissal between 3:45 pm and 4:00pm. If you have an urgent matter during the school day please contact the school office and a message will be given to the teacher and she/he will call you as soon as possible.

We respectfully request that you **not expect an immediate response to phone or email messages** from your child's teacher. Their time during their working day must focus on teaching and the supervision of children.

Please keep your address, home and cell phone numbers, email address and emergency contacts current through the district and the elementary school so that we can efficiently provide you with information and announcements.

## Automated Phone/Email Messaging System

Is utilized district-wide for important announcements including delays and closings due to inclement weather. Messages will be automatically delivered to your "Preferred Contact" phone number listed in Powerschool. Please keep your number current by notifying the school office.

## Custody Orders/Agreements

It is your responsibility to keep your child's file current. Please provide the school office with a copy of all current custody orders/agreements to the main office. Please update your child's record if any changes are made throughout the school year. Please keep in mind that the district will abide by the most current order/agreement in your child's file.

## Dress Code

A student's appearance, mode of dress or cleanliness will not be permitted to disrupt the educational process or constitute a threat to health or safety. Elementary students should be dressed in school clothing with safety in mind. Please be aware that students frequently go outside for recess, and should have appropriate outerwear given the day's forecast. As students grow and mature we expect that they will dress conservatively within these guidelines with appropriate guidance from their parents.



## **Students wearing any of the following will be required to change or will be sent home**

- Flip Flops or sandals without backs
- Bare shoulders or midriffs
- Short shorts
- Jeans or pants with large tears or holes
- Any article of clothing that displays tobacco, alcohol, weapons, violence, suggestive or offensive language or graphics
- Hats, scarves, bandanas, gloves, or other miscellaneous outerwear not weather related

## **Electronics**

The use of any electronic device or toys brought from home is not permitted during the school day. The school district is not responsible for any items brought from home. School district issued devices will be handled according to policy.

Some parents may deem it necessary for children to carry cellular phones for after school safety. In that event, we request that you notify the classroom teacher and support our expectation that the phone must be turned off and stored during the school day.

Electronic devices, other than school issued devices, may be confiscated and returned to the student on the first offense. The parent/guardian will be responsible to collect the item on the second offense. The third offense will result in after school detention.

## **Discipline**

Learning is, by its very nature, discipline. Accepting direction from responsible adults and taking responsibility for one's own behavior are lessons we must not only teach our children but model for them. Lessons will be best learned when children know that parents and teachers are working together and have the same expectations for them. Your child's teacher will provide a classroom behavior plan. We ask that you review it with your child.

Teachers will inform you of problems as they arise. We encourage you to contact your child's teacher with any problem or concern, as well. Serious matters will be handled by the building principal in accordance with District Policy #218, which can be found at <http://www.efsd.net>.

## **Expectations for Student Conduct**

- Come to school on time and be prepared.
- Listen to adults and follow directions.
- Stay in assigned space.
- Do his/her own work.
- Ask for help when needed.
- Help others.

- Report bullying and unsafe behaviors to an adult.
- Be respectful of school property.

## Dismissal Procedures

Regular dismissal time for elementary students is at 3:45pm. In the event that your child is not riding the bus home, and will instead be picked up by you, please follow the same instructions as below (for early dismissal) PLUS send a note to the child's teacher documenting the change for the day.

If an **early dismissal** is necessary, please send a note to your child's teacher. The person picking up the student must report to the office, sign the student out, and remain in the office until the student is excused from class. Anyone picking up a student must be listed on the child's Emergency Card. You may be asked to show proper ID upon arriving in the office- this is for your child's safety.

## Food Services/Lunch

Please consult the district website: [www.efsd.net](http://www.efsd.net) and look under the Student Resources tab for current cafeteria pricing and menus.

Meals are purchased using a "point of sale" system. You will be responsible for keeping your child's cafeteria account current by sending in money (checks preferred).

The Elizabeth Forward School District uses **PayForIt**, a Food Service Department debit card pre-payment system that can be used immediately. This service will allow parents to track the payment history of student spending in the cafeteria. It will also provide additional services including:

- Parents have the ability to set-up automatic recurring cafeteria payments by date or by balance.
- Parents can request to see a report on what their child has purchased in the cafeteria for the last 30 days.
- Parents can see the child's cafeteria balance online.
- Parents can request email notification when their child's cafeteria balance falls below a certain point.

Parents are able to use a link on the district website: [www.efsd.net](http://www.efsd.net) under Quick Links or log in to [www.payforit.net](http://www.payforit.net) to register a new account. You will need the Student ID Number, the school of attendance and current grade. Once the account is registered, you will be able to start using the PayForIt site.

Please note: **PayForIt** requires a small service fee, which is charged by the site on each credit card transaction.

**Please do not send food to school requesting that it be heated for your child. If this is medically necessary, accommodations will be made by our Food Service personnel based on a doctor's order. In that case, please contact the principal or the school nurse.**

Students may also carry their lunches to school. For safety reasons, **no glass bottles or cans of carbonated beverages are permitted.**

## **Suspected Child Abuse**

The Child Protective Services Law in Pennsylvania requires all school employees to report suspected child abuse. When the principal and the school nurse have reasonable cause to suspect that a child may have been abused, the principal must notify the Childline and Abuse Registry and Allegheny County Children and Youth Services.

It is *not* the responsibility of school officials to determine if there has been abuse or neglect. The principal will permit authorized personnel from the Department of Public Welfare or Child Protective Services to interview the student at school without prior parental consent if the suspected abuser is unknown or may be the parents. If the student has suffered severe injuries that warrant medical attention, the principal will take appropriate action and will attempt to notify the parent. The principal may request that the police investigate the matter if the suspected child abuse involves law violations under the Crimes Code.

## **Emergency Information for Sudden Illness or Injury**

The Health Office maintains Emergency Contact Information for each student. This information enables us to care for an ill or injured student. Only those persons named in that file will be contacted and can give permission for a student to leave the building. **It is essential that parents keep emergency contact information current.** If your contact information is permanently or temporarily changed, be sure that both your child and the school office have accurate emergency contact information. The health office is available for temporary care only. Parents are asked to develop a plan that would allow their child to be picked up from school within a half hour after notification of an illness or an injury.

## **Food and Environmental Allergies**

Each year, we see an increasing number of students with serious food allergies. When a doctor determines it is medically necessary, a 504 Plan will be developed in collaboration with the student's parent, physician, and school nurse for students with potentially life threatening allergies. Parents are asked to contact their school nurse to discuss the health and safety procedures for their child at the beginning and as needed throughout the school year.

## Head Lice

All cases of head lice should be reported to the school nurse so that the required examination procedures may take place. The student is not permitted to return to the classroom until proper treatment has been completed and the student has been checked by the school nurse. Any student found to have nits after treatment will be excluded from school until found to be nit free. The positive action of reporting to the school an incidence of head lice cannot be overstated. Parents who treat their child for lice, yet do not report it to the school, risk the infestation of others and/or the re-infestation of their own child. All reports are kept confidential.

## Health Care Treatments

Emergency care is available in the health office for any illness or injury that is sustained during school hours. The nurse cannot address injuries that occur at home. By law, a nurse is not permitted to make a diagnosis or prescribe treatment. Children are excluded from school if they have a known or suspected communicable disease, an elevated temperature, vomiting or diarrhea. If the school nurse suspects or learns that a student has a contagious illness, she will instruct parents to follow guidelines established by the Allegheny County Health Department for the child's re-admittance to school.

The District maintains a practice of Universal Precautions (procedures that are designed to reduce the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens regardless of the presumed infection status of the individual) to insure the health, safety and welfare of our students and staff. Students are taught about possible disease transmission through exposure to blood/body fluids. Students are to report any blood or body fluid spill to a teacher and never to touch or clean-up another person's blood/body fluid.

The District is not equipped to provide advanced emergency care. Children needing urgent medical attention will be transported to an emergency care facility by the local EMS.

Please notify the school nurse if your child has any health concerns that could result in the need for emergency services, or that need to be communicated to emergency personnel.

## Medication Policy

The Elizabeth Forward School District has developed a medication policy in accordance with the Guidelines for Pennsylvania Schools for the Administration of Medications and Emergency Care, which allows prescription or over the counter medications to be administered during school. A Physician's Instructions for Administering Medications During School Hours form must be completed and returned to the School Nurse along with the **medication in the Rx bottle**. This form is available in the Health Office or may be downloaded from the district website.

## PBIS

### Possession/Use of Asthma Inhalers

Students are permitted to have in their possession a prescribed inhaler for the treatment of asthma under the following guidelines:

- Physicians written Instructions for Administering Medication completed
- Written authorization by physician and parent to have inhaler in their possession

### PSSA Testing

During the month of April students in 3rd through 5th grade will be taking the Math and ELA Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) exams. Students in 4th grade will also be taking the Science PSSA's. We would like all students to perform to the best of their ability on these state assessments and we need your help. In order for them to perform well, we ask that they be well rested, eat a healthy breakfast, and be at school on time during the days of testing. **Please avoid taking family trips during the scheduled testing date.** If you have specific questions, please contact the building principal. Thank you for supporting your child's achievement and growth!

### Required Health Examinations

- Physical exams are required at original school entry (usually Kindergarten).
- Dental exams are required at original school entry and Grade 3.
- Parents may choose to have their family doctor/dentist perform the examinations and complete the required forms that may be downloaded from the district website.
- Physical/dental exams can be completed at school by physician/dentist with written parent permission.

### Required Health Screenings per PA School Health Code

- The School Nurse will administer Vision and Body Mass Index screenings to each child every year.
- Hearing screenings are performed for Grades Kindergarten, 1, 2, 3 and Special Education students annually.
- If there is a need for further evaluation, referrals are mailed to parents.

## Immunizations

Each child in school must have required immunizations according to the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Allegheny County Health Department Guidelines. Immunizations are not required in cases where special medical or religious factors are involved. Documentation of such will be required.

### Communicable Diseases

Children with communicable diseases are required to remain out of school for the protection of others. Children may return to school according to Allegheny County Health Department Guidelines. (<http://achd.net>)

## Homework

These are general expectation Monday-Thursday. Teachers are responsible for assigning homework when needed to reinforce a skill or enhance a lesson.

Kindergarten:	15 minutes with adult support
Grade 1/2:	20 minutes with adult support
Grade 3:	30 minutes
Grade 4:	40 minutes
Grade 5:	50-60 minutes

### Missed homework assignments in Gr 3-5 will be handled as follows:

- One missed assignment: benched for recess, assignment made up at that time.
- Two missed assignments: phone call made to parents, make-up required
- Three missed assignments: after school detention (4:30 pick-up)

## Report Cards

Elementary Report Cards are issued four times a year according to the district calendar. Please refer to the EFSD website [www.efsd.net](http://www.efsd.net) for current district calendar. The academic calendar for the year is also available through the school office.

## PTO: Parent Teacher Organization

The PTO sponsors a variety of activities during the school year that help our school community. Please contact our PTO representatives for more information on how to get involved in this worthy organization.

## Visitors

**A visitor is defined as any person who is not employed in the school building.**

For the overall safety and security, the front of the building is equipped with a security buzzer and a security camera. To gain entrance to the building, visitors must first press an intercom button: identify themselves, and their purpose for visiting the building. All visitors must report to the main office and show government issued ID (most likely a driver's license) to the office staff. Their ID will be scanned through the RAPTOR System to determine if the visitor is clear or not before going to any other area of the building. The visitor(s) must wear a badge while in the school building identifying themselves as visitor. Before leaving the building, the visitor is asked to return to the office, sign out, and return the visitor badge.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of Receipt FORM

**Elizabeth Forward School District  
Elementary Student Handbook**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Elementary Student Handbook.

I further understand and agree that I will read it and be responsible to abide by all relevant policies and practices as outlined in this handbook, as well as all other policies of the Elizabeth Forward School District.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name and Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to your child's teacher.