



DOWNTOWN HIGH SCHOOL 2019-2020

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

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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. Reporting Absences - When a student is absent from school for any reason, an excuse note must be submitted within three (3) days of the absence. An excuse note signed by a parent/guardian may be submitted in person. The note should include the student's name, grade, and reason for the absence. Excuse notes may also be electronically submitted using the Attendance e-mail address for your school: stemattendance@dasd.org
- B. When returning to school from being absent, the student must submit a written excuse to the attendance office.
- C. Any student not bringing an excuse note within three (3) days after his return to school automatically receives an illegal/ unexcused absence.
- D. **Advanced Excuses:** Students re- questing 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.
- E. 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. 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.
 - 3. Requests for students to be excused for more than one family trip during a school year will most likely not be honored.
- F. **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.
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 without 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 district's Home & School Visitor and building

administrator(s) will review students' attendance records. Due to the signing of Act 138 by Governor Wolf in November 2016, the following changes have been implemented by DASD:

- a. Parents of a student who has accumulated 3 unexcused or illegal absences will be notified by letter of the school's concern regarding the student's attendance. This letter will be a warning that a meeting will be required when a student accumulates 6 unexcused or illegal absences.
- b. If a student accumulates 6 unexcused or illegal absences, a School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) meeting will be scheduled by school administration.
- c. It is imperative that an excuse note is submitted within 3 days of the student's return to school. If an excuse note is not submitted within that time frame or if an excuse is provided that is not one of the 8 reasons for an acceptable excuse, the absence(s) will remain illegal or unexcused.

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 arrival 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 10:00a.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 only to be used for instructional purposes.
- E. Failure to attend results in further consequences.

DISTRICT DISCIPLINE CODE

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

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

DRESS CODE

The dress code must be followed at all times. Please refer to the Student Code of Conduct on the District website: [Student Code of Conduct](#)

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.

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.

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

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. Please note that a faculty advisor is required for student run events and fundraisers.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The minimum district course requirements for graduation are outlined 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 eS+ 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 Knowledge Commons. 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.

Student Recognition: As per Downingtown Area School District Policy 214, and the associated administrative guidelines approved on June 12, 2013, DASD will use a Latin, college-style honors system and no longer use the designations of valedictorian and salutatorian. Such a system shall recognize all students with weighted GPAs of 4.40 or higher as summa cum laude, all students with weighted GPAs between 4.20 and 4.39 as magna cum laude, and all students with weighted GPAs between 4.00 and 4.19 as cum laude. 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 based on availability (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. The District Code of Conduct will be followed at the prom.

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 Research Papers will be available to students through their teachers and posted on-line. All students should use the Chicago Format for History, MLA Format for Literature and APA Format for all other subjects 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 and phone messages will be sent from the Superintendent via Blackboard.

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.

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.

RECORDING DEVICES

To accommodate special needs as required by State and federal law, certain students in your child's classroom might have the right to audio record, or to receive teacher- made audio recordings of discussions that occur during instructional activities. These recordings could include the voice of your child. The child making the recording or for whom the recording is made will use the recording solely to support his or her ability to access and retain educational information. The recording will be destroyed when it is no longer necessary for that purpose. Recordings shall not be maintained by or otherwise considered educational records of the District for any purpose. The use of audio recordings in the classroom will be limited to students with disabilities who are unable, as a result of their disabilities, to record information independently in written form when such information is required to aid memory or learning and when audio recording is identified as an adaptation or accommodation on the individualized educational programs ("IEPs") or Section 504 accommodation plans of such students. The audio recording device shall only be used when necessary to capture spoken or written

information in the classroom that nondisabled peers would be expected to record in written form. The use of audio recordings shall be for the sole use of the student for the educational use stated in his or her IEP and shall not be shared with any third party. All recordings are the property of the Downingtown Area School District, and the use of such recordings for any purpose or in any manner other than as described in these guidelines is strictly prohibited. All recordings will be erased or destroyed when no longer necessary for educational purposes and shall not be maintained as, or otherwise considered, educational records of the District for any purpose.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

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

HEAD LICE GUIDELINES

The school nurses in the Downingtown Area School District will follow the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association of School Nurses, and the Centers for Disease Control concerning the treatment and containment of head lice by implementing the following procedures in the event that a confirmed case of head lice for a student.

Guidelines:

1. Upon report or discovery of live head lice, the School Nurse will privately check the affected child's head for live head lice.
2. If live head lice are found, the School Nurse will call the child's parent and request that they take their child home.
3. The School Nurse will advise on evidence-based treatment options and/or refer them for to their health care provider.
4. The affected child may return to school after treatment of live head lice, and will report to the school nurse to be approved for school attendance.
5. Children may not remain in school if a significant number of live head lice are found, but they are permitted to remain in school if nits (head lice eggs) are found.
6. If the student has siblings in the school district, the School Nurse will check the siblings for any live head lice.
7. At the elementary level, a letter will be sent home to parents in the child's homeroom alerting them that a case of head lice was discovered and advising them to check for head lice and to treat if live lice are discovered.
8. Instructions in the letter should ask that if child is treated for head lice at home, the parent should contact the school nurse. The school nurse will then check that student's head upon return and follow the recheck policy.
9. The School Nurse will re-check the affected child's head a week after treatment and follow the aforementioned guidelines if live head lice are found.

HOMELESSNESS

In 1987, Congress passed the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, (subsequently renamed the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act) to aid homeless persons. The Act defines the term "homeless children and youths" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was enacted, amending McKinney-Vento. Categories of children who are "homeless" and entitled to the protections of the federal law are as follows:

- A. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals;
- B. children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human

beings;

- C. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- D. "migratory children" who qualify as homeless under federal law because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (A) through (C) above. The term "migratory children" means children who are (or whose parent(s) or spouse(s) are) migratory agricultural workers, including migratory dairy workers or migratory fishermen, and who have moved from one school district to another in the preceding 36 months, in order to obtain (or accompany such parents or spouses in order to obtain) temporary or seasonal employment in agricultural or fishing work; and
- E. "Unaccompanied homeless youth" including any child who is "not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." This includes youth who have run away from home, been thrown out of their home, been abandoned by parents or guardians, or separated from their parents for any other reason.

If you believe that you fall under one of the above mentioned categories of children who are "homeless" and entitled to the protections of the federal law, contact your school counselor or the district's Home and School Visitor / Homeless Student Liaison.

(Basic Education Circular, December 2016)

CHESTER COUNTY EMERGENCY RESOURCES

MEDICAL EMERGENCY	911
Valley Creek Crisis Intervention (Mental Health Emergencies)	877-918-2100 610-280-3270
Valley Creek Crisis (Warm Line – non emergencies)	866-846-2722
Suicide Prevention Hotline	1-800-273-TALK (8255)
CHILD LINE (Child Abuse Hotline)	800-932-0313
Crime Victim Center (Sexual Assault Hotline)	610-692-7273
Crime Victim Center (Information)	610-692-7420
POISON CONTROL	800-222-1222

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.