

AVELLA ELEMENTARY CENTER

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

**AVELLA ELEMENTARY CENTER
1000 AVELLA ROAD
AVELLA, PENNSYLVANIA 15312**

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Student Arrival-8:35 AM
Student Dismissal-3:20 PM

TELEPHONE: 724-356-2294
FAX: 724-3567892

Avella Area School District
Avella Elementary Center

2020-2021

The following needs to be read to students and signed by both parent and student.

I am aware that the Avella Elementary Handbook and School Board Policies are available on the District website, www.avellasd.org. I agree to read the handbook and abide by the standards, policies, and procedures defined or referenced in this document.

The information in this handbook is subject to change. I understand that changes in policies may supersede, modify, or render obsolete the information summarized in this handbook. As the District provides policy information, I accept responsibility for reading and abiding by the changes.

The preceding rules and regulations of this Parent/Student Handbook for the Elementary Center have been read and discussed by:

Student Name *(Please Print)*

Homeroom

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Welcome to the Avella Elementary Center 2020-2021

MISSION STATEMENT

“The Avella Area School District, in collaboration with students, parents and the community is committed to developing 21st century learning and thinking skills through a rigorous, relevant, and comprehensive curriculum, while preparing students to be innovative, productive citizens in an interconnected world.”

INTRODUCTION

We are a Kindergarten through Grade 6 school whose main priority is academic achievement for all students. The staff is dedicated to providing our students with a superior educational environment that fosters success and responsible citizenship. We believe that the key to student success lies in the open and productive communication between the home and school. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call me at 724-356-2294, extension 5500.

Sincerely,
Zachary Zebrasky
Elementary Principal

The Avella Area School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, or handicap/disability. For more information or to report allegations of discrimination, please contact the Compliance Officer, Mrs. Debra Bentz, School Board Secretary, 1000 Avella Road, Avella, PA 15312. Mrs. Bentz can be contacted by telephone at 724-356-2218, or by email at bentzd@avellasd.org.

AVELLA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Cyril Walther, Superintendent
Mrs. Sheryl Wright-Brown, Principal Jr./Sr. High School
Mr. Zachary Zebrasky, Principal Elementary School

ELEMENTARY OFFICE STAFF

Telephone: 724-356-2294
Fax : 724-356-7892

Mr. Zachary Zebrasky, Elementary Principal – Ext. 5500
Mrs. Lori Ragan, Secretary – Ext. 5502
Mrs. Carmelita McEndree – Special Education Secretary – Ext. 3303
Mrs. Yvonne Federouch, Guidance Counselor – Ext. 5211
Mrs. Erika Bakaitis, School Nurse – Ext. 5504
Heather Poirier, Food Service Director – Ext. -3312

ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

Kindergarten Teachers

Mrs. Heidi Farrell
Mrs. Katrina Rado
Mrs. Colleen Jastrzebski

1st Grade Teachers

Mrs. Dana Gatewood
Mrs. Lynette Zimmerman

2nd Grade Teachers

Mrs. Jody Morgan
Mrs. Nicole Brown-Deer

3rd Grade Teachers

Mr. Daniel Davidson
Mrs. Heather Maidment

4th Grade Teachers

Mrs. Rebecca Fox
Mrs. Jessica Crum

5th Grade Teachers

Mrs. Melinda Coates
Mrs. Marie Smitsky

6th Grade Teachers

Mrs. Kristina Piskuric
Mrs. Beth Rosenberg

Mrs. Lauren Baker - Title I/Reading Specialist
Mrs. Susan Majestic-Frabel – Learning Support
Ms. Briana DeNardo - Art
Mrs. Lynn Maidment-Clarchick – Interactive
Media/Gifted
Mr. John Mylan – Physical Education
Mrs. Leigh Stets – Speech Language Therapist
Mr. Alex Light - Music

ELEMENTARY AIDES

Mrs. Anita Kolesar
Mrs. Lisa Conn
Mrs. Linda Gagliani
Mrs. Barb Humensky
Mrs. Amy Rush

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

GG&C Bus Company Inc.
2924 Jefferson Avenue
Washington, PA 15301
Telephone (724) 222-2320
Fax (724) 228-3030

Disclaimer: All procedures in this document need to be followed with social distancing guidelines in mind.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Avella Area School District has high expectations for *all* students from K to 6th grade. The staff wants all children to get the most out of their educational experiences. It is important that every student:

- Comes to class prepared.
- Follows the class and school rules.
- Shows respect to staff/students.
- Shows pride in their school.
- Does their BEST!

Standards have been set by the school board to advance from one grade to another. It is very important that students make every effort to meet and exceed these standards, which include the following components:

- Attendance
- Effort
- Scores achieved on the district assessment test
- Completion of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)
- Report Card Grades

Parents are encouraged to become a part of their child's educational experience and visit regularly with the teachers by scheduling an appointment.

ATTENDANCE

Daily attendance is an integral part of an effective educational environment. Regular attendance is necessary for students to build upon previous information and to develop skills in all areas of the curriculum. Daily attendance contributes to the total development of the student and helps the student to develop a sense of responsibility, self-discipline and good work habits.

If your child is absent from school:

- Parents/Guardians must send an excuse explaining the reason and the date(s) of the absence within three (3) days of returning to school.
- If the excuse is not turned in within three (3) days it will be an unexcused absence.
- After the third (3rd) unexcused absence, a letter will be sent home.
- After the sixth (6th) unexcused absence, the Guidance Office will contact TIPPS, a second letter will be sent home and a School Attendance Improvement Conference will be held.
- After the eighth (8th) unexcused absence, charges are filed with the District Magistrate and, if over the age of 16, referred to CYS.
- All subsequent absences will require a doctor's excuse.

Students who miss 10 or more days will jeopardize their right to extracurricular activities including field trips, activity days, movies, etc.

- The tardy bell rings at **8:55 a.m.** After the fifth (5th) tardy, the student will lose recess.

Pre-Approved Absences:

- If your child must miss school due to a vacation or other special day, it can be considered excused if:
 - You complete a Special Absence form *prior* to the special day
 - Your child has not missed 10 or more days in the school year
 - Your child submits a short journal to the principal regarding the special absence

(For more information, see the district *Policy #204 Attendance*, available for review on the district webpage)

AFTER-SCHOOL DETENTION

We believe students choose the actions they exhibit. We attempt to instill a sense of responsibility in our children by encouraging them to behave appropriately. Students who continually abuse rules are subject to after-school detention. Detention is scheduled from 3:30 p.m. — 4:30 p.m. Parents/Guardians will be notified in advance in the event their child is assigned to detention. Parents/Guardians are responsible for picking up their child promptly at 4:30 p.m.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

School begins at **9:00 a.m.** Students are permitted into the specific designated location in the building at **8:35 a.m.** Adult supervision does not begin before **8:35 a.m.** Please *do not* bring your child to school before that time as they cannot be supervised and their safety is a major concern. They may proceed to their classrooms at **8:35 a.m.** Dismissal is at **3:20 p.m.** Students will not be dismissed to parents during bus dismissal, unless excused by the principal. Any parent or guardian wishing to pick up their child should wait at the cafeteria side of the Jr/Sr High School until all (7) buses and (2) vans have been dismissed. At that time, all cars picking up students will be signaled to move up to the front of the school.

BIRTHDAYS

A birthday is an important event in the life of an elementary school child and many children wish to treat their classmates at this time. Parents/Guardians should feel free to make arrangements with their child's teacher if they desire to send a *purchased treat* to school.

BUSING REGULATIONS

Good behavior on the school bus is expected at all times. Any student not following bus rules will be subject to discipline by the Principal. Any questions regarding transportation should be directed to GG&C Bus Company at (724) 222-2320. Misbehavior on the bus may result in suspension of bus privileges. We expect our students to behave appropriately at all times.

Rules for the school bus stop:

- Arrive at least ten (10) minutes early for a van or bus.
- Remain off the road and in a designated waiting area.
- Line up safely when the bus arrives.
- If the bus does not arrive at the prearranged time, all students should wait a minimum of 30 minutes before leaving the stop area.
- Board the bus and proceed directly to your assigned seat.
- Go directly home after departing the bus on the p.m. run.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for their child's behavior at the bus stop.

Rules for riding the school bus:

- Obey the bus driver
- Remain seated while the bus is in motion
- Stay in assigned seat throughout the duration of the trip
- Do not throw objects in the bus or out of the window
- Do not extend any body parts out of the window
- Do not deface the appearance of the bus
- Talk only as loud as to not disrupt the driver and others around you
- Actions endangering the safe operation of the bus, other persons or property are prohibited

Disciplinary Responses for Students Who Fail to Follow Bus Rules:

1st Offense: Verbal warning by Administrator unless conduct endangers the health or safety of other passengers.

2nd Offense: One (1) day after school detention unless conduct endangers the health or safety of other passengers.

3rd Offense: Possible loss of riding privileges 1 day or 1 day after school day detention unless conduct endangers the health or safety of other passengers.

4th Offense: Possible loss of riding privileges 3 days or 2 days of after school detention unless conduct endangers the health or safety of other passengers.

5th Offense: Possible loss of 10 days riding privileges and a meeting with the Principal, Bus Company, Parent and Student.

6th Offense: Loss of riding privileges until the end of the year.

BULLY PREVENTION PROGRAM

Our school has implemented the "Olweus Bully Prevention Program" in grades 1-6. This program consists of weekly classroom meetings to discuss what constitutes bullying behavior. The purpose of the program is to empower the students to not be bystanders when bullying is occurring and to report any bullying behavior to an adult at home and at school.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Please notify the office in writing, in advance, and/or advise the teacher in writing, if there is to be a permanent change in the transportation of your child. If no written notification is received, your child will follow his/her regular method of getting home.

Students are not allowed to ride a bus other than their assigned bus unless provided a note by the elementary office. In order to receive permission from the office, a note from you and the parent of the child whose bus you want your child to ride must be turned into the office. If it is an unexpected request, please call the office no later than 1:00 p.m. If we do not hear from you before 1:00 p.m., your child will ride his/her regular bus unless it is cleared by the principal.

CAFETERIA

Breakfast and lunch services are provided by Avella Area School District. Any questions should be directed to Food Service Director at extension 3312. Students are expected to keep their account balances positive at all times. The district reserves the right to provide alternative food items when students' accounts have a negative balance.

During the first few weeks of school, all children will be given an application for free and reduced lunches/breakfasts to be taken home to their parents/guardians. Only those who wish to apply need to return the forms. Please keep in mind that we are required to provide every family with this information. Breakfast and lunch prices are available in the elementary office. A menu will be sent home on a monthly basis. Flavored and low-fat milk are available on a daily basis.

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

In the event it is necessary to close or delay school, an announcement will be made over our new district communication software SendIT, posted on the district website, announced on local radio stations, and T.V. channels. If the opening of school is delayed, pupils are to report to their building one or two hours after their normal reporting time, depending on the radio/TV message. It is advisable that families devise a plan in the event of a delay or early dismissal to ensure the care and safety of the children.

It is important that you do not drop your children off and leave the premises without first checking in the office. At times, school delays will change to cancellations.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER

All changes of addresses or phone numbers should be promptly reported to Mrs. Ragan in the school office. The information will also be given to the school nurse so that she can update your child's emergency card.

CHILD FIND

This refers to activities undertaken by public education agencies to identify, locate, and evaluate children residing in the state, including children attending private schools, who are suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, and determine the child's need for special education and related services. The purpose is to locate these children so that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) can be made available. The types of disabilities that if found to cause a child to need services are: Autism, deaf-blindness, Deafness, Emotional disturbance, Hearing impairment, Mental retardation, Multiple disabilities, Orthopedic impairment, Other health impairment, Specific learning disability, Speech or language impairment, Traumatic brain injury, or Visual impairment including blindness. In the case of a child that is of preschool age, developmental delay.

Each school district is required to annually provide notice describing the **identification** activities and the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of **personally identifiable information**.

Identification activities are performed to find a child who is suspected as having a disability that would interfere with his or her learning unless special education programs and services are made available. These activities are sometimes called **screening**, activities. The activities include: Review of group data, conducting hearing and vision screening, assessment of student's academic functioning, observation of the student displaying difficulty in behavior and determining the student's response to attempted remediation. Input from parents is also an information source for **identification**. After a child is identified as a suspected **child with disability**, he or she is evaluated, but is not evaluated before parents give permission for their child to be evaluated

CHILDREN WITH PARENTS HAVING SPLIT CUSTODY

Parents have the right to share in the education of their children, even when circumstances exist in which both parents do not live together with the child. Unless ordered otherwise by a court order, each parent will be provided with all records and information concerning their child. (Please note: children are only permitted to be removed from the school by the parent who has physical custody during school hours). It is the responsibility of the non-custodial parent to inform the school of the particular situation and request to be placed on a mailing list to receive a copy of all school correspondence.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR/CONSEQUENCES

Each teacher team will develop a classroom management plan that includes expected behavior and graduated consequences. Parents will receive this information in writing shortly after the beginning of the school year. Parents will be asked to review the form with their child and to return the form to the classroom teacher. We value the safety of our children. The school district is responsible for student welfare:

- During instructional hours of the school day.
- During instructional hours on district property.
- On school district vehicles.
- At events before, during, and/or after school when directly supervised by school personnel.
- All Avella Area School District policies regarding student behavior that impact the safety and security of the school and/or disrupt the educational process will be upheld by the Principal. Infractions in any of these policies may result in after-school detention, removal from school programs, in-school suspension, out of school suspension, and in extreme cases, expulsion from school.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Student conduct is closely related to learning. An effective educational program requires a safe and orderly school environment. Please reference *Policy #218* for any Student Code of Conduct questions.

COMPUTER USE AND ELECTRONIC NETWORKING

With the advancement of technology, students are becoming more and more competent and comfortable using technology in their education as well as in their personal lives. Everyone who uses computers and other technological tools is entitled to do so free of unnecessary or unwarranted intervention from others. Tampering with computers or computer networks, whether or not permanent damage has resulted from the tampering, will result in disciplinary action. The computer electronic technology (i.e. Internet) is a worldwide telecommunications network. There are hundreds of resources on the Internet. You will find libraries, government agencies, universities, software, technical information, as well as the missions of people who are part of this worldwide network. When applicable, your student account lets you use these resources. The purpose of your student account is to let you use the Internet for curriculum activities and classroom projects. You are expected to exercise responsible behavior when on the Internet. Responsible behavior includes but is not limited to the following:

- Being courteous
- Following the rules set by other groups on the Internet
- Using the Internet as a resource tool
- Avoiding inappropriate language and usage
- Staying on task

The Avella Area School District has made a commitment to prepare their students for entrance into a highly technological society by providing access to computer and electronic network technology. It is understood that the use of such technology is a privilege to be governed according to the Avella Area School District's *Acceptable Use of Internet and Computer Network Policy*. Students are responsible for reading and following these expectations. Note that additional rules and restrictions may be added if the need arises. The primary use of the Internet shall be reserved to those students who are obtaining material that is of educational value. Educational value shall be defined as those areas of network access that have a direct or indirect impact on the student's educational program. The use of the network for actions that are not part of a teacher-supervised curricular project is not permitted. Students are cautioned that inappropriate use of the Internet will result in disciplinary action. The Internet may not be used for profit purposes, non-school related activities, lobbying, advertising, transmitting or receiving inappropriate material. Illegal activity of any nature, including but not limited to copyright or trademark infringement, is prohibited. Students may be liable for spreading false information and making slanderous remarks. Any violation of the above will result in disciplinary action. (Any attempt to circumvent system security, guess passwords, gain unauthorized access to network resources, harm the network, or infect it with a virus is forbidden.) All users of the network must comply with the Electronic Communications Privacy Act of 1986, as amended, and Communications Decency Act. These acts prohibit the unauthorized interception or disclosure of e-mail messages by third parties. These statutes do recognize the right of the school district to monitor a student's e-mail messages provided the interception device is included in the email equipment. Students who use the network must recognize that the District retains the right to intercept e-mail messages of all users. There will be no privacy right construed by the District to exist in the statements made in the network. In order to effectively monitor the student's use of the Internet, the District has installed various security and filtering systems. Students should be aware that a report of all websites visited by students is available to be routinely reviewed by the administration. In no event shall the Avella Area School District be liable to any users for any damages, whether direct, indirect, special, or consequential, arising in any way out of the use of the Internet, including but not limited to, accuracy or correctness of databases of information contained therein or related, directly or indirectly, to any failure or delay of the district and/or the district's Network/Internet access provider(s).

CONFERENCES

Parent /Teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall. All parents are encouraged to attend this conference. Additional conferences may be arranged at *any time* by calling the school office and making an appointment.

CUMULATIVE RECORDS

A cumulative record will be maintained for each student from entrance into school through the twelfth grade. All material in each cumulative record shall be treated as confidential. All students and their parents/guardians have the right to examine the student's cumulative record and to challenge or correct any information they believe to be inaccurate. FERPA: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act-The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school Principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.

Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the school board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

A copy is available in each school office for parents/guardians to review. Elementary students wishing to examine records must be accompanied by parents/guardians.

DISCIPLINE

Good discipline is more than the maintenance of school and classroom order. Good discipline has as its ultimate objective the development of socially approved self-control in pupils. Policies and practices of discipline in the district's schools are designed to help achieve this broad objective while at the same time, achieving the immediate objective of maintaining the desired degree of order in the school.

The following actions by students will not be condoned and students involved will be liable for appropriate action:

- Smoking and Use of Tobacco — As stated in Act 145 of 1996, the use or possession of tobacco in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses
- Drinking and Drugs — Under the influence or in possession of intoxicating beverages or illegal or non-prescription drugs.
- Stealing — Those pupils caught stealing shall also be liable for restitution and may be referred to the police
- Vandalism — Willfully defacing or destroying school property; shall also be liable for payment, repair or replacement of equipment damaged
- Fighting — Physical contact with another student. If no adult witness is present, both students will be punished equally; involved parties may be subject to suspension from school
- Inappropriate Language — The use of vulgar/offensive language is prohibited
- Harassment — Physical or verbal harassment of staff or students is prohibited

(For additional information, please reference the last page of this document for the discipline matrix)

DRESS CODE

As adopted by the Avella Area School Board in the *Dress and Grooming Policy*, the Avella Area School District recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. The Avella Area School District believes that the manner in which a student is dressed does not reflect the abilities or qualities of that student, but that attire which is clean, non-disruptive and in good taste enhances the educational environment and promotes learning. While the Avella Area School District does not intend to interfere with the rights of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, it is appropriate to do so when their choices affect the educational program of the schools or the health, safety or security of themselves or others. Accordingly, the Board of Directors of the Avella Area School District authorizes the Superintendent to enforce school regulations prohibiting student dress or grooming practices which:

- Present a hazard to health, safety or security of the student himself/herself or to others in the school
- Interfere with school work, create disorder or disrupt the educational process
- Cause excessive wear or damage to school property
- Prevent the student from achieving his/her own educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement
- Impede the School Districts legitimate educational concerns
- Are plainly offensive
- Students can wear face masks/shields due to Covid-19 guidelines. If the

In compliance with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Health, all students are required to wear face coverings at the following times and locations:

- on District-provided transportation
- outside when physical distancing is not feasible
- at all times while inside the school building, with the following exceptions:
 - while eating or drinking and spaced at least six feet apart
 - when wearing a face covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task
 - when at least six feet apart during "face covering breaks" to last no longer than 10 minutes
 - when a student has a medical or mental health condition or disability, as documented by a health care provider in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or the IDEA, that precludes the wearing of a face covering in school. Accommodations for such students will be made in partnership with the student's health care provider, school nurse, and IEP/504 team.

"Face covering" means a covering of the nose and mouth that is secured to the head with ties, straps or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. A "face covering" can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen, and can include a plastic face shield that covers that nose and mouth. "Face-coverings" may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or improvised from household items, including but not limited to scarves, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.

Students are not permitted to wear face coverings with suggestive, obscene, sexual innuendos, vulgar wording, or graphics that advertise/suggest/promote tobacco, drug, or alcohol products.

The situation surrounding the pandemic is fluid and all guidance and requirements are subject to change, based on new information, guidance or requirements issued by state, federal or other sources. **The District reserves the right to change its guidance and requirements without amending this Handbook.**

(For more information, please reference policy #221 Dress & Grooming)

EMERGENCY CARDS

The safety of your child is a concern of the school. The Emergency Cards issued to your child at the beginning of the year have important information needed so that the school can contact the parents in case of an emergency. To eliminate any delays in contacting parents in emergency situations, this card must be returned on the second day of school each year.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The use of personal electronic devices (tablets, phones, etc.) at any time during the school day is **NOT PERMITTED**. A student may only use a personal electronic device with the written permission of Mr. Zebrasky.

FIRE DRILLS/SAFETY DRILLS

Fire drills are necessary for the safety of the students, staff and faculty. Everyone should know the specific directions for reaching a point of safety from those areas of the school building in which he/she may be. Specific information regarding fire drills must be posted in each room. The elementary school will regularly practice safe and appropriate evacuation procedures to ensure the absolute safety of our children. In addition to fire drills, safety drills are also practiced as part of our proactive safety and security plan. The Principal of the elementary school will disseminate information regarding these procedures appropriately.

- Drills are held monthly
- All procedures are posted in the classroom
- When the alarm sounds, ALL STUDENTS AND ADULTS are expected to move quickly and quietly to the designated areas
- The loudspeaker or a bell will sound for everyone to return to the school

FLAG SALUTE AND NATIONAL ANTHEM

Students are responsible to demonstrate proper respect for the country and the flag. If they choose not to participate in these activities, they must maintain respectful silence.

GRADING SCALE

The Avella Elementary Center uses the following marking key when determining grades

A – 90-100% (Excellent)

B – 80-89% (Above Average)

C – 70-79% (Average)

D – 60-69% (Below Average)

F – 0-59% (Failing)

GUM

Gum chewing is not permitted in the Avella Elementary Center.

HARASSMENT

Our schools are fair places where people treat each other with respect. Harassment of any type will not be tolerated from anyone under any circumstances. It is wrong and unfair for anyone to:

- Make someone feel uncomfortable or threatened;
- Humiliate or insult another person;
- Force themselves on anyone who doesn't want physical contact with them;
- Cause a person to lose confidence, self-respect or self-esteem.

Verbal complaints of harassment should be put in writing by the individual complaining or by the person who receives the complaint and signed. All complaints regarding harassment will be investigated. Offenders will be disciplined. All threats of physical harm must be reported to school personnel. The Principal or his/her designee will investigate these threats.

*The district does not discriminate in any manner, including Title IX sexual harassment, in any district education program or activity, to be issued to all students, parents/guardians, employment applicants, employees and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the district. All discrimination notices and information shall include the title, office address, telephone number and email address of the individual(s) designated as the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator.

(For more information, please reference *Policy #103 Nondiscrimination/Discriminatory Harassment – School and Classroom Practices* on the district website)

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

If a child has suffered an illness that has lasted longer than five days, he/she may require homebound instruction (instruction in the home by certified tutors). Please contact the building Principal to obtain a "Homebound Instruction Application" to be filled out by the physician verifying the need for this process if this circumstance occurs to your child.

HOMEWORK

Homework refers to school assignments which aid the educational program during periods of supervised study in class or outside of the classroom may necessitate independent work in the home. Assignments are given regularly and are regulated in length of time according to grade level. All homework assignments should be meaningful and aid to reinforce concepts developed in class.

MEDIA CENTER

The Library/Media Center will be open to different grade levels on different days. The Librarian will be in the Library to check out and return books from 8:35 – 8:55 for grades 3 – 6. (These days will be distributed by homeroom teachers.)

All materials checked out are expected to be cared for and returned on the due date in like condition. To avoid inadvertent charges, students are expected to check materials prior to leaving the library/media center and report any damages to the librarian. Materials that are lost or stolen must be paid for at replacement cost. Materials that are misused will be charged a fine or the replacement cost at the discretion of the librarian for such things as: torn pages/bar codes; coloring/writing on pages; pocket/date due slips; covers torn; wet pages; or spine damage. If materials have been damaged, none will be checked out on the day of return until the parent/guardian has been notified of the damage and the fine paid. Afterward, any student owing a fine will not be permitted to borrow any materials from the library.

LOST AND DAMAGED BOOKS/MATERIALS

We believe that students have a responsibility to maintain and secure school property issued to them. If any books or materials issued to a student are damaged, they will be charged a rebinding fee or full replacement fee depending on the severity of the damage.

LOST AND FOUND

A place housing lost/found articles is provided for in the elementary school. Check with the office for a detailed location. Students missing any articles are encouraged to check in the lost/found for their belongings. Please label all of your child's articles (coats, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc.) to facilitate their return. Unclaimed items will be given to a charitable organization after a reasonable length of time. The school is not responsible for items left in the lost/found area.

MEDICATION

Students needing to take medication during the school day should secure a copy of the form, "Authorization for Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication During School Hours" from the school office or the nurse. This form must be signed by the student's physician and returned to school before the student will be permitted to take medication at school. All medication is to be kept in the nurse's office and obtained by the student when needed. No medication is to be kept in student desks or carried around the building.

NURSE/HEALTH ROOM

The school nurse is NOT to be used instead of the family physician. An injury/illness occurring out of school should be taken care of at home. Any student in need of seeing the school nurse should obtain permission from his/her classroom teacher in accordance with school procedures. A student should report to the health room or school office under the following conditions:

- *If he/she has a physical defect or is under doctor's care.*
- *If a doctor advises that the student not take gym class or must have limited*

activities. (A note from the doctor must be submitted.)

- *If an injury is received during school hours or going to and from school or in athletics.*
- *If he/she is in need of first aid or in an emergency.*

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

The bringing of personal belongings to school is discouraged including any personal devices. Not only can they disturb classes, but also they are often lost or stolen. Common sense and consideration is the best guide in determining whether or not to bring personal possessions to school. In general, students should not bring toys or unusual items to school unless they are intended for a specific purpose in the classroom. Unauthorized articles that are brought to school that are lost/ broken will be the family's responsibility.

PICTURES

Individual student pictures will be taken during the fall. Families will receive notice in advance of the photo session. Picture money and necessary forms must be returned in a timely fashion in order to purchase pictures. Photos/videotape footage of Avella students involved in school-related activities are often used in district publications, video productions, newspapers, yearbooks, on television, and the district's website. *If for any reason you do not want photographs or videotapes of your child(ren) used in this manner, please complete the form sent home the first day of school.*

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students are expected to participate in physical education classes on a weekly basis. A student may be excused from active participation in physical education classes for a certain period of time only with written permission from a physician indicating that such activity would be detrimental to the student's health.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Students will not be issued Progress Reports at the mid-point of each grading period. All student grades are posted on the new grading software, ALMA, within two days of being assessed. If you do not have internet access and would like a hard copy of your child's grades, please contact the office.

PROMOTIONS AND RETENTIONS

Promotions and retentions are based on an evaluation of academic, social and emotional growth. The primary reasons for considering retention are indifference or lack of effort on the part of a capable student and frequent or long absences. Parents can assume their child will be promoted unless the alternative of retention has been discussed during the school year. Parents will be involved in any retention decision.

RELEASE FROM SCHOOL FOR TRIPS

Parents/guardians who wish to obtain the release of their children from school for family trips, family business or other family activities must submit a written request *prior* to their child's release. Parents must define the nature of the activity and its duration. All such absences are considered unexcused unless a written journal about the trip is submitted to the principal. It is the responsibility of the student to make up all missed class work.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be posted to ALMA after each nine-week grading period for grades 3-6. Report cards for grades K, 1, and 2 will be sent home quarterly. Report cards will contain marks for both academics and personal growth. Attendance will also be reported on the card. If you would like a paper copy of your child's report card, a written request must be sent into the elementary office at the beginning of each year.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

Kindergarten, first and second grade participate in an RTI model 4 days per week. Forty minutes per day are set aside for students to be split into small groups according to reading ability. During this time, the students have the opportunity to receive remediation or enrichment based upon how they perform with recent assessments.

RIGHT TO REQUEST TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

As a parent of a student in the Avella Area School District, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Part of the **No Child Left Behind** law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teachers and requires us to give you this information in a timely manner if you ask for it. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the Pennsylvania Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he/she teaches;
- Whether the Pennsylvania Department of Education has decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances;
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degree and, if so, the subject of the degree; and whether any teacher's aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services and, if they do, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please contact the Principal of your child's school.

SCHOOL SECURITY

We value the safety of our children. The school district is responsible for student welfare:

1. During instructional hours of the school day.
2. During instructional hours on school district property.
3. On school district vehicles.
4. At events before, during, and/or after school when directly supervised by school personnel.

The elementary school has a security system. All doors are locked; in order to gain admittance to the building, please ring the doorbell. At this time, be prepared to identify yourself and state the purpose of your visit. Upon entering the building, please have your ID ready for scanning. All visitors must report to the school office and sign in. A visitor's badge must be obtained prior to visiting other areas in the school. We care about the safety of our children and believe precautions such as these demonstrate our concern.

SEARCHES

To maintain order and discipline in the school and to protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may conduct searches according to the Avella Area School District's *Searches* Policies and may seize any illegal, prohibited or contraband materials discovered in the search. An Administrator may seize any evidence indicating that a student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule, that the Administrator may find as a result of a search of a student's property, clothed body or areas designated for a student's use if the search is proper and reasonable. A student who refuses the request for a search by an Administrator that is proper and reasonable may be disciplined under the District's Student Discipline Policy. Action may include suspension or referral to the board for an expulsion hearing.

(For more information, please visit *Policy #226 Searches* on the district website)

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The Avella Area School District is very proud of the fine services offered through our special education programs. These include special education resource teachers, speech/language therapists, vision/hearing therapists, psychologists, and teachers of the gifted. Children may be referred by a parent or teacher and then screened to determine their needs. For further information, contact your child's school or our Special Education Department at extension 5501.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The student assistance team made up of administration, guidance, teachers, and county workers meet weekly throughout the year to discuss potential problems with students that may affect their academic and social performance. If you ever feel that your child may be experiencing problems, please contact the office to be part of this process.

STUDY SKILLS

A parent can help his/her child be aware of skills and techniques, which make learning easier and more enjoyable. The following are student guidelines for achieving good study habits:

- Come to class prepared with pencil, paper and other necessary materials.
- Be an active participant in class. Listen well and take part in class.
- Ask questions to clarify problems.
- Plan your day and schedule time for homework.
- Use what is learned and apply it to new situations.
- Strive to do the very best work possible. Just "getting by" is not a worthwhile goal.

TARDY

Students must report to the main office if they are not in class by the **8:55 a.m.** bell. The following tardy policy is in effect:

- Parents are requested to sign in all students who are late and cite the reason for being tardy
- Unexcused tardies will result in disciplinary action.
- Parents should sign their students in at the office when they are arriving after **8:55 a.m.**

TREATMENT AND CONTROL OF HEAD LICE

Every effort will be made to prevent the spread of lice in our schools. If a lice problem occurs, a notification will be sent home to the parents/guardians of students in the affected classrooms. Parents will be given guidance regarding treatment methods, The school nurse must inspect the child's hair to be sure proper treatment has been carried out before the child will be readmitted to school. Your cooperation in our effort to maintain a healthy environment for our children is appreciated. Absences in excess of two days will be considered illegal. Subsequent absences could result in referrals to the appropriate authorities, i.e. Magistrate, CYS, Public Health.

VANDALISM

Our school and school equipment is public property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property is cause for immediate disciplinary action. If a student accidentally causes damage, he/she should report it to school personnel immediately so that the damage is not misconstrued as vandalism.

WEAPONS

Weapons offenses are serious issues in our schools. A weapon can mean any tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. Any student caught in possession of a weapon will be disciplined.

(For more information, please visit *Policy #218.1 Weapons* on the district webpage)

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS

If you are moving and are withdrawing your child from school, please call or contact the school at least two weeks prior to the withdrawal date. This will enable us to have ample time to complete required paperwork. All library books and textbooks must be returned and all outstanding charges paid before your child leaves. Your child's records will be forwarded upon request to the new school. No withdrawal will be made without official notice from the parents/guardians to the school. As always, your cooperation is appreciated.

Level I Violation

1. Violating individual classroom rules
2. Hall disruption
3. Dress code violation
4. Cafeteria disruption examples: throwing food, out of seat, excessive noise, cutting line, etc.
5. Tardy to class 2 times and each tardy thereafter
6. Misuse of classroom office or restroom pass
7. Forgery
8. Lying
9. Bus violations
10. Unauthorized use of classroom phones
11. Insubordination (minor infraction)*

Disciplinary Responses

1. Warning
2. Detention/Loss of recess
3. Parent notification

*Depending on severity and administrative prerogative

Level II Violation

1. Three (3) Level I violations
2. Defacing school property
3. Cutting detention
4. Computer violations
5. Violations of the smoking Policy
6. Cheating (see school policy)
7. Cutting class
8. Bullying/ Harassment
9. Fighting
10. Insubordination
11. Profanity/ Vulgarity

Disciplinary Responses

1. Notify parents
2. Suspension/Loss of recess
3. Magistrate

*Depending on severity and administrative prerogative

Level III Violation

1. Stealing/possession of property
2. Fighting (attempt to injure another student)
3. Verbal assault on any staff member or student
4. Harassment/Sexual harassment
5. Indecent exposure
6. Tampering with the emergency call system
7. Insubordination
8. Cutting school or leaving school grounds without permission

Disciplinary Responses

1. Conference with parents
2. Out-of-School Suspension
3. Conference with counselor and/or SAP Team as stated in current policy
4. Call Authorities
5. Magistrate

Further Disciplinary Responses

1. Formal hearing with the Superintendent and School Board
2. Expulsion
3. Juvenile Petition Probation Office
4. Washington County Alternative School

*Depending on severity and administrative prerogative

Level IV Violation

1. Distribution of drugs or alcohol/under the influence or in possession of drugs, alcohol or related paraphernalia
2. Possession of and/or use of lethal weapons
3. Physical and/or verbal assault on staff members or students
4. Extortion
5. Arson
6. Terroristic Threats
7. Reckless Endangerment
8. Fireworks
9. Fire Alarm/Calling in or activating a false alarm

Disciplinary Responses

1. Suspensions
2. Call Authorities
3. Magistrate Citations

Further Disciplinary Responses

1. Formal hearing with Superintendent
2. Expulsion
3. Juvenile Office
4. Washington County Alternative School

*Depending on severity and administrative prerogative

*Immediate notification of Principal and steps determined by school policy

*Additional offenses may be included in each of the violation categories as needed

*You will be notified of any revisions.

2020-2021 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Dates subject to change

August 21, 2020	Teacher Clerical Day
August 24, 2020	Teacher In-Service Day
August 25, 2020	Teacher In-Service Day
August 26, 2020	Teacher In-Service Day
August 27, 2020	Teacher In-Service Day
August 28, 2020	Teacher In-Service Day
August 31, 2020	First Day Students
September 7, 2020	No School (Labor Day)
October 12, 2020	No School – Columbus Day
November 11, 2020	Act 80 Day- Parent Conference Day
November 25, 2020	2 Hour Early Dismissal
November 26-30, 2020	No School- (Thanksgiving Break)
December 23, 2020	2 Hour Early Dismissal
December 24, 2020 – January 1, 2021	No School- (Christmas Break)
January 18, 2021	No School - (ML King Day)
February 15, 2021	No School- (President's Day)/Snow day
March 15, 2021	Built in Snow Day - No School
March 31, 2021 – April 6, 2021	Built in Snow Days – No School
May 9, 2021	Mother's Day
May 14, 2021	No School
May 28, 2021	Last Day for Seniors
May 31, 2021	No School (Memorial Day)
June 4, 2021	Students' Last Day/High School Graduation
June 7, 2021	Clerical Day
June 20, 2021	Father's Day
June 21, 2021	Kennywood Day

To view the district policies listed, click on the link provided.
HOLD DOWN THE CTRL+CLICK TO FOLLOW THE LINKS.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/avel/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9YQR9S6CF3BE#>

HEAD LICE:

<http://www.boarddocs.com/pa/avel/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9YQRAU6D1B34>

WEAPONS:

<http://www.boarddocs.com/pa/avel/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9YQRCD6D5493>

TERRORISTIC THREATS:

<http://www.boarddocs.com/pa/avel/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9YQRCH6D5961>

DRESS AND GROOMING:

<http://www.boarddocs.com/pa/avel/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9YQRD66D721A>

BULLYING:

<http://www.boarddocs.com/pa/avel/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9YQRFL6DCD05>

**STUDENT USE OF THE INTERNET/SCHOOL DISTRICT NETWORK AND DISTRICT PROVIDED
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT:**

<https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/avel/Board.nsf/vpublic?open#>

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE (SAFE2SAY):

<https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/avel/Board.nsf/vpublic?open#>

NONDISCRIMINATION/DISCRIMINATION HARASSMENT:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/avel/Board.nsf/vpublic?open>