



## **DOWNTOWN HIGH SCHOOL 2016-2017**

***Mission:*** *The mission of the Downingtown Area School District, proud of our tradition of excellence, is to educate all students to meet the challenges of a global society by providing an individually responsive learning environment characterized by outstanding academic and personal achievement in partnership with family, students and community.*

### **STEM Academy**

345 Manor Avenue  
Downingtown, Pennsylvania 19335  
Phone: 610-269-8460  
FAX: 484-694-5590

**Principal:** Mr. Art Campbell

**Administrators:** Mr. Michael Sheehan  
Mr. Zachary Ruff  
Mrs. Susan Boardman

---

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

The Pennsylvania Department of Education recognizes a limited number of reasons as **legal excuses for missing school**. They include **illness, quarantine, death in the immediate family, impassable roads, student court appearances and exceptionally urgent reasons that affect the child**. In the belief that attendance is closely related to good class work, and that academic performance usually suffers when students are late or absent frequently, the following procedures have been adopted with regard to excuses for vacations, trips, or special reasons.

### I. EXCUSE PROCEDURES

- A. When returning to school from being absent, the student must submit a written excuse to the attendance office.
- B. Any student not bringing an excuse note within three (3) days after his return to school automatically receives an illegal/unexcused absence.
- C. **Advanced Excuses:** Students requesting advance excuses are to report to the attendance office prior to homeroom period. A note from a parent/guardian is required before a student can obtain an Advance Excuse Form from the attendance office.
- D. Advance Excuse Procedures are as follows:
  1. **Educational tours and family trips may be excused by the principal if permission is sought ahead of time. Student academic records will be examined prior to any approval. Requests are to be submitted no less than three (3) days in advance.**
  2. When trips exceed ten (10) school days, students will be officially withdrawn and will be re-enrolled upon their return.
  3. Work missed due to approved educational tours or family trips may be made up, but the responsibility for the completion of that work will remain with students and/or parents. Teachers will work with students and parents, but not necessarily send work for the days of excused absence. In some cases, requests for work present an unfair burden upon the teachers, who may not have future lessons completely ready.
  4. Requests for students to be excused for more than one family trip during a school year will most likely not be honored.

E. **Early Dismissal** – Every effort should be made to schedule appointments for doctor, dentist, etc., after school; however, when it becomes necessary for a student to be excused from school, the following procedures must be followed:

1. The student completes the green early dismissal form which is signed by the parent/guardian and includes the name and phone number of the doctor/dentist. Properly completed Early Dismissal forms can be dropped off at the attendance counter in the morning before homeroom. Students can then pick up their passes over the course of the morning. No parent notes will be accepted. The student receives an early dismissal pass from the attendance office which he/she shows to the classroom teacher.
2. College visitations shall be documented and a call to the parent will be made to verify the early dismissal. College visitations will require Official Documentation from the college/university upon return from the visit. If the documentation is not submitted to the attendance office the next day prior to first period, the day will be considered unexcused.

### II. TWENTY DAY RULE

**A student who has accumulated more than 20 unexcused absences in an academic year will be required to appear before the Board of Directors for a disciplinary hearing where expulsion may be imposed.**

### III. ABSENCE AND TRUANCY

- A. General Procedure Relating to Student Absence
  1. The Pennsylvania School Code defines three types of student absence.
    - a. Excused: Absences for clearly established mental, physical or other reasons.
    - b. Unexcused: Absences for which acceptable evidence is lacking. Only students who have reached the age of 17 may be considered to have

- unexcused absences.
- c. **Illegal:** Absences for which acceptable evidence is lacking and in which case the child is less than 17 years of age.
  2. A physician's excuse will be required for any consecutive absence of more than three (3) school days.
  3. Students whose absence/ tardiness is unexcused/illegal will not be permitted to make up work; however, the building administrator may give consideration to extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control.
- B Acceptable Reasons for Excused Absences**
1. *Observance of religious holiday or religious instruction* - Prior permission must be obtained before the holiday.
  2. *Trips* - Absences for trips to exhibitions, colleges, places of interest, and planned vacations considered educational in nature may be excused provided:
    - a. Prior permission is obtained from the principal before the absence begins. A maximum of three days will be approved.
    - b. The educational development of the student is not likely to be hindered seriously.
    - c. **Students will not be permitted to take mid-term or final examinations early due to trips or vacations.**
    - d. Each trip will be given individual attention by the principal.
    - e. When a trip or vacation absence exceeds ten (10) days in duration, the student will be withdrawn from school and must re- enrolled upon return.
  3. *Health Care* - absence for a portion of the school day may be excused for medical or dental appointments, which cannot be arranged after school hours. Prior permission must be obtained in order for the absence to be excused.
  4. *Illness or recovery from an accident.*
  5. *Death or serious illness in the immediate family.*
  6. *Court appearance.*
- C. Unacceptable Reasons for Absence: babysitting, missing the school bus, running errands, car trouble, shopping, etc.**
- D. Makeup Work due to Absence** - It is the student's responsibility to make immediate arrangements to make-up work missed while absent. The student must make up

all work within two (2) days of the absence/tardiness for classes, which do not meet every day, the day after the absence/tardiness for classes, which meet every day. **Students will have the same number of days as absences to make up the work. Students will not be permitted to make up tests or other work missed when unexcused absences occur.**

- E. Corrective Measures and Penalties**
1. **Illegal absences.**
    - a. When a student has accumulated three or more days of absence with-out a lawful excuse, an official written notice shall be mailed to the parents or guardians.
    - b. After the warning has been mailed, each additional time during the school year that the pupil is illegally absent, a citation will be served on the parent/ guardian by the District Justice.
  2. **Excessive Absences** - The Home & School Visitor and building administrator will review the attendance records.
    - a. Parents of a student who has accumulated 10 absences will be notified by letter of the school's concern regarding the student's attendance; the letter will serve as a warning that after 15 absences only a doctor's note will be accepted for future absences.
    - b. Parents of a student who has accumulated 15 absences will be notified by letter that only a doctor's note will excuse any future absences.

#### **IV. LATE TO SCHOOL**

- A. All students must be in their first period promptly at 7:40 a.m. Any student reporting to school after 7:40 a.m. must report to the attendance office for admission. **Any student who does not report to attendance upon late arrival will be marked absent and receive detentions.**
- B. A late is excused if the student is ill when school begins and then feels better and wishes to still come to school; or, has an appointment with a doctor, dentist, orthodontist, etc. All students arriving late should have a parent note explaining the lateness, but will be required to provide an excuse note the next school day BEFORE homeroom begins.
- C. After a student reaches 8 lates (excused

or unexcused), he/she must have a doctor's note for each additional late.

**V. ON THE DATE OF ABSENCE, A PARENT OR GUARDIAN SHOULD CALL THE SCHOOL BETWEEN 7:00 A.M. AND 7:45 A.M TO REPORT THE REASON FOR ABSENCE.**

**VI. PERSONAL APPOINTMENTS**

**\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*** Prior notification of personal appointments (doctor, dental, etc.) conflicting with the normal bell schedule **MUST** be received from the parent/guardian. Forms are provided by the attendance office and require signature of the parent/guardian.

**VII. LEAVING SCHOOL BUILDING/ GROUNDS WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION..**

**VIII. CLASS LATES**

**Students are expected to arrive to classes on time; four minutes are allowed for passing between classes.**

**IX. POLICY ON ATTENDANCE PRIOR TO A SCHOOL ACTIVITY OR ATHLETIC EVENT**

- A. Students **MUST** be in attendance by 10:00 a.m. on the day of the scheduled activity or athletic contest in order to participate.
- B. A student/athlete **may not** participate in or attend any school activity on a day the student has an absence.
- C. School events (concerts, field trips, dances, etc.) and athletic contests scheduled on Saturday require proper attendance on the previous Friday.

**X. ATHLETICS AND MARCHING BAND PARTICIPATION**

Any STEM Academy student participating in athletics or marching band must do so at the high school based on residence as defined by the district attendance boundaries.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Inform the main office and/or the counseling office in writing and provide proof if you have a change of address or phone number. **Two forms of documentation with new address must be presented.** In order to help with mailings and emergencies, please update student/parent email addresses in the parent portal.

**COLLEGE ENTRANCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Most colleges have the following minimum course requirements:

- 1. English – 4 years
- 2. Mathematics – 4 years – Engineering students should have Trigonometry, Math Analysis, and Calculus.
- 3. Science – 4 years – 2 lab sciences
- 4. Social Studies – 4 years
- 5. Foreign Language – 2 years minimum of one language. Some colleges require three or four years.
- 6. Electives – Colleges recommend electives be chosen that parallel areas offered in college, such as fine arts, humanities, etc., in preference to non-academic offerings. Note: Some colleges do have a fine arts requirement for admissions.

In selecting students, most colleges give consideration to the following:

- 1. Secondary grades.
- 2. College Board scores or ACT tests.
- 3. Teacher ratings.
- 4. Counselor recommendations.
- 5. Extra-curricular activities.

**COUNSELING DEPARTMENT**

Counseling services are available for educational planning, interpretation of test scores, occupational information, career information, study strategies, social concerns and home or school concerns. Appointments may be made through the secretaries in the counseling department at any time.

**DETENTION PROCEDURES**

- A. Students must come prepared with enough books and materials to keep busy for the entire detention period.
- B. There is to be **no sleeping, eating/drinking.** Students may not communicate with each other in any way. Keep feet off chairs.
- C. Students are to use the lavatory before entering and make all phone calls before coming to detention. Students **WILL NOT** be permitted to leave detention.
- D. Cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted.
- E. Failure to attend results in further consequences.
- F. Students are permitted to reschedule detentions one time a year. A parent note is required two days prior to the detention.

**DISTRICT DISCIPLINE CODE**

The Downingtown Area School District Code of Student Conduct may be found on the district's website: [www.dasd.org](http://www.dasd.org).

- Click on School Board.

- Click on Policies.
- Click on 200-Pupils.
- Click on 218-Student Code of Conduct.

1<sup>st</sup> repair: \$100.00  
 2<sup>nd</sup> repair: \$150.00  
 3<sup>rd</sup> repair: \$300.00  
 4<sup>th</sup> repair: \$400.00

## DRESS CODE

The dress code must be followed at all times. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct at [www.dasd.org](http://www.dasd.org) for details.

## ELEVATOR

An elevator is available for students to use if prior approval is granted by the office. A student must first present a written request from a doctor stating the reasons for the need and an approximate time frame. A refundable deposit may be required for the use of an elevator key. Keys must be returned immediately when the need no longer exists.

## EXAMS

Semester exams are administered at the end of each semester; mid-term examinations are given at the end of the first semester; and final examinations are given at the end of each year. All students are required to take exams at the time specified by the examination schedule.

Exam dates will be announced as soon as possible. We request that parents do not plan appointments or family trips during these times. Dates may change due to inclement weather. No early exams will be permitted.

## INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

All students regardless of IB diploma status are required to complete all IB internal and external assessments. All Students are also responsible for all fees associated with IB Testing.

## LAPTOP REPAIR FEES

An annual technology insurance fee is required from all those who participate in the district-issued laptop program (not those who bring a personal laptop, which waives the fee). This fee covers technical and maintenance support, as well as a loaner if the district-issued laptop needs to be sent out for warranty and/or out-of-pocket warranty repairs. The technology insurance fee schedule is device specific.

For those with a district-issued laptop, the following repair fee schedule will also be followed each year for non-warranty repairs. There is no charge if the manufacturer/vendor determines that the repair is a warranty item.

Refer to complete details here:

[Laptop Technology/Activity Fee and Repair Information](#)

## FUNDRAISING

Any and all school fundraisers must be approved by the Building Principal or designee. Fundraisers during the school day must adhere to the Wellness Policy. Fundraisers not sponsored by the school administration are prohibited in the school building.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The minimum district course requirements for graduation are outlines in School Board Policy referenced here:

[Graduation Requirements STEM Academy 217.1](#)

## CLASS PREPARATION POLICY

*Homework* at the Academy is called *Class Preparation*. We believe that all assignments are important components to the success of students.

- o Curriculum assignments are necessary in order to fully participate in the lessons and class activities
- o Support assignments are intended to support the student's skills and provide extra practice in a given area
- o Preparation Assignments are not graded but will be recorded in eSchool with a zero weight
- o Lack of class preparation will result in consequences determined by the instructor

### Conditions for Assessment Revision/Retake

Students may retake any assessment (as determined by the teacher) no more than one time. Second assessment grade replaces the first grade. In order to be eligible for an Assessment Revision or Retake, he or she must take the following steps.

1. Submit the Revision/Retake Assessment within two days of receiving the grade.
2. Schedule the assessment within one week of the application submission.  
[Retake Application](#)
3. Develop an action plan for how to improve his or her grade for the assessment that includes the following criteria:
  - Fully answer/reflect on how he or she prepared for the first assessment.

- Identify what he or she will do differently in preparation for the revision or retake.
  - List the specific areas for improvement from the first assessment.
  - Schedule a meeting with the teacher after completing the Academy Revision/Retake Application.
4. Parent must answer how they will support their child in preparation for the revision/retake of the assessment.

## HONOR ROLL

Distinguished Honors.....	*A's in all courses
High Honors.....	*A's in at least two majors and more than one-half of all courses taken. B's in remaining courses. No C's.
Honors.....	*A's in at least two courses (one must be a major). A maximum of one C. All others must be B's.

## LATEX

Due to increased latex sensitivity among students, latex balloons and latex gloves are not permitted on school premises. Students should make every effort to keep latex-based products out of the school.

## LOST AND FOUND

The Lost and Found is located in the main office and the café. Valuable items should be turned into the main office.

## MARKING SYSTEM

GRADE	%	GRADE POINT	GRADE POINT AVERAGE
A	90-100	4	3.6 - 4.0
B	80-89	3	2.6 - 3.5
C	70-79	2	1.6 - 2.5
D	60-69	1	.6 - 1.5
F	0-59	0	0 - .5

In order to pass a course, a student must have a minimum of three passing grades recorded on the report card and attain a minimum of a .6 average. One of these passing grades could be for the final examination or the average of the mid-term exam and the final exam. In those special cases where five grades are not recorded on the report card, an average of .6 or better must be earned to pass the course.

Any student who receives an "I" (incomplete) is required to remove the incomplete **within two weeks**

**of the end of the marking period.** If the incomplete is not removed within that time, the "I" will be changed to "F". Since an incomplete grade may be established any time during a marking period, it is the responsibility of the student and teacher to make provisions to remove the "I" within the specified time period.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian: As per Downingtown Area School District Policy 214 and the associated administrative guidelines approved on September 14, 2011, and revised on June 12, 2013, the honorary distinctions of valedictorian or salutatorian shall not be recognized. The Downingtown STEM Academy will recognize student academic achievement with the Summa, Magna, and Cum laude designations according to the three tiered collegiate model and will be selected at the completion of the third marking period. This policy is subject to change.

## PARKING PRIVILEGES

Parking permits will be reserved for Junior and Senior students who are in good standing and without obligations (ie: fines, textbooks, graduation project, etc.). Students may lose this privilege as a consequence of discipline issues.

## PROM

Attendance is required the day of the prom. Days where the prom falls on an exam day, students must attend all final exams. Should the prom be scheduled for a Saturday, students must be in attendance the day prior. The District Code of Conduct will be followed and enforced. Students with obligations will not be permitted to attend the prom. Obligations include (but may not be limited to): graduation projects, textbooks or their replacement cost, library fines, borrowed lunch money etc.

## R.E.I.V.C.S.

DASD is instituting an on-line form, The Registration, Emergency Information Verification & Consent Sheet. The new district form will be used to update and maintain student data including:

- Student mailing address, physical address, phone numbers
- Guardian Information – all forms of contact information, second mailings
- Emergency Information – contacts other than parent/guardian
- Medical/Health Information – including special concerns, medications, allergies and permission to administer OTC
- Acknowledgement of the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct

- Acknowledgement of the Acceptable Use Policy
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act – Release of Student Information for websites or print media

## RESEARCH GUIDELINES

The DASD Guide to the MLA Research Paper will be available to students through their English teachers and posted on-line. All students should use this guide when conducting formal research.

## REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued four times a year. The report cards can be found on the Home Access Center (HAC). The final report card can be found on the HAC until the end of June. Mid-marking period deficiencies are posted electronically when appropriate.

## SCHOOL CLOSINGS/LATE OPENINGS/WEATHER EMERGENCIES

During inclement weather, it may be necessary to either delay the opening of school or cancel school completely for the day. In cases of severe weather – snow, low temperatures, ice, etc. – the official announcement for the closing of school or postponement of the opening will be broadcast over WCHE and KYW. Our code is 876. (PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL). The phone lines must be kept open for emergencies. School closings will also be listed on the district's web page, [www.dasd.org](http://www.dasd.org) and phone messages will be sent from the Superintendent via Alert Now.

## SCHOOL DAY

Classes are in session from 7:40 a.m. to 2:40 p.m. Students are required to be in school on time for first period. Students may not leave school between classes or before their last class without permission from the attendance office.

*Downingtown Area School District shall not discriminate in their educational programs, activities or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, ancestry or any other legally protected classification. This policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. Information relative to special accommodation, grievance procedure, and the designated responsible official for compliance with Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 may be obtained by contacting the Director of Human Resources, Downingtown Area School District, 540 Trestle Place, Downingtown, PA 19335, phone number 610-269-8460.*

## SCHOOL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

The Downingtown Area School District has developed a Student Assistance Program, (SAP) which is available to all students. The SAP is composed of school staff that have been trained to identify issues related to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs and mental health issues that pose a barrier to school success. The primary goal of the Student Assistance Program (SAP) is to help students overcome these barriers in order that they may achieve, remain in school and advance.

The Student Assistance Specialist or Prevention Specialist is also a member of the SAP team. This professional is uniquely qualified through training and experience to work with students and families. The SAP team is comprised of a building administrator, guidance counselor, teachers and nurse. The teams do not replace the guidance counselors.

The SAP team is available to all students for assistance with problems of an immediate, non-academic nature. Students, parents, teachers, and staff may refer anyone to the team. Each referred student periodically meets with a team member. While these meetings remain confidential, parental consent is required and parent involvement is encouraged whenever possible.

To make a referral to the SAP team, complete a form in the counseling office, in designated areas around the school, see a SAP team member or see the Prevention Specialist or Student Assistance Specialist in the school.

## VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

To assist school personnel in maintaining a safe school environment, the school building and grounds are electronically monitored at all times.