

# **Belle Vernon Area Elementary Schools**



## **2023 - 2024 Student Handbook** **Marion Elementary & Rostraver Elementary**

Investing in the future by preparing students for the opportunities of tomorrow.

# District Information

## Central Office

Belle Vernon Area School District  
270 Crest Ave.  
Belle Vernon, PA 15012  
(p) 724-808-2500  
(f) 724-929-5598

## **Superintendent**

TBA

## **Mrs. Alisa King, Assistant Superintendent**

Alisa.King@bvasd.net

School Calendar - Please click [here](#)

# Elementary Buildings Contact Information

## Marion Elementary School

Marion Elementary School  
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### **Mrs. Pam Kingsland, Secretary**

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### **Mrs. Michele Petrosky, Secretary**

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### **Mrs. Jennifer Martin, RN, BSN, CSN**

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## Rostraver Elementary School

Rostraver Elementary School  
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### **Ms. Jamie Andrews, Counselor**

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### **Mrs. Shelley Galloni, Secretary**

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### **Mrs. Lynette Indof, Secretary**

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### **Mrs. Laura Rotolo, RN, BSN, CSN**

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# Table of Contents

<b>Compliance Policy Statement</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Attendance - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here for additional information</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Excused Absences:</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Unexcused Absences:</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Tardiness</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Procedures</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Dismissals</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Dismissals Due to Illness</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Emergency Early Dismissals</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Bus Transfers</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Arrival and Dismissal Policies</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Breakfast/Lunch Program - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Student Meal Charging - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Cafeteria Procedures</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Playground Procedures</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Classroom Parties and Birthday Celebrations</b>	
<b>BVA Wellness Policy - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Classroom Party Guidelines</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Birthday Celebration Guidelines</b>	<b>15</b>

<b>Safety</b>	
<b>Emergency Evacuation Procedures</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Safe2Say Something</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>ALICE Drills</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Discipline</b>	
<b>Basic Rules</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Book Bag Policy</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Electronic Devices</b>	
<b>Device Policy</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Office Phones</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Academics</b>	
<b>Grades</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Grading Scale</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Report Cards</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Conference</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Exemption from Activities</b>	
<b>Assemblies/Programs/Activities</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Opening Exercises</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Programs</b>	
<b>School Messenger</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Social Media</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Custody Issues</b>	<b>21</b>

<b>Special Education Awareness Notice - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Learning, Educating with our Parents for Student Success (L.E.P.S.)</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Wellness - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Medication Policy - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>General Policies</b>	
<b>Lost and Found</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Fire Drill Procedure</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Parent Involvement</b>	
<b>Criminal Background, Child Abuse Checks, and FBI Clearances - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Marion Elementary PTA - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Rostraver Elementary PTO - Please visit <a href="http://bvasd.net">bvasd.net</a> or click here</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Fundraisers</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Visitor Procedures</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Belle Vernon Area School District Code of Student Conduct</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>TYPES OF DISCIPLINE/CONSEQUENCES AND INTERVENTIONS DEFINED</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>BEHAVIORAL CONTRACT</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>REMOVAL OF SCHOOL PRIVILEGES</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>EXCLUSION FROM CLASSES – IN-SCHOOL REFLECTION</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>HEARINGS</b>	<b>27</b>

<b>FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>SEARCHES (POLICY #226)</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>LEVEL OFFENSES AND CONSEQUENCES</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL NOTES</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>TOBACCO USE</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>POSSESSION, USE, DISTRIBUTION, OR SOLICITATION TO USE DRUGS, DRUG PARAPHERNALIA, OR ALCOHOL (SEE POLICY #227.)</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>CHEATING</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>DRESS AND GROOMING GUIDELINES</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES FOR DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>HAZING</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>WEAPONS: Please see BVASD Board Policy NO. 218.1</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>BULLYING: Please see BVASD Board Policy 249</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>RESCISSION OF DISCIPLINE FOR FIRST OFFENDERS</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>BVA Board Policies</b>	<b>39</b>

## **School Information**

All district offices are open from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

Students are **NOT** permitted to be on campus prior to 8:15 am or remain later than 3:45 pm unless they are in a supervised activity.

## **Compliance Policy Statement**

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

## **Attendance - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#) for additional information**

### **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 and may be removed from extracurricular activities such as field trips, and/or other special events.**

**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.**

### **Tardiness**

Tardiness for more than three times within a nine-week period is considered excessive. Students who have excessive tardies will be turned into the district magistrate.

### **Procedures**

Students will receive a pass in order to enter class. Excuse forms are available when you arrive, please complete it and have your child take it with them to give to their teacher.

### **Dismissals**

The school district discourages students leaving early. Students who must be excused earlier than our normal dismissal time, must have a written note signed by their parent/guardian on the morning of the proposed early dismissal. The note must contain the student's name, time for the early dismissal, and the name of the person picking up the student. The person picking up the student will be asked to show some form of ID. Students will only be released to the people listed on their emergency contact card or as listed on the note. Notes will not be accepted from people coming to the building to pick up the student. Students will be signed out in the early dismissal log. Please refrain from parking or stopping on the curb in the bus circle at any time for any reason. This area is a fire lane. If your child requires to be dismissed early, dismissal must occur prior to 3:10pm or after 3:35 pm in order to ensure safety during bus dismissal. No early dismissal will occur between 3:10 and 3:35pm.

## **Dismissals Due to Illness**

If a student becomes ill during the school day, he/she must secure permission from the school nurse/principal before going home. The school nurse will be the initial contact parents will be contacted in such cases. **Students should not attempt to contact their parents through the use of their cell phone.** If a parent/guardian cannot be reached the emergency contacts will be called. In a case where no one can be reached, the student will return to the nurse's office. All students must be signed out when leaving due to illness at the main office in the early dismissal log.

## **Emergency Early Dismissals**

In the case of an emergency, the district administration office notifies all schools and parents/guardians using the following methods:

- Announcements on TV and radio and their websites
- KDKA 1020 AM
- KDKA, WTAE, WPXI TV stations and websites
- A school messenger notification will be sent out to all parents/guardians.

Each family should have an alternative contingency plan for their student in the event that an emergency early dismissal occurs. Please be certain that you have made the necessary arrangements for the care of your student should circumstances arise that will cause your students to arrive home before a parent/guardian.

## **Bus Transfers**

Students who must ride the bus other than the one assigned to them, must present a written request from their parent/guardian to the office no later than the morning of the desired transfer. The written request will be initiated by the secretary and the child will be given a bus pass. The request must contain:

- Name of student
- Teacher's name
- Bus number and stop where the child is to exit the bus
- Address of where the student is going

The student will give the bus pass to the driver when he/she boards the bus. If a student needs to ride a different bus and no one can be contacted, the students will be sent home on their regular bus. **Students that have had discipline referrals from their primary bus may not be given permission to ride a different bus.**

### Arrival and Dismissal Policies

#### Marion Elementary School - Car Riders

##### **Car Riders**

All car riders will come out the STEM room entrance when the walkers are called at 3:22 pm. No students will be dismissed from the office at dismissal time (3:10 pm - 3:35 pm).

#### Rostraver Elementary School - Car Riders

Car rider dismissal will be from both the Kindergarten exit and the 6th grade entrance. Car rider dismissal will be at 3:22 pm. Parents/guardians picking up their child from the Kindergarten entrance will pull down through staff lot. If picking up their child from the 6th grade entrance, we ask that you pull around staff parking lot **WITH THEIR NUMBER** (Cars are not permitted to line up for pickup). Parents/guardians must have their number with them for their child to be released. If you do not have your number, you will be asked to report to the main office to pick up with your identification. Parents/guardians are not permitted to be at the exit until 3:22 pm. Parents/guardians will be asked to return to their vehicles if they are at the doors prior to 3:22 pm. Parents/guardians are not permitted to bring pets with them to pick up their children. Parents/guardians that **do not** already have a number will need to come to the school prior to 3:00 pm to obtain a number.

## **Marion Elementary School**

### **Morning Arrivals**

Morning arrivals are to occur at Entrance 8, behind the building (8:15 am - 8:45 am). Students are only permitted to enter the building beginning at 8:15 am. Any student arriving prior to 8:15 am must receive prior permission from the principal.

**Parents should not exit their car to walk their children into the building.**

## **Marion Elementary School**

### **Parking**

Do not park in:

- Any designated parking spot
- Bus circle, against curb, or fire lane
- On McDonough St. (residential side)

### **Parent Volunteers**

Please park in the lot behind Marion or another available parking spot on campus.

### **Field Trip Chaperones/Party Day Volunteers**

Please consider carpooling or using the Washington Township ball field lot if other areas at MES are full. All other parking procedures listed above apply for field trip and party days.

## **Rostraver Elementary School**

### **Morning Arrivals**

Morning arrivals are to occur at the main entrance beginning at 8:15 am. Any student arriving prior to 8:15 am must receive prior permission from the office and principal. Parent(s) dropping off their students are to drive down the high school parking lot and drop their children off at the kindergarten stairs. **Parents should not exit their car to walk their children into the building. If parents need to enter the building for any reason, they should park on Crest Avenue during morning arrival.**

## **Rostraver Elementary School**

### **Parking**

Do not park in:

- Any designated parking spot
- Horseshoe, against curb, or fire lane
- On Crest Ave. during morning arrival

### **Parent Volunteers**

Parent volunteers should park in the Leopard Hall lot.

### **Field Trip Chaperones/Party Day Volunteers**

Please consider carpooling or using the stadium lot if other areas at RES are full. All other parking procedures listed above apply for field trip and party days.

### **True Walkers (live within walking distance to school)**

Walking students will be dismissed at 3:22 pm. Students picked up in a motor vehicle are not considered walkers and must be picked up according to car rider procedure.

### **True Walkers (live within walking distance to school)**

Walking students will be dismissed at 3:22 pm. Walking students will exit the building from the front entrance. Parents/guardians should wait for their students on the front porch.

## **Please follow the school grounds speed limit of 15 mph.**

**Breakfast/Lunch Program - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#)**

**Student Meal Charging - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#)**

### **Cafeteria Procedures**

- Students are not permitted to enter and leave at will. Teachers will bring their class to the cafeteria and seat them properly.
- Students are to use the restroom closest to the cafeteria. Students must ask a teacher to use the restroom.
- Students are not permitted to share food.
- Students who fail to observe proper conduct during lunch shall be assigned to a designated table during lunch. All lunchroom activities will be completed at this table for the student.

### **Playground Procedures**

- Students will walk in a single line to the playground. Students are required to remain outside until it is time to reenter the building.
- A written note is required if you do **NOT** want your child outside for recess.

- Students with recess detention must report to the assigned room directly.
- Students are to respect teachers and obey directions given to them from adults.
- Students are to report to teachers if any injury occurs.
- Students should share the facilities and use the equipment appropriately.
- Shoelaces should remain tied. If flip flops are worn, the student will not be permitted on the equipment.
- Students who do not follow procedures will be sent inside or to a designated area outside.
- Students are **NOT** permitted to:
  - Play full contact sports
  - Pick or play with berries or leaves
  - Climb trees
  - Go into restricted areas (woods, near private property, parking lots, hillside)
  - Push, shove, fight, or mimic any acts
  - Throw objects such as rocks, surfacing material
- Slide Rules:
  - Only one student at a time is permitted to go down using the feet first method. Students should not climb, jump, or go up backwards on the slide. Students should not stand at the bottom of the slide but move away quickly.

### **Classroom Parties and Birthday Celebrations**

**BVA Wellness Policy - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#)**

### **Classroom Party Guidelines**

A maximum of 3 items may be served at class parties:

1. Fresh fruits and/or vegetables.
2. One item containing sugar as the first ingredient.
3. A beverage that shall be bottled water, 100% fruit juice, milk or chocolate-flavored milk.

**No homemade party foods shall be provided.** Due to a portion of the student body being diagnosed with food allergies, please check with the teacher on what items can be purchased.

All parties will be held from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Homeroom parents come in at 1:45 pm. Party parents must bring a pass and ID to enter the school. Passes will be given prior to parties. If parents wish to take their child home after a party, they must send a note to school that morning. The student will be dismissed as a walker. Homeroom parents are not permitted to bring younger siblings to parties. This is a liability issue and may cause a distraction.

### **Birthday Celebration Guidelines**

As per the BVA Wellness Policy, parents are discouraged from sending in food items. Parents may send in non-food items that are packaged appropriately, are safe, and cannot be swallowed. Invitations to private birthday parties are **NOT** to be handed out in the classroom or on school property unless they are given to all the girls and all the boys in the classroom.

## **Safety**

### **Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

- In the event of an emergency evacuation or early dismissal, Parents/Guardians will be notified via the BVASD Mobile App, the BVASD web-site: [www.bvasd.net](http://www.bvasd.net), BVASD Facebook Page, BVASD Twitter Account: @BVASDinfo, the BVASD School Messenger call system, and/or commercial TV and radio.
- Please be sure to provide current contact information to your child's school and report any updates to building office staff. Our communication system, the School Messenger system, will access the information stored in our Student Information System (Sapphire Community Web Portal).
- If an emergency evacuation should occur, please **DO NOT COME TO THE SCHOOL FOR YOUR CHILD**. The campus will be closed to all parent traffic to allow necessary movement of Emergency vehicles and buses.
- Arrangements will be made to transport ALL students home by bus as soon as it is safe to do so. Parents should wait for their children to be delivered to their normal bus stops.

## Safe2Say Something

In 2018, the General Assembly passed Act 44 mandating the establishment and use of the “Safe2Say Something” (S2SS) anonymous reporting system by every Pennsylvania school entity by January 14, 2019. S2SS is a life-saving and life-changing school safety program that teaches students, educators, and administrators how: (1) to recognize the signs and signals of individuals who may be at risk of hurting themselves or others, and (2) to anonymously report this information through the S2SS app, website, or 24/7 Crisis Center Hotline. The following provides an overview of how the program works and is implemented in schools:

### HOW IT WORKS

1. A tip is submitted via mobile app, website, or phone call—arriving first at the S2SS Crisis Center.
2. Crisis Center analysts vet and triage the tip by engaging the tipster in anonymous two-way chat and collaborating, when needed, with schools to gather contextual or historical information on the student in question in order to provide detailed and immediately-actionable information to schools and dispatch.
3. Crisis Center analysts deliver the tip to the impacted school and, as needed, local law enforcement via 911 County Dispatch.
4. The school and, as needed, local law enforcement, assess and intervene with the at-risk individual.
5. The school then closes out the tip and reports actions taken as a record for their school.

## ALICE Drills

Students will periodically practice ALICE drills through the school year. ALICE drills are designed to prepare students for an emergency in our building. Please discuss these drills with your child.

**Alert:** Initial Alert may be a gunshot, PA announcement, etc.

**Lockdown:** If evacuation is not a safe option, barricade entry points.

**Inform:** Communicate real time information on shooter location.

**Counter:** As a last resort, district shooter’s ability to shoot accurately.

**Evacuate:** Run from danger when safe to do so using non-traditional exits if necessary.



## **Discipline**

### **Basic Rules**

- In order to provide your child with a safe and congenial environment, the rules below outline the expected behavior for our students.
- Students are NOT permitted in the building until 8:15am.
- Students shall walk through the hallways at all times.
- Students permitted in the hallways with a note or accompanied by an adult.
- Students shall respect the rights and property of other students, faculty, staff and school.
- Proper dress is required by all students.
- Students are NOT permitted to use cell phones, smart watches, and or any non school issued electronic device while at school.
- Students are NOT permitted to bring cigarettes or tobacco products, matches, lighters, fireworks or firecrackers on school property.
- Students are NOT permitted to ride bicycles, scooters or skateboards to school. Heelys shoes are NOT permitted in school.
- Lockers are to be visited at designated times.
- Students should not loiter in the hallways. They should arrive at their location promptly and not detour to other locations. Students also cannot stay on school property before or after school.
- Students should leave their valuables with the physical education teacher during PE class.
- Students are not permitted to bring the following items to school:
  - Large amounts of money
  - Yo-yos
  - Permanent markers
  - Items to trade with other students (ie, Pokemon cards)
  - Indecent or gruesome items
  - Weapons (or look-alikes), or illegal substances

**If an item brought into school for recess becomes a classroom disruption, the teacher or principal has the discretion to ban such item.**

## **Book Bag Policy**

Students may carry backpacks to school. They must remain in their locker or homeroom and be accessed during designated times. Book bags will be subject to security checks.

## **Electronic Devices**

### **Device Policy**

The school recognizes that students may need to carry cell phones to and from school for the purpose of contacting family in the event of emergencies and for communication before and after school. Students may utilize cell phones before 8:15am and after 3:35 pm. During school hours, cell phone usage is prohibited. These devices can cause a distraction to the educational process. Upon suspicion or determination that a student is utilizing a cell phone, the students will be asked to voluntarily surrender the item. The student may pick up the cell phone at the end of the day for the first offense. For further offenses, the parents will be notified to retrieve the confiscated item. If a student refuses to surrender a cellphone, further disciplinary action may be taken. During school hours, students may only utilize school-issued devices for class activities.

### **Office Phones**

- Students and teachers will NOT be called out of class to answer a call unless it's an extreme emergency.
- The secretary or nurse will make all calls home due to illness
- Please limit calls for missing or forgotten work
- Students that forgot dismissal or bus transfer notes will be permitted to contact home.
- Students will NOT be permitted to call home to organize events after school

## **Academics**

### **Grades**

Subject grades should not be used to enforce discipline. The teacher should have evidence in the form of specific marks earned during the grading period in his/her gradebook to substantiate the grade. A student must have a 60% or better to pass.

At the conclusion of the school year, all four percentages will be averaged together to arrive at the final percentage, which will be converted into the proper letter grade. An “I” represents incomplete work. It can be removed by completing the required work. All “I” must be made up within 15 school days after the end of the nine-week grading period. If not, they will result in a “0”.

### **Grading Scale**

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

### **Report Cards**

Students in grades 1-6 receive grades four times a year at the end of each nine weeks. Report cards can be viewed through the Sapphire Community Web Portal by clicking [here](#).

Kindergarten report cards are given twice a year. The first one will be distributed to students. The Kindergarten report card will be only available online through the Sapphire Community Web Portal by clicking [here](#). These are standards based report cards.

## **Conference**

You may call or email your child's teacher or principal if you wish to speak to them about an issue. Please call the office or send a note with your child to the teacher to request a conference. There are two designated times throughout the school year for parent teacher conferences (see School Calendar).

Teachers will take phone calls from 8:15-8:30 am and 3:30-3:45 pm. Contract time of teachers is from 8:15 am to 3:45 pm.

## **Exemption from Activities**

### **Assemblies/Programs/Activities**

If you do NOT want your child participating in any program, assembly, or use of playground equipment, please notify the homeroom teacher in writing. The student will be given an alternative assignment.

## **Opening Exercises**

The School District will uphold the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the United States concerning opening exercises for school. Each student shall be required to salute the flag (place right hand over their heart) and recite the Pledge of Allegiance during each day's opening exercises. If a student has conscientious objections which interfere with full participation in the flag salute or Pledge of Allegiance, said student shall maintain a respectful attitude throughout the ceremony. Parents of students refusing to salute the flag shall be informed by the building principal, and the parent or guardian shall be required to furnish the school administration with a written statement of their child's conscientious objection.

## **Programs**

### **School Messenger**

The district will be sending automated phone calls and emails to parents regarding Emergency Broadcast, Parental Outreach and Student Attendance Communications. The system is programmed to call primary phone numbers of parents/guardians for a variety of reasons that impact the safety and academic performance of students.

## **Social Media**

The district will use various Social Media to keep families and students informed of events happening at the school. You can stay up to date by following: Marion Elementary School- FACEBOOK- Marion Elementary School or TWITTER- @BVAMarion. Rostraver Elementary School- FACEBOOK- Rostraver Elementary School or TWITTER- @BVARostraver

## **Physical Education**

Belle Vernon Area School District strongly supports health and physical education and the well-being of each and every one of its students. The district has made important changes in the grading of physical education classes moving from the satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade towards letter grades. By placing a higher standard on physical education, this grading system sends a message to students and parents about the importance of physical education.

Grading Scale: Students will not be graded on their physical ability, but by a three point system. Three points will be designated per day:

- Students must participate to the best of their ability
- Students must follow rules and safety guidelines
- Students must demonstrate good sportsmanship

Shoes/Attire: Students must wear securely tied athletic sneakers and socks. No boots, slide-on shoes or any type of platform or wheeled shoes are allowed. Non-restrictive clothing is suitable for movement to be worn on their “gym” days. Please avoid jeans or any type of skirt or dress.

Medication Conditions: Students that have any type of medication condition, limitation or excuse should be brought to the attention of the instructor prior to physical activity. This excuse should be signed by a parent or doctor and should indicate what activities can and cannot be performed in class as well as the length of time. Medical absence does not affect the student’s grade in physical education.

## **Custody Issues**

Parents or guardians who are involved in custody situations with their children are to submit a copy of the standing and current court order to the office immediately. Court order statements will be fully honored by our staff. Please keep the office informed of any changes in the initially submitted statement due to situations that occur subsequent to our reception of the document. And requests or concerns must be submitted each new school term.

## **Special Education Awareness Notice - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#)**

## **Learning, Educating with our Parents for Student Success (L.E.P.S.)**

LEPS will be our revamped Elementary Student Assistance Program. The program is instituted in response to state regulations. The LEPS team helps to strengthen the relationship between school, families, and human service organizations. The team consists of school personnel, including the principal, the guidance counselor, the school nurse, and teachers who have all undergone an extensive training. Faculty or staff make referrals to the LEPS team when they witness behaviors that may indicate more serious problems. With parental involvement, the LEPS team will research the situation and will create a plan recommending services to resolve the problem. If the family is interested in recommendations, the LEPS team will help to coordinate the services, either in the school or within the community. The ultimate goal of the LEPS team is to help students succeed in school by helping them overcome barriers that are making learning difficult.

**Wellness - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#)**

**Medication Policy - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#)**

## **General Policies**

### **Lost and Found**

Articles found in and around the school should be placed in the lost and found box located in the school lobby. Students and parents may claim their property by identifying it.

### **Fire Drill Procedure**

Fire drill regulations and direction are posted above the door of each classroom. The fire drill signal is different from other bells or buzzers. When the signal sounds, all work is to be stopped. All windows are to be closed, lights are to be turned out and the door closed by the last person leaving the room. Students leaving everything and leaving quickly and quietly, following the leader out the proper exits in single file to a distance of at least 300 feet from the building. The class or group should remain together and arrange so as to facilitate the taking of roll by the teacher in charge.

Each teacher is responsible for all students assigned to his/her and should be with his/her groups at all times. The Fire Marshall requires all teachers to have their roll book with them when evacuating the building for fire. No children, parents, visitors, teachers or other personnel are to remain in the building during a fire drill. Everyone will re-enter the building when the signal is given.

## **Parent Involvement**

**Criminal Background, Child Abuse Checks, and FBI Clearances - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#)**

**Marion Elementary PTA - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#)**

**Rostraver Elementary PTO - Please visit [bvasd.net](http://bvasd.net) or click [here](#)**

## **Fundraisers**

Students are not permitted to sell items in school. Parents must pick up the fundraisers at school and distribute it at home. The money earned from these events goes towards assemblies/programs, activities, field trips, and more throughout the year.

## **Visitor Procedures**

Visitors must have a scheduled meeting or delivery. Visitors will remain outside until meeting or delivery is confirmed. All visitors will be escorted to their scheduled destination. All doors will be kept closed and securely locked during the school day. Visitors must have identification (drivers license, passport or other state issued ID), sign the daily log at the security desk, receive a visitor's badge, and give their reason for being in the building.

## **Belle Vernon Area School District Code of Student Conduct**

The Belle Vernon Area School District Code of Conduct adopted and updated by the Board of Directors on September 27, 2021 is as follows:

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**

- Ø 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.
- Ø It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.
- Ø Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.
- Ø 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**

Ø Detention – Student is required to remain in a designated setting before, after or during school as assigned by a teacher or administrator.

Ø 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.

Ø Suspension – Exclusion from school for a period of one (1) to ten (10) consecutive school days. (See Suspension and Exclusion Policy #233.)

Ø 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**

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

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

Ø Suspensions may be given by the principal or person in charge of the public school.

Ø 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.

Ø 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.

- Ø 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.
- Ø Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the ten (10) school day period.
- Ø 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.

Ø 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.

Ø 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**

Ø 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.

Ø 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.

Ø 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.

Ø The student's school entity has the responsibility to make provision for the student's education during the period of the in-school reflection.

Ø 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.

- o 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.
- o 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. 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:

- o Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents/guardians by certified mail.
- o 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.
- o The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parents/guardians request a public hearing.
- o The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents/guardians, and may have a parent guardian attend the hearing.
- o 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.
- o The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- o The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his/her own behalf.
- o 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.
- o 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.
- o 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.

## **LEVEL OFFENSES AND CONSEQUENCES**

**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**

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

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

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

**Level 2 Offenses**

- Ø Continued Level I violation.
- Ø Defacing or misuse of school property.
- Ø Disrespect of a staff member.

- Ø Forging notes, including electronic communication
- Ø Misbehavior on district transportation, violating bus rules.
- Ø Sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) unexcused lateness to school or more within a semester.
- Ø Failure to follow driving/parking permit instructions.
- Ø Leaving class or assigned activity without permission.
- Ø Failure to serve a detention.
- Ø Cutting class.
- Ø Violation of the acceptable use and electronic devices policies. (See Policies #815 and #237.)
- Ø 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:

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

### **Level 3 Offenses**

- Ø Continued Level 2 violations.
- Ø Harassment/bullying (See Policy #103 and #249.)
- Ø Profanity or other abusive language directed at a staff member.
- Ø Failure to identify yourself to a staff member.
- Ø Theft
- Ø Possession of stolen property.
- Ø Extortion
- Ø Vandalism
- Ø Fighting
- Ø Hazing (See Policy #247)
- Ø Posting on social media messages/information found to be disruptive to the school environment.
- Ø Leaving school building and/or grounds without permission.



- Ø 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.):

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

#### **Level 4 Offenses**

- Ø Repeated Level 3 violations
- Ø Possession, transfer or use of a weapon (See Policy #218.1)
- Ø Setting off a false alarm, making a false 911 call, making a bomb threat or a similar terroristic threat (See Policy #218.2)
- Ø Assault
- Ø Aggravated hazing (i.e., an act of hazing that results in serious bodily injury or death to the student, as defined by Policy #247.)
- Ø Possession or detonation of fireworks, smoke bombs, stink bombs, and/or similar devices.
- Ø Arson or attempted arson.
- Ø Possession, use, distribution or solicitation to use drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcohol (See Policy #227)
- Ø 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.):

- Ø Conference with student and parents/guardians.
- Ø Loss of privileges.

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

**DEFINITIONS AND SPECIAL NOTES**

**TOBACCO USE**

Ø 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>Drug / Alcohol Offense</b>	<b>10 day suspension &amp; Counseling</b>	<b>45+ day suspension (Formal Hearing with the BVASD Board of Directors) &amp; Counseling</b>
Drug Paraphernalia	Possession of Drug Paraphernalia - 1st offense (no drugs present)	Repeat offense of Drug Paraphernalia possession (no drugs present)
Possession / Use of Drugs	Use or Possession - 1st offense	Repeat offense (any year)

Alcohol Possession / Use	Use or Possession - 1st offense	Repeat offense (any year)
Distribution	N/A	1st and subsequent offenses

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

- **L.E.P.S. referral (See page 22 of this document)**
- **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:

- Ø Defacing School Property: Minor damages that require minimal repair and costs under a value of \$100 will be considered defacing school property.
- Ø 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.

Ø First Offense – Grade of zero on the assignment and/or other Level 1 consequences

Ø Second Offense – Grade of zero on the assignment and Level 2 consequence.

Ø 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 skorts 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. Clothing must not overly expose the students' undergarments.
2. No revealing or provocative clothing is permitted, including but not limited to, midriff exposed and open back, plunging necklines, see-through garments, and exposure of undergarments. Any holes in jeans or pants can't be more than four (4) inches above the kneecap of the student wearing the item.
3. T-shirts or other apparel which depict any manner of drugs, alcohol, or profanity are prohibited. Content of a sexual nature is 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 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.

9. 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.

## **WEAPONS**

The **Belle Vernon Area School District** strictly prohibits possession of weapons in the school setting. The term **Weapon** “*shall include but is not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, replica of a weapon, and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.*”

*“The Board shall expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal due process proceedings required by law and Board policy. [2][4][5]”*

**For more information regarding the weapons policy, please see BVASD Board Policy NO. 218.1**

## **BULLYING**

The **Belle Vernon Area School District** is “*committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for all students. The term 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 that is severe, persistent and has the effect of doing any of the following: [1]*

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

*Bullying also includes cyberbullying.”*

*“School setting is defined as in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school. [1]”*

For more information regarding the bullying policy, please see BVASD Board Policy 249

### **BVA Board Policies**

Policies are revised periodically throughout the school year. All policies are located on the Belle Vernon Area School District website and can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Familiarizing yourselves with the following Belle Vernon Area School District policies, would be of the best interest for your child and family.

- **101: Mission Statement**
- **102: Academic Standards**
- **103: Nondiscrimination/Discriminatory Harassment-Schools and Classroom Practices**
- **103.1: Nondiscrimination - Qualified Students with Disabilities**
- **105.2: Exemption from Instruction**
- **112: School Counseling**
- **121: Field Trips**
- **130: Homework**
- **204: Attendance**
- **210: Medications**
- **211: Accident Insurance**
- **218.1: Weapons**
- **218.2: Terroristic Threats**
- **222: Tobacco/Nicotine**
- **226: Searches**
- **227: Controlled Substances/Paraphernalia**
- **237: Electronic Devices**
- **246: School Wellness**
- **249: Bullying/Cyberbullying**
- **251: Children and Youth in Transition**
- **806: Child Abuse**
- **808.1: Student Meal Charging**
- **810.2: Transportation-Video/Audio Recording**

- **815: Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers, and Network Resources**
- **918: Title I Parent and Family Engagement**