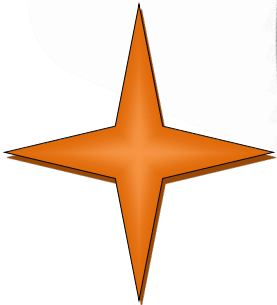


# Somerset Area School District

*Mr. Scott Shirley  
Sr. High School  
Principal*

*Ms. Stacey Cornelius  
Assistant Principal*



## **2023 - 2024 Junior and Senior High School Student Handbook**

*Somerset Jr. and Sr. High School  
645 South Columbia Avenue  
Somerset, PA 15501  
Phone: 814-443-2831*

*Mr. Lance McGough  
Jr. High School Principal*

*Mr. Scott Close  
Dean of Students*



**2023-2024**

**JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK**



Somerset Area School District is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, and handicap in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504.

For information regarding civil rights or grievance procedures, contact the Superintendent, Title IX Coordinator, at South Columbia Avenue, Somerset, PA 15501, 814-443-2831. For information regarding services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by handicapped persons, contact the Superintendent.

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## WELCOME

Welcome to the Somerset Area Junior and Senior High School. We are beginning a new school year with lots of enthusiasm and hope that this year will be both enjoyable and successful for you.

To be truly successful, it is important that we work together and support each other in our daily efforts. Through a cooperative effort and a positive attitude, we will continue to attain our group and individual goals while also creating a climate in our school that is conducive to learning. It is our very strong desire to provide you with an educational environment that meets your academic, social, and emotional needs. A positive school climate can only be created through the mutual efforts of students and staff therefore we encourage you to challenge yourself to do your very best in assuring our school is a safe, healthy, and enjoyable place to be!

It is very important that parents and students read and understand the contents of this handbook as it contains all of the policies and regulations necessary for our school to operate in a safe, healthy, and efficient manner. An understanding of the rules that govern our school will also help to alleviate misunderstandings throughout the school year. On behalf of our school directors, administration, faculty, and staff, we wish you a very rewarding and successful school year filled with many memory-making moments!

Mr. Scott T. Shirley, Senior High School Principal  
Mr. Lance McGough, Junior High School Principal  
Ms. Stacey Cornelius, Assistant Principal  
Mr. Scott Close, Dean of Students

## 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE BELL SCHEDULES

| <u>Regular Bell Schedule</u> | <u>Early Dismissal Bell Schedule</u> | <u>2-Hour Delay Bell Schedule</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 7:27 – 7:50                  | 7:27 – 7:50                          | 9:27 – 9:50                       |
| Homeroom                     | Homeroom                             | Homeroom                          |
| 7:45                         | 7:45                                 | 9:45                              |
| Tardy Bell                   | Tardy Bell                           | Tardy Bell                        |
| 7:50 – 9:06                  | 7:50 – 8:40                          | 9:50 – 10:44                      |
| Core 1                       | Core 1                               | Core 1                            |
| 9:07 – 10:08                 | 8:42 – 9:30                          | 10:46 – 11:40                     |
| Core 2                       | Core 2                               | Core 2                            |
| 10:11 – 10:55                | 9:32 – 10:03                         | 11:42 – 12:36                     |
| Block Rotation               | Block Rotation                       | Core 3                            |
| 10:58 – 12:14                | 10:06 – 10:37                        | 12:38 – 1:08                      |
| Core 3                       | Core 3                               | Lunch                             |
| 12:15 – 12:29                | 10:40 – 11:11                        | 1:11 – 1:42                       |
| Core 4                       | Enrichment/Remediation               | Block Rotation                    |
| 12:30 – 1:00                 | Band/Chorus/Orchestra                | Core 4                            |
| 1:02 – 2:03                  | 11:14 – 11:30                        | 1:42 – 2:17                       |
| Core 4                       | Core 3                               | Enrichment/Remediation            |
| 2:06 – 2:50                  | 11:32 – 12:18                        | 2:19 – 2:50                       |
| Enrichment/Remediation       | Core 4                               | Band/Chorus/Orchestra             |
| Band/Chorus/Orchestra        | Lunch                                |                                   |
|                              | 12:20 – 12:50                        |                                   |

## 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE BELL SCHEDULES

| <u>Regular Bell Schedule</u>   | <u>Early Dismissal Bell Schedule</u>  | <u>2-Hour Delay Bell Schedule</u>  |
|--|---|--|
| <p>7:27 – 7:50 Homeroom</p> <p>7:45 Tardy Bell</p> <p>7:50 – 8:34 Period 1</p> <p>8:37 – 9:21 Period 2</p> <p>9:24 – 10:08 Period 3</p> <p>10:11 – 11:09 Period 4</p> <p>11:12 – 11:42 Lunch</p> <p>11:45 – 12:29 Block Rotation</p> <p>12:32 – 1:16 Period 7</p> <p>1:19 – 2:03 Period 8</p> <p>2:06 – 2:50 Enrichment/Remediation</p> <p>Band/Chorus/Orchestra</p> | <p>7:27 – 7:50 Homeroom</p> <p>7:45 Tardy Bell</p> <p>7:50 – 8:21 Period 1</p> <p>8:24 – 8:55 Period 2</p> <p>8:58 – 9:29 Period 3</p> <p>9:32 – 10:03 Period 4</p> <p>10:06 – 10:37 Period 8</p> <p>10:40 – 11:11 Enrichment/Remediation</p> <p>11:14 – 11:44 Band/Chorus/Orchestra</p> <p>11:47 – 12:17 Lunch</p> <p>12:20 – 12:50 Block Rotation</p> <p>Period 7</p> | <p>9:27 – 9:50 Homeroom</p> <p>9:45 Tardy Bell</p> <p>9:50 – 10:21 Period 1</p> <p>10:24 – 10:55 Period 2</p> <p>10:58 – 11:29 Period 3</p> <p>11:32 – 12:02 Lunch</p> <p>12:05 – 12:35 Block Rotation</p> <p>12:38 – 1:08 Period 4</p> <p>1:11 – 1:42 Period 7</p> <p>1:45 – 2:16 Period 8</p> <p>2:19 – 2:50 Enrichment/Remediation</p> <p>Band/Chorus/Orchestra</p> |

## 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE BELL SCHEDULES

| <u>Regular Bell Schedule</u> | <u>Early Dismissal Bell Schedule</u> | <u>2-Hour Delay Bell Schedule</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 7:27 - 7:50                  | 7:27 - 7:50                          | 9:27 - 9:50                       |
| Homeroom                     | Homeroom                             | Homeroom                          |
| 7:45                         | 7:45                                 | 9:45                              |
| Tardy Bell                   | Tardy Bell                           | Tardy Bell                        |
| 7:50 - 8:34                  | 7:50 - 8:21                          | 9:50 - 10:21                      |
| Period 1                     | Period 1                             | Period 1                          |
| 8:37 - 9:21                  | 8:24 - 8:55                          | 10:24 - 10:55                     |
| Period 2                     | Period 2                             | Period 2                          |
| 9:24 - 10:08                 | 8:58 - 9:29                          | 10:58 - 11:29                     |
| Period 3                     | Period 3                             | Period 3                          |
| 10:11 - 10:55                | 9:32 - 10:03                         | 11:32 - 12:02                     |
| Period 4                     | Period 4                             | Block Rotation                    |
| 10:58 - 11:42                | 10:06 - 10:37                        | 12:05 - 12:35                     |
| Block Rotation               | Period 8                             | Lunch                             |
| 11:44 - 12:14                | 10:40 - 11:11                        | 12:38 - 1:08                      |
| Lunch                        | Enrichment/Remediation               | Period 4                          |
| 12:15 - 1:16                 | Band/Chorus/Orchestra                | 1:11 - 1:42                       |
| Period 7                     | Block Rotation                       | Period 7                          |
| 1:19 - 2:03                  | 11:14 - 11:44                        | 1:45 - 2:16                       |
| Period 8                     | Lunch                                | Period 8                          |
| 2:06 - 2:50                  | 11:47 - 12:17                        | 2:19 - 2:50                       |
| Enrichment/Remediation       | 12:20 - 12:50                        | Enrichment/Remediation            |
| Band/Chorus/Orchestra        | Period 7                             | Band/Chorus/Orchestra             |



## Senior High School Bell Schedule

Cafeteria: Student drop off/arrival permitted @ 7:00 AM;  
Bus arrival/drop off @ 7:27 AM

Homeroom access permitted @ 7:27 AM; Late Bell @ 7:45 AM

|                          |                      |
|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Homeroom (HR)</b>     | <b>7:45 - 7:50</b>   |
| <b>Period 1 (1-3)</b>    | <b>7:50 - 8:34</b>   |
| <b>Period 2 (4-6)</b>    | <b>8:37 - 9:21</b>   |
| <b>Period 3 (7-9)</b>    | <b>9:24 - 10:08</b>  |
| <b>Period 4 (10-12)</b>  | <b>10:11 - 10:55</b> |
| <b>Period 5* (13-15)</b> | <b>10:58 - 11:42</b> |
| <b>Period 6* (16-18)</b> | <b>11:45 - 12:29</b> |
| <b>Period 7* (19-21)</b> | <b>12:32 - 1:16</b>  |
| <b>Period 8 (22-24)</b>  | <b>1:19 - 2:03</b>   |
| <b>Period 9 (25-27)</b>  | <b>2:06 - 2:50</b>   |

SCTC Students depart SAHS @ 7:53  
SCTC Students depart SCTC @ 10:42

Arrive at SCTC @ 8:05  
Arrive at SAHS - 10:55

Student Dismissal @ 2:50 PM

## Early Out Bell Schedule

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Homeroom (HR)</b>     | <b>7:45 - 7:50</b> (7:45 Late Bell) |
| <b>Period 1 (1-3)</b>    | <b>7:50 - 8:21</b>                  |
| <b>Period 2 (4-6)</b>    | <b>8:24 - 8:55</b>                  |
| <b>Period 3 (7-9)</b>    | <b>8:58 - 9:29</b>                  |
| <b>Period 4 (10-12)</b>  | <b>9:32 - 10:03</b>                 |
| <b>Period 8 (22-24)</b>  | <b>10:06 - 10:37</b>                |
| <b>Period 9 (25-27)</b>  | <b>10:40 - 11:11</b>                |
| <b>Period 5* (13-15)</b> | <b>11:14 - 11:44</b>                |
| <b>Period 6* (16-18)</b> | <b>11:47 - 12:17</b>                |
| <b>Period 7* (19-21)</b> | <b>12:20 - 12:50</b>                |

SCTC Departure: 7:53

SCTC Return: 10:07

## 2 Hour Delay Bell Schedule

|                          |                                     |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Homeroom (HR)</b>     | <b>9:27 - 9:50</b> (9:45 Late Bell) |
| <b>Period 1 (1-3)</b>    | <b>9:50 - 10:21</b>                 |
| <b>Period 2 (4-6)</b>    | <b>10:24 - 10:55</b>                |
| <b>Period 3 (7-9)</b>    | <b>10:58 - 11:29</b>                |
| <b>Period 5* (13-15)</b> | <b>11:32 - 12:02</b>                |
| <b>Period 6* (16-18)</b> | <b>12:05 - 12:35</b>                |
| <b>Period 7* (19-21)</b> | <b>12:38 - 1:08</b>                 |
| <b>Period 4 (10-12)</b>  | <b>1:11 - 1:42</b>                  |
| <b>Period 8 (22-24)</b>  | <b>1:45 - 2:16</b>                  |
| <b>Period 9 (25-27)</b>  | <b>2:19 - 2:50</b>                  |

SCTC Departure: 9:53

SCTC Return: 11:25



Meaningful teaching and learning in a caring, nurturing educational community!!



# SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

## 2023-2024 School Calendar

Board Approved 2/13/23

| August 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su          | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|             |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6           | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13          | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20          | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 26 | 26 |
| 27          | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    | 4  |

**August - 3 Student Days**

- 24-26 Teacher In-Service
- 28 Act 80
- 29 First Student Day

3 Student Days

| February 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |     |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Su            | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa  |
|               |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3   |
| 4             | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10  |
| 11            | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17  |
| 18            | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24  |
| 25            | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |    | 119 |

**February**

- 2 Early Out
- 16 Early Out
- 19 Act 80

20 Student Days

| September 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su             | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|                |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3              | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10             | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17             | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24             | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
|                |    |    |    |    |    | 24 |

**September - 20 Student Days**

- 4 Labor Day Holiday

20 Student Days

| March 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |     |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Su         | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa  |
|            |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2   |
| 3          | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9   |
| 10         | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16  |
| 17         | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23  |
| 24         | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30  |
| 31         |    |    |    |    |    | 137 |

**March**

- 1 Early Out
- 15 Early Out
- 26 Early Out
- 27 Snow Make-Up Day\*
- 28-29 Spring/Easter Break

18 Student Days

| October 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su           | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|              |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2            | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9            | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16           | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23           | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30           | 31 |    |    |    |    | 45 |

**October - 21 Student Days**

- 8 Early Out
- 9 Teacher In-Service
- 27 Early Out

21 Student Days

| April 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |     |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Su         | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa  |
|            |    |    |    |    |    | 1   |
| 2          | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8   |
| 9          | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15  |
| 16         | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22  |
| 23         | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29  |
| 30         | 31 |    |    |    |    | 158 |

**April**

- 1 Spring/Easter Break
- 12 Early Out
- 22-30 PSSA Testing Window

21 Student Days

| November 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su            | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|               |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 5             | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 12            | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19            | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26            | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    | 62 |

**November**

- 13 Teacher In-Service
- 22 Teacher In-Service
- 21 Early Out
- 23-27 Thanksgiving Break

17 Student Days

| May 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |     |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Su       | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa  |
|          |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4   |
| 5        | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11  |
| 12       | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18  |
| 19       | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25  |
| 26       | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 180 |

**May**

- 1-3 PSSA Testing Window
- 13-23 Keystone Exam Window
- 24 Act 80
- 27 Memorial Day Holiday
- 31 Last Student Day

21 Student Days

| December 2023 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su            | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|               |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3             | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10            | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17            | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24            | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31            |    |    |    |    |    | 77 |

**December**

- 4-16 Keystone Exam Window
- 21 Early Out
- 22-29 Winter Break

15 Student Days

| June 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su        | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|           |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2         | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9         | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16        | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23        | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30        |    |    |    |    |    |    |

**June**

- 3 Teacher In-Service

| January 2024 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Su           | M  | Tu | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|              |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2            | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9            | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16           | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23           | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30           | 31 |    |    |    |    | 98 |

**January**

- 1 Winter Break
- 2 Snow Make-Up Day\*
- 3-17 Keystone Exam Window
- 15 Act 80

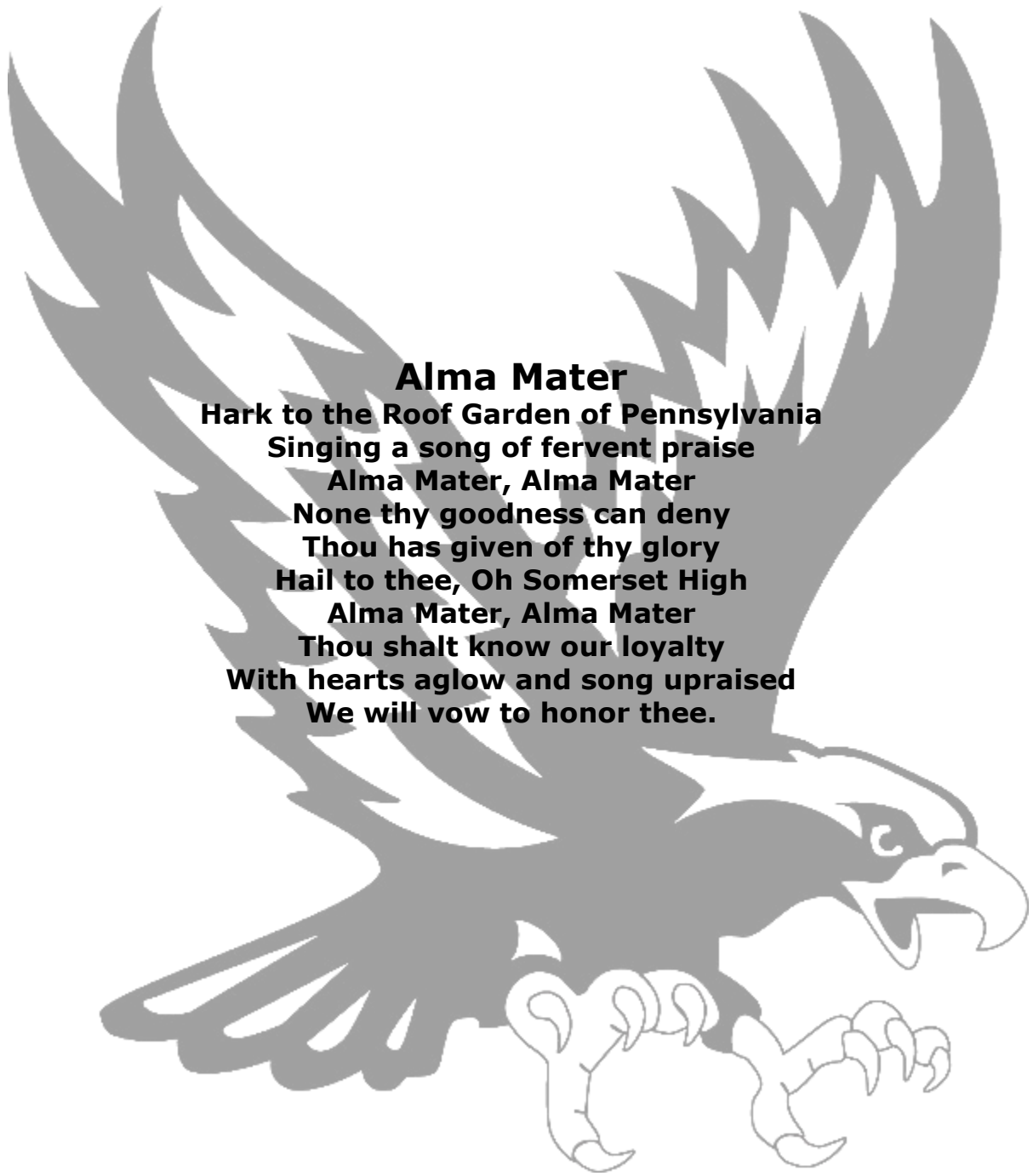
20 Student Days



**180 Instructional Days**

- 4 Act 80 Days (no school for students)
- 6 Teacher In-Service Days (no school for students)
- 2 Snow Make-Up Days

\*The first two snow days of the year will be made up in the following order:  
1/2/24, 3/27/24  
All remaining snow days will be FID (remote learning).



## **Alma Mater**

**Hark to the Roof Garden of Pennsylvania  
Singing a song of fervent praise  
Alma Mater, Alma Mater  
None thy goodness can deny  
Thou has given of thy glory  
Hail to thee, Oh Somerset High  
Alma Mater, Alma Mater  
Thou shalt know our loyalty  
With hearts aglow and song upraised  
We will vow to honor thee.**



**Parents' Right to Know**  
**Regulations 200.61**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child's school receives Title I funding and is included under the regulations of the "No Child Left Behind Act" (NCLB) that was signed into law by President Bush on January 8, 2002.

NCLB requires:

- Increased accountability for states and school districts
- Greater choice for parents, especially those in low performing schools
- Greater flexibility for state and local education agencies in the use of federal funding

Under NCLB, parents have a right to request professional qualifications of their children's teacher(s) or paraprofessional(s). This letter is to inform you of your right to ask for the following information about your children's classroom teachers or paraprofessionals:

- Whether Pennsylvania has licensed the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which Pennsylvania licensing criteria have been waived
- The teacher's baccalaureate degree major and whether the teacher has any advance degrees, and if so, the subject of the degrees
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications

If you would like to receive specific information about your child's teacher or paraprofessional, please contact your school principal.

The Somerset Area School District is fully committed to the success of your child. We appreciate your partnership in our efforts to provide the best education for your child.

Sincerely,

**Mrs. Krista S. Mathias, Superintendent**

## Gifted Education

Dear Parents and Guardians:

The Somerset Area School District offers gifted support services in all of its buildings. This program focuses on enrichment and acceleration activities that supplement the regular education program. Instructional services are provided through direct instruction, consultation and classroom enrichment.

The District conducts a screening process to identify students who might qualify for gifted support services. When the results of the screening indicate the need for a full evaluation, the District first seeks parental consent. The evaluation includes observations from school personnel, performance on standardized assessments, review of the student's academic and health records, as well as family and teacher input. If the results of this multidisciplinary evaluation indicate that the student meets the Chapter 16 criteria as an individual who is in need of gifted support services, the gifted support team meets and develops an individualized educational plan. Parents who feel that their child might be in need of gifted support services should send a written request for evaluation to the building principal.

Copies of parent rights and confidentiality issues are routinely provided to parents with the permission to evaluate and are also available to parents upon request.

Parents who need more information about gifted educational programs and services or parental due process rights are encouraged to contact the principal of their child's school or call Mr. Erick Fish, Director of Special Education, at (814) 444-3225.



**SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Annual Public Notice of Special Education**  
**Services and Programs**  
**Services for School Age Children with Disabilities**

It is the responsibility of the Pennsylvania Department of Education to insure that all children with disabilities residing in the Commonwealth (including children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disabilities), and who are in need of special education or related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by the individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Amendments of 2004 (IDEA 2004).

The Somerset Area School District provides a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to children with disabilities who need special education and related services. FAPE is provided to students who need specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical or mental disabilities:

- 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
- Visual Impairment including Blindness

**Early Intervention**

The IDEA 2004 also requires the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education to children with disabilities between three years of age and the school district's age of beginners who have a developmental delay or one or more of the physical or mental disabilities listed in the first section may be identified as an "eligible young child".

Eligible young children are afforded the rights of school age children with disabilities, including screening, evaluation, individualized education program planning, and provision of appropriate programs and services. The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and services to eligible young children under Act 212 of 1990, The Early

Intervention Services System Act. Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 provides programs and services to eligible young children on behalf of the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

### **Screening**

The Somerset Area School District has established and implemented procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate children suspected of having a disability. These procedures involve screening activities which include, but are not limited to: yearly review of group-based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, and report records); hearing screening (at a minimum of kindergarten, special ungraded classes, first, second, third, seventh, and eleventh grades); vision screening (every grade level); motor screening; and speech and language screening. In addition the Somerset Area School District uses early intervening services to verify that the student was provided appropriate instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction, appropriate instruction in math, and an assessment of the student's performance in relation to State-approved grade level standards. Screening or early intervening services do not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request evaluation, at any time, including prior to or during the conduct of early intervening activities.

Except as indicated above or otherwise announced publicly screening activities take place in an on-going fashion throughout the school year. Screening is conducted in the child's home school unless other arrangements are necessary.

### **Evaluation**

When screening indicates that a student may be a child with a disability, the Somerset Area School District will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. Evaluation means procedures used in the determination of whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child requires. The term means procedure used selectively with an individual child and does not mean basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children.

In Pennsylvania, this evaluation is conducted by a multidisciplinary team (MDT) that includes the parents and qualified professionals. The evaluation process must be completed no later than sixty calendar days after the district receives informed written parental consent and must include "protection-in-evaluation procedures". For example, tests and procedures used as part of the multidisciplinary evaluation process may not be racially or culturally biased. The evaluation process results in a written evaluation report that specifies a student's eligibility for special education based on the presence of a disability and the need for specially designed instruction.

### **Identification Activities**

Parents who think their child is exceptional may request, at any time, that the school district conduct a multidisciplinary evaluation. This request should be made in writing to the Building Principal or Director of Special Education. If a parent makes an oral request for a multidisciplinary evaluation, the school district shall provide the parent with a form for that written request.

Parents also have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation. The Somerset Area School District will provide parents, on request, information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained. Under certain circumstances, such an independent educational evaluation may be obtained at public expense.

### **Educational Placement**

The IEP team develops an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). This team includes at least one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment), at least one special education teacher, a representative of the local education agency, the student whenever appropriate, or beginning at age 14, and the parents. The IEP describes the child's present levels of educational performance, goals, objectives (when required), and the individualized programs and services the child will receive. For each child with a disability, beginning at age fourteen or younger when deemed appropriate, a statement of transition service needs will be included. In determining student placement, consideration will be given to ensure that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who are non-disabled. Classes and services that involve removal of children with disabilities from the regular environment will occur only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes, with the use of supplementary aids and services, cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

### **Services for Handicapped Students**

Students who are not eligible to receive special education programs and services may qualify as protected handicapped students and, therefore, be protected by other federal and state laws intended to prevent discrimination. The school district must insure that protected handicapped students have an equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for each individual student.

In compliance with state and federal law, the school district will provide to each protected handicapped student, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities, to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected

handicapped student, the child must be of school-age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in, or access to, an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for “protected handicapped students” may be distinct from those applicable to exceptional or thought –to-be exceptional students. The school district or the parent may initiate an evaluation if it is believed a student is a protected handicapped student.

For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services for protected handicapped student, parents should call your child’s Building Principal. (Please note that this is a regular education service and not one required by IDEA or Chapter 14.)

### **Confidentiality**

Each school district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding children with disabilities, children thought to have disabilities, protected handicapped students (if not protected by IDEA 2004 or Pennsylvania’s Special Education Regulations) and children who are identified as gifted, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws, policies, and regulations.

“Education records” means those records that are directly related to the student, including computer media and videotape, which are maintained by an educational agency or a party acting for the agency. “Educational Agency”, for purposes of this notice means the local school district, and/or the Appalachia Intermediate Unit. For all students, the educational agency maintains education records which include but are not limited to:

Personally Identifiable Information—Confidential information that includes, but is not limited to the student’s name, name of parents and other family members, the address of the student or student’s family, and personal information or personal characteristics which would make the student’s identity easily traceable.

Directory Information—Information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the student’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study (secondary students), participation in officially-recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and award received, and the name of the most previous educational agency or institution attended.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford to parents and to students over 18 years of age, certain rights with respect to the students' education records. They are:

Parents or students over 18 years of age have the right to inspect and review that student's education record. The school district will comply with the request to inspect and review education records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP or due process hearing, but in no case more than 45 days after the request has been made. Requests should be submitted in writing, indicating the records the parents wish to inspect, to the school principal or other appropriate school official. Parents have the right to a response from the school district to a reasonable request for explanations and interpretations of the records. Parents have the right to request copies of the records. While the district cannot charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information, it may charge a copying fee, as long as it does not effectively prevent the parents from exercising their right to inspect and review the records. Parents have the right to appoint a representative to inspect and review their child's records. If any education record contains information on more than one child, parents (or students over 18 years of age) have the right only to inspect and review the information relating to their specific child.

If parent (student over 18 years of age) thinks information in an education record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of the child, an amendment of the record may be requested. Requests should be made in writing and clearly identify the part of the record to be changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The school district will decide whether or not to amend the record and will notify the parents (student over 18 years of age), in writing, of its decision. If the school district refuses to amend a record, it will notify the parents (student over 18 years of age) of their right to a hearing to challenge the disputed information. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents (student over 18 years of age) when notified of the right to a hearing.

The school district will inform parents (student over 18 years of age) when personally identifiable information is no longer needed to provide educational services to a child. Such information must be destroyed at the request of the parents (student over 18 years of age). Parents (student over 18 years of age) have a right to receive a copy of the material to be destroyed; however, a permanent record of the student's name, address, and telephone number, his or her grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed may be maintained without time limitation. "Destruction" of records means physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers from information, so that the information is no longer personally identifiable. The

school district will provide, upon request, a listing of the types and locations of education records maintained, the school officials responsible for these records, and the school personnel authorized to see personally identifiable information. Such personnel receive training and instruction regarding confidentiality. The school district keeps a record of parties obtaining access to education records, including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

Parents (or student over 18 years of age) have the right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorized disclosure without consent. "Consent" means: the parent(s) (or student over 18 years of age) have/has been fully informed regarding the activity requiring consent, in the native language or other mode of communication; they understand and agree in writing to the activities, and, they understand that the consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. Information may be disclosed without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, Supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); person or company with whom the district 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/her professional responsibility. Directory information, as defined above, may be released without parent consent. Parents have the right to refuse to let an agency designate any or all of the above information as directory information. Upon request, the district discloses education records to officials of another school district, in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

Parent(s) (or student over 18 years of age) have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

### **Notice to Exiting Students Regarding Destruction of Special Education Records**

Special Education records, which have been collected by the Somerset Area School District related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or the provision of the Special Education in the district, must be maintained under state and federal law for a period of seven years after Special Education services have ended for the student. Special education services end when the student no longer is eligible for services, graduates, completes his or her educational program at age

21, or moves from the district. Student files will be destroyed ten years after the student exits the Somerset Area School District.

After ten (10) years, the records are no longer useful to the district, but they may be useful to the parent/guardian or former student in applying for Social Security benefits, rehabilitation services, college entrance, etc. The parent/guardian or eligible (adult) student, who reached 18 years of age, may request a copy of the records in writing or in person at the following address.

C/O Supervisor of Special Education  
Somerset Area School District  
645 S. Columbia Ave., Suite 130  
Somerset, PA 15501

**Complaints may be filed with:**

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20202-4605

**PUPIL SERVICES**

Guidance and Counseling

Guidance and counseling services are available to all students. Their services, which touch every phase of the student's development, include orientation, placement, testing and academic, vocational and personal counseling.

The function of guidance is to assist the student in obtaining the maximum benefit from the Jr. High School and the Sr. High School experience. Students are encouraged to take their problems to their counselors.

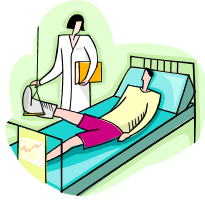
Records-Student

Records of all students are kept in the guidance office. The student records include such information as achievement test results, grades and attendance. Because the school is often asked to submit copies of these records as recommendations for students, a good school record is important.

The Somerset Area School District has adopted a policy statement on school records, which may be consulted as to the release of any information contained within these records.

## Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring may be available in the guidance office during study hall. Students should contact their guidance counselor to discuss the need for tutoring.



## School Nurse

School nursing services are available for all students in the Somerset Area Schools for routine health appraisals and emergency first aid. A pass is required to go to the nurse's office.

**Do not call your parent or guardian on your own to tell him/her to pick you up because you are sick. The nurse will determine your condition and contact your parent/guardian. This will result in an unexcused absence for the day.**

**Students without health insurance, who have healthcare needs, will be referred to the school nurse and school physician. Please contact your building's school nurse.**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The administration of student medications, either prescription or non-prescription, during school hours is strongly discouraged as there are safety concerns about students forgetting to take the medication, having a reaction to the medication, or other students taking the medications.

If a physician deems it **medically necessary** for a student to take medications, either prescription or non-prescription during the day, the **Authorization for Medication Form** (on reverse side) signed by the parent and completed by the physician, must be returned to the Health Office with the medication in a pharmacy labeled container. This includes inhalers and auto injectors. A new form is required for each medication change, dose change, time change and for each new school year. It is the responsibility of the student to report to the Health Office for his/her medication.

**Please remember your child may not receive his/her medication if these procedures are not followed.**

Please feel free to contact the school nurse if you have any concerns regarding this matter. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Authorization for Prescription or Non-Prescription Medications to be taken during school hours.**

- This form must be submitted for each medication, both prescription and non-prescription.
  - Medication must be in a container and labeled by the pharmacy as follows:
    - Student Name
    - Date of Prescription
    - Name and Dosage of Medication
    - Time/Frequency of Medication
    - Physician Name
    - Name and Number of Pharmacy
  - Parents must notify school personnel in writing if a medication is discontinued.
  - A new form must be submitted for any dosage or time change
  - A new form must be submitted at the beginning of each school year for medications taken during school hours.
  - It is the responsibility of the student to report to the office to receive medication
- \* Failure to follow the above, prescribed procedures will result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the administration.**

Outdoor Activities

During the school year there may be activities that take place outside the building. If students are unable to tolerate extended exposure to the elements they have the option to stay inside the building. Please communicate any issues to the teacher involved and dress appropriately. Sunscreen is available for use, if needed.

Homebound Services

Homebound instruction is available when students are ill at home or the hospital, for extended periods. When the instruction is necessary, the parent should contact your child's respective office. Medical or psychological approvals are necessary for this service.

### Speech Correction

Speech correction services are provided under the direction of Intermediate Unit 08. Referrals should be made through the Director of Special Education.

### School Psychologist

The School Psychologist is available to administer educational evaluations to assist in planning students educational programs. For these services, contact the Director of Special Programs.

### Social Worker

A Licensed Clinical Social Worker is available in the District to meet with students when the District identifies a situation as an emergency/crisis and for students who require more extensive counseling. These services are provided through the Guidance Office.

### Homeless Student Assistance

The McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act is a federal law that ensures immediate enrollment, timely and accurate identification and educational stability for homeless children and youth. McKinney- Vento provides federal funding to states for the purpose of supporting district programs that serve homeless students. When meeting the definition of homeless or unaccompanied youth, the student may qualify for services to support the student educational placement. These services are provided through the school's homeless liaison/school social worker in the High School Guidance Office. Services/rights include free and appropriate education, immediate enrollment or continuation of schooling in their school of origin (if in the student's best interest), transportation possibilities, free lunches, health/medical referrals, graduation/retention assistance, and linking to extra-curricular and family engagement opportunities.

### The McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (per Title IX, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act) defines homeless as follows:

The term "homeless children and youths"—

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and (B) includes—

(i) 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; or are abandoned in hospitals;\*

(ii) 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 (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));

(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and  
(iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

\*Per Title IX, Part A of Every Student Succeeds Act, "awaiting foster care placement" was removed from the definition of homeless on December 10, 2016.

Unaccompanied youth means a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. This includes youth who have run away from home; been abandoned or forced out of the home by a parent, guardian or other caretaker; or separated from a parent or guardian for any other reason.

Dispute Resolution and procedural safeguards, as well as additional information, can be found at: <https://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/Homeless%20Education/Pages/default.aspx>

Our district policy can be referenced at <https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/some/Board.nsf/Public#>

#### Community Resources

Next Step Center is a homeless shelter, located in Somerset. The shelter is a fully operational emergency shelter, suitable for children and special needs guests. Next Step is a referral shelter, therefore please contact the Tableland Services/Community Action Partnership mentioned below. [www.nextstepcenter.org](http://www.nextstepcenter.org)

The Salvation Army, located at 334 W. Main St., Suite 100, Somerset, provides support to area families through clothing assistance, fuel counseling/utility assistance, rental assistance, personal growth workshops, emergency food/holiday programs and employment assistance. 814-445-9232

Somerset County Assistance Office, located at 164 Staybrook St., Somerset, is the county office of DPW offering assistance in applications for nutrition, medical coverage, cash and assistance, family planning and child care services, and school meals. Contact 1-800-248-1607.  
<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/findfacilsandlocs/countyassistanceofficecontactinformation/index.htm>

Somerset County Mobile Food Bank is a free food distribution intended to bring fresh produce and other items to those in Somerset County who have a limited income and a lack of or limited transportation. Distribution is limited to one site and one produce Saturday per household per month. Contact 814-443-6574 (extension 3) to find distribution days. [www.scmfb.org](http://www.scmfb.org)

Somerset Food Pantry is operated within the Trinity Lutheran Church, located at 918 Tayman Ave., Somerset. It is open 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. every Wednesday. Please bring financial/income information.

Tableland Services, INC./Community Action Partnership for Somerset County provides homeless and housing services to low income families currently homeless or facing eviction/mortgage foreclosure. Additionally, Tableland Services provides emergency food and shelter assistance, weatherization support to help reduce heating/cooling and utility costs, utility assistance, LIHEAP, employment/work ready programs, transportation services and early childhood education. Located at 535 East main St., Somerset, PA. 814-445-9628  
[www.capfsc.org](http://www.capfsc.org)

Women's Help Center, located at 809 Napoleon Street, Johnstown, PA., provides emergency shelter and services for women and children who are fleeing violence in their home. 24 Hour Hotline: (814) 536-5361 [www.womenshelpcenter.org/services](http://www.womenshelpcenter.org/services)



### **Somerset Eligibility Policy**

At the time of the adoption of this policy, under PIAA eligibility rules, a student must be passing at least 4.0 credit subjects or the equivalent. Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of the grading period, shall be reported on a weekly basis, and be filed in the Principal's office.

**The Somerset Area School District special eligibility rules are as follows:**

**A. As of the date of any weekly grade report:**

- 1) A student shall not be failing more than 1 course (regardless of its credit value).
- 2) A student recording 2 failing courses (regardless of the credit value of the courses) on any grade report, will be placed on athletic and extracurricular probation for 1 week. If the student is not academically eligible at the end of the 1-week probation period, the student will be immediately ineligible until a weekly grade report indicates compliance with academic eligibility requirements.
- 3) A student recording 3 failing courses (regardless of the credit value of the courses) on any grade report will be immediately ineligible until a weekly grade report indicates compliance with academic eligibility requirements.

**B. As of the end of any 9-week grading period**, a student attaining a failing grade in 2 courses (regardless of the credit value of the courses), will be academically ineligible for 2 weeks following the date the report card is issued.

\*In the event PIAA enacts a more stringent policy on academic eligibility than the one set forth herein, then the PIAA eligibility policy shall prevail.

**SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Guidelines for Student Participation in Extra-Curricular / Co-Curricular Activities**

**Introduction:**

The Somerset Area School District offers a wide variety of extra-curricular and co-curricular opportunities that lend support to the total educational development of each participant. These activities are viewed, recognized, and managed as extensions to the classroom. The Somerset Area School District recognizes interscholastic, extra-curricular, and co-curricular activity participation as privileges, and not rights and that student participation in all such activities is strictly voluntary. The Somerset Area School District also believes that students who participate in these activities are representatives of the school district, examined by the public, become role models for children, as well as peers, and are special representatives of the school district and community. Therefore, in order to be a participant in any such activity, each member must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Maintain a full schedule of academic courses which fulfill all curriculum requirements including those courses officially approved as \*Graduation Requirements for the attainment of a Somerset Area School District Graduation Diploma.
- Successfully complete all required course work and fulfill all the requirements of each course as assigned by each individual teacher of record. All teachers of record will be properly content certified for each course taught within the guidelines of the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- Be accounted in daily attendance reports to a standard as stringent as the District approved Attendance Policy.
- Participate in the District's Random Drug Testing and Search Policy.
- Student athletes who participate in interscholastic sports must maintain, on a weekly basis, the minimum passing grade/credit requirement as per Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) regulations. Interscholastic sport participants must also adhere to all requirements of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) that include guidelines for age and semester eligibility.
- Adhere to a standard as stringent as those listed in all adopted school district policies including, but not limited to the Code of Student Conduct, the Drug /Alcohol and Search Policy, and the requirements listed in the student handbook.
- Adhere to the requirements of all other appropriate governing bodies relevant to each activity.

## **Interscholastic and Extra-curricular Eligibility**

"A student must be passing at least 4.0 credit subjects or the equivalent. Eligibility shall be cumulative from the beginning of a grading period, shall be reported on a weekly basis and shall be filed in the Principal's office."  
(Wording same as PIAA handbook)

In addition, a student shall not be failing more than 1 course. If a student fails a second course they will be put on athletic and extracurricular probation for 1 week.

A student recording 3 failing courses will be immediately ineligible until such time as the report indicates 1 or 0 failing courses.

After 1 week of athletic and extracurricular probation, a student will be prohibited from practicing or competing if the failure report has not been reduced to one failing grade. The student will remain ineligible until the point in time when the failure report is reduced to 1 or 0 failing courses.

Two or more failing courses at the end of a marking period will cause the student-athlete to be immediately ineligible for 2 weeks from the date of the report card issue.

## **CLASS STANDING**

In order for a Somerset Area High School student to maintain a reasonable pace in acquiring the necessary credits for graduation, the following credit totals must be reached to proceed to the next grade level.

Sophomore - 6

Junior - 13.5 or passed at least 1 Keystone Exam.

Senior - 16

## **Graduation Requirements**

### **Course Completion**

A student must meet the following requirements to graduate from the Somerset Area School District:

- A. Successful completion of all requirements through grade 8
- B. Passing a minimum of 24 credits in grades 9 through 12, including the following required courses:

| Course                   | Credits                    | Notes  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| English                  | 4                          |  |
| Social Studies           | 4<br>(3 for SCTC students) | See requirements, below.   |
| Science                  | 3                          | Must be separate courses   |
| Mathematics              | 3                          |  |
| Financial Literacy       | 1/4                        |  |
| Health (levels 9 & 11)   | 1/2                        |  |
| Drivers Education        | 1/4                        |  |
| Physical Education       | Annual                     | One quarter per year   |
| SAT Math and Reading     | 1/2                        | Taken during sophomore and/or junior year; based on highest level of math; For honors and college prep students in math and ELA only |
| Freshman Academy Courses | ½ - 1                      | Required during 9 <sup>th</sup> grade  |
| Electives                | Varies                     | Enough to complete 24 credits; SCTC students receive 4 credits/year for work at SCTC   |

**Per ACT 86 of 2016**, students may substitute up to one credit of computer science towards a math or science graduation credit. Eligible courses include AP Computer Science (1 credit), Coding-STEM (½ credit), Coding-Graphics (½ credit), Intro to Robotics (½ credit), Robotics 2 (½ credit), and Advanced Robotics (½ credit), CADD I (1 credit), CADD II (1 credit), Accounting I, and Accounting II.

### **Social Studies:**

With the exception of SCTC students, Somerset Area School District students are required to earn 4 credits for graduation; however, 3.5 credits will be required courses. They are as follows:

1. Civics: 1 credit
2. World History: 1 credit
3. American History: 1 credit
4. Government: ½ credit
5. The remaining ½ credit is earned by selecting and passing elective courses offered within the Social Studies Department. These are:
  - A. Criminal Justice (grades 10-12)
  - B. American History through Film
  - C. Hometown History (grades 10-12)

**College Preparatory (CP)** social studies students must choose one of the following dual enrolled courses as their ½ credit elective:

1. CP Psychology
2. CP Sociology
3. CP Economics

*SCTC students* will be required to complete 3 credits for graduation. *SCTC students'* required courses are as follows:

1. Civics (1 credit)
2. American History (1 Credit)
3. Government (½ credit)
4. Any social studies elective course worth ½ credit

In addition to minimum graduation requirements, students who wish to prepare for certain career tracks are recommended to include specific courses among their electives as follows:

**College Preparatory** – Should take the college preparatory level courses in English and social studies, mathematics at least through Algebra II, Lab Biology, Chemistry, a three year sequence of a foreign language, and at least one literature course. Additional courses in science, mathematics, foreign language, and computer are recommended to the limit that the student's ability and education goals dictate.

**Agricultural Education** – Must complete a Supervised Agricultural Experience Project each year, Agriscience I, II, III, IV. An agricultural Co-op experience is also available during your senior year.

**Career/Technology** – Career and Technology students will attend the Somerset County Technology Center for one-half day and Somerset Area High School one-half day all year. Students are encouraged to take a strong academic curriculum to the limits of the student's ability and as career goals dictate.

All students are encouraged to take as full and as challenging coursework as possible to gain the most from the broad range of courses available to them. The goal should be to graduate with as solid a foundation as possible while providing as many options as is reasonable for the future.

Along with the required courses for graduation and the courses recommended for specific tracks, students are encouraged to take electives from as many different disciplines as possible, including those already mentioned as well as art, music, family and consumer science, and industrial arts.

### **COLLEGE CREDIT**

Somerset Area Senior High School Students may acquire college credit while they are still in high school. This credit can be obtained in several ways.

Students who take the Advanced Placement classes may receive college credit by scoring well on the Advanced Placement examinations given each spring. Registration for the exams begins in February each year when teachers announce the procedure to do so.

By paying a fee to the appropriate college, students can receive credit from various colleges and universities that have articulation agreements with the school district. Students interested in scheduling these courses should consult with their guidance counselor prior to the scheduling process. Courses available for college credit may be obtained in the guidance office.

High school credit will be granted for college classes taken during high school only under the following circumstances:

1. Credit will be given for those college level classes taught during the school day at the senior high school by Somerset Senior High School Faculty.
2. College credit will be given for those college level courses that are taken as make-up courses for required classes failed at Somerset Senior High School. To receive credit for make-up classes, the student must obtain approval for such from the senior high school principal prior to registering for the class.
3. In other instances, students with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher at Somerset Area Senior High school may take college level classes during school hours if they can be scheduled in such a manner as not to interfere with the student's senior high school curriculum. All courses must meet the approval of the senior high school principal. Those classes will not, however, be counted in any way toward the student's graduation credits, class rank, or grade point average.

When a student takes a college class as a high school make-up course or for credit to be transferred to another post-secondary school, it is the student's responsibility to request from the college any transcripts necessary to get appropriate credit either from the high school or the post-secondary school involved.

### **INDEPENDENT STUDY CREDIT**

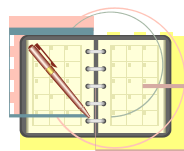
Students may receive one credit in either their junior or senior year for an independent study project which demonstrates the student's ability to apply, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and communicate significant knowledge and

understanding of a special interest area and which meets the following criteria:

1. The student must acquire a faculty advisor who will mentor the student and to assure that the student follows all the requirements to complete the project.
2. The student, with the approval of the advisor, chooses the project.
3. The student will acquire a mentor who will assist with the content area of the project.
4. The student must meet with the advisor at least three times per year until the project is completed.
5. The student must meet with the mentor at least four times per year until the project is completed.
6. Projects must be completed no later than the end of the first semester in the senior year.
7. Projects will require a minimum time investment of sixty (60) logged hours.
8. All projects will include at least the following components: a written report of at least five pages, typewritten, double-spaced, font no larger than 10; an oral report 5-15 minutes in length presented to the evaluation team; a tangible product such as an art work, a video, a piece of furniture, a short story, etc.; student log; an evaluation completed by a team of at least three people including the student's faculty advisor.

Upon successful completion of the project with a grade of "C" or better the student will receive one elective credit. The project will be graded and used in class rank and GPA calculations.

For more information and /or an application to start an independent study project, see your guidance counselor.



### **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Students are **NOT** permitted to change their schedules after the 10<sup>th</sup> day of class.

Students will **not** be permitted to withdraw from the SCTC during the school year.



## **GRADES**

Grades will be posted on report cards based on percentage.

I – represents work not completed. Students must make arrangements to complete missed assignments within one week of their return from absences.

Teacher discretion may be used as to an extension of time limits in which to complete these assignments.

1. The student must achieve an average of 60% during the four marking periods to pass a class for the year.
2. Students in 6, 7 & 8<sup>th</sup> grade who failed 2 or more credits worth of courses will not pass to the next grade level.

## **REPORT CARDS**



The Somerset Junior and Senior High School uses nine-week grading periods for all subjects. Student progress in the areas of academics and attendance will be indicated on the Report Card.

Distribution of report cards will occur as soon as possible after the end of the grading period.

Students and parents are urged to contact counselors regarding any grade questions; they are also reminded that tutoring is available through the tutoring program described in another section of this handbook.

Final report cards will be mailed home.

## HONOR ROLL

The Honor Roll will be computed at the end of each grading period.

Students with a grade point average of the below standards will qualify:

- 95.0 – 100           = **Highest Honors status**
- 90.0 – 94.999       = **High Honors status**
- 85.0 – 89.999       = **Honor status**

### Grade Point Average (G.P.A.)

- GPA Calculations will be based on percentage
- College Preparatory weighting = 2 points
- Honors weighting = 4 points
- AP weighting = 8 points
- No college prep weighting
- Weighting is in place every nine weeks
- Weighting goes towards honor roll and GPA but does not appear on the report card grade
- Class Rank = 1, 2, Top 5 %, Top 10%, Top 20%, Top 30%, etc

### Grading Example

| <u>Course</u> | <u>Percent</u> | <u>Yearly Credit Value</u> | <u>Grade Pts</u> | <u>Weight</u> | <u>Grade Pts + Weight</u> |
|---------------|----------------|----------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| AP Biology    | 98             | 1.5                        | 147              | 8             | 155                       |
| AP US Hist.   | 86             | 1                          | 86               | 8             | 94                        |
| Hon ELA 11    | 91             | 1                          | 91               | 4             | 95                        |
| Hon Calc      | 79             | 1                          | 79               | 4             | 83                        |
| PE            | 89             | 0.5                        | 44.5             | 0             | 44.5                      |
| Ag. Science   | 96             | 1                          | 96               | 0             | 96                        |
| CADD II       | 93             | 1                          | 93               | 0             | 93                        |
| Health        | 79             | <u>0.5</u>                 | 39.5             | 0             | <u>39.5</u>               |
|               |                | 7.5                        |                  |               | 700                       |
|               |                |                            | Total Pts=       | 700           |                           |
|               |                |                            | Percent =        | 93.33333      |                           |

1. Grade points are equal to the percent times the yearly credit value
2. Add the weighting to the grade points
3. Total the grade points and weight from each class
4. Total the yearly credit value
5. Divide the grade points and weight by the total credits to get the percentage grade point average.

## **HOMWORK POLICY**

### **Homework is:**

Any work planned by the teacher for independent completion outside the classroom for the purpose of preparation, reinforcement, or remediation of the education activities of the student.

### Philosophy

#### **We believe:**

1. Assigning homework is an acceptable practice, beneficial at all levels, and should be an integral part of the total education of the student.
2. Homework should be based on student needs, capabilities, and/or interests.
3. Each teacher, student, and parent has a responsibility for insuring the success of homework assignments.

### Objectives

#### **Homework should:**

1. Reinforce learning through the practice, application, integration, and/or extension of knowledge and skills.
2. Develop study skills, work habits, and a sense of personal responsibility so that the student may become an independent learner.
3. Be a natural outgrowth of classroom activities.

### Responsibilities of Students

#### **Students should:**

1. Understand what the assignment is, how it is to be completed, and when it is due.
2. Budget time to complete all assignments.
3. Complete the assignments.
4. Be prepared to answer questions based on homework.
5. Make immediate arrangements with the teacher to make up missed assignments.

## Responsibilities of Parents

### **Parents should:**

1. Provide the work atmosphere conducive to, and time necessary for, completion of assignments.
2. Encourage and seek to motivate the student to fulfill his responsibilities as outlined under Student Responsibilities.
3. Contact the school regarding homework problems.

### \*\*Policy Enforcement Procedures

### **When homework is not completed we make the following suggestions:**

1. Discuss the problem with the student.
2. Accept late homework for partial credit at the discretion of the teacher.
3. Restrict or deny activities, and privileges.
4. Communicate the problem with parents.
5. Refer to guidance for counseling.
6. Reduce the over-all grade for the grading period for assignments not completed.
7. Assign detention after sufficient warning or ineffective use of other alternatives. Attempt other alternatives first.

### **If the above listed suggestions fail to resolve the problem in the case of blatant offenders, the following procedures may be implemented.**

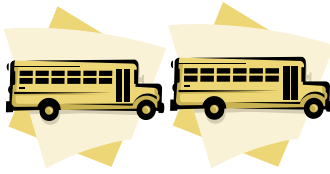
1. Staffing conference or Instructional Support Team referral.
2. Referral to the building principal.
3. Grade or incomplete for the course.

\*\*Appropriate enforcement procedures may vary according to grade level.

## **THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS**

The Somerset Area School District is responsible for students...

1. During the instructional hours of the school day in school.
2. During the instructional hours of the school day on school district property.
3. On school district vehicles (owned, rented, leased, or contracted).
4. At school district events held before, during, or after school that are directly observed and supervised by school district staff.



## **TRANSPORTATION POLICIES**

### **STUDENT DRIVERS**

Properly licensed junior and senior students may drive their personal automobiles or other motorized vehicles for transportation to and from school only when they conform to all traffic laws and school regulations in doing so. Automobiles and other motorized vehicles must be parked in the designated student parking area.

The principal is authorized to suspend the driving privileges of students and/or assign detention if they do not conform to traffic laws, school regulations, and safe driving practices while on the school grounds, or who park in other than the designated student parking area. Student automobiles will be towed at the driver's expense if they are parked in a non-student area.

Student automobiles may not be parked in any faculty parking lots between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

A limited number of parking spaces are available in the student parking lot. The parking permits are sold for \$25 each and are non-refundable. Parking at the fieldhouse is available for free pending application and approval.

All cars must be registered and have an identification sticker in order to park on school grounds. Unregistered vehicles and vehicles without a permit will be towed away at the owner's expense. Students must get prior administrative approval to park non-permit vehicles.

Registration for parking will be on a first come - first served basis. Any student with outstanding detention or suspension from the previous school year will not be eligible for a parking permit for the entire current school year.

Upon the 9<sup>th</sup> tardy, a student will have driving privileges suspended.

Use or distribution of reproduced permits will result in loss of driving privileges and/or disciplinary action.

Accidents occurring on school property will not be investigated by the administration, but they will assist in exchange of information if/when necessary.

**Driving stickers are nontransferable and non-reproducible.** Anyone involved in the transference of a driving permit or the use/distribution of reproduced permits will lose driving privileges for the remainder of the school year and will be subject to disciplinary action. If you have a driving permit, it must be placed on the back of the rearview mirror.

The fee for parking is \$25.00 per car/per identification sticker.

A monitor will be on duty in the parking lot from 7:00 a.m. - 7:38 a.m. during days that school is in session.

**Students on revised schedules (early college, work release and co-op) will lose driving privileges and will be required to resume a normal full-day schedule at the home school for excessive truancy, tardiness, and absence.**

### Student Conduct on School Buses

Parents/guardians of students maintain the responsibility of child supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day.

Once a child boards the bus – and only at that time – does he or she become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day.

In view of the fact that a bus is an extension of the classroom, the Somerset School Board shall require children to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior.

#### **I. Guidelines**

- A. Students are required to be at their bus stop 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.
- B. The law prohibits bus drivers from changing bus stop locations without the approval of the school district administration.
- C. The bus driver is not permitted to make unscheduled stops. This includes dropping students off within the borough for after-school jobs.

- D. Students are not permitted to change their assigned stops or buses without written permission from the parent and approval from the Transportation Department.
- E. Possession and/or use of tobacco on school buses is illegal. Citations will be issued the same as if the student was using on school property.
- F. Drinking soda and eating food or candy are not permitted on the buses. Suspension of riding privileges will result if the student is caught doing either of these two things.
- G. Rules for bus behavior are the same as those for behavior inside the school and classroom.
- H. Bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Students who fail to conduct themselves respectfully will lose bus privileges and transportation will become the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

## **II. Discipline**

In cases when a child does not conduct himself properly on a bus, the following procedures shall be followed:

- A. On the first abuse of privileges, the Supervisor of Transportation shall:
  - 1. Contact the parent and give verbal explanation of the infraction.
  - 2. Follow the verbal communication with a written confirmation. Copies of the write-up will go to the principal.
  - 3. The student's bus privileges may be suspended one to three days, depending upon the severity of the problem.
- B. On the second offense, the Supervisor of Transportation shall:
  - 1. Contact the parent and give a verbal explanation of the infraction.
  - 2. Follow the verbal communication with a written confirmation. Copies of the write-up will go to the principal.
  - 3. The student's bus privileges may be suspended for a maximum period of two weeks, depending upon the severity of the problem.
- C. On the third offense, the Supervisor of Transportation shall:
  - 1. Contact the parent and give a verbal explanation of the infraction.
  - 2. Follow the verbal communication with a written confirmation. Copies of the write-up will go to the principal.
  - 3. The student's bus privileges may be suspended for the remainder of the school year, depending upon the severity of the problem.

If property is destroyed, the student is required to make payment within two weeks of notification or his bus privileges will be suspended until payment is received.

**Certain, severe bus behavior incidents can result in temporary or permanent suspension from the bus without prior disciplinary measures, at the discretion of the district personnel.**

### **III. Bus Transportation Policy**

- Each parent/guardian must confirm a Monday through Friday schedule before the start of the school year or at the time of enrollment. Parents/guardians must indicate, in writing, morning and afternoon bus stops for their children for each day of the week. These assigned stops will remain in place for the entire school year with the following exceptions:
  1. Residence change
  2. Permanent childcare arrangements necessitate a change in bus stops
  3. A change in legal custody necessitates a bus stop reassignment
- Bus stop reassignment requests must be submitted to the Director of Transportation/Student Services Office at least three school days prior to the expected reassignment.
- No day-to-day “bus passes” will be issued and no day-to-day bus stop reassignments will be approved.
- In emergency situations (such as medical emergencies that prevent an adult from being home to receive the student at the bus stop), parents must notify the school prior to 12:00 noon and arrange for the child to be picked up at the school by 2:45 PM. It is preferable that the parent/guardian prepare for emergency situations in advance, by having back-up plans for proper adult supervision at the bus stop.

### **Video/Audio Monitors on School Buses**

#### **Purpose:**

The Board of School Directors and school officials recognize that undesirable behavior and serious misconduct on a school bus not only makes it uncomfortable for the driver and fellow passengers but also jeopardizes the safety and well-being of all. Therefore, video/audio-monitoring cameras **may** be used as an aid in discouraging student misconduct. This policy includes: athletic, band, field trip, and any other school related activity.

**Authority:**

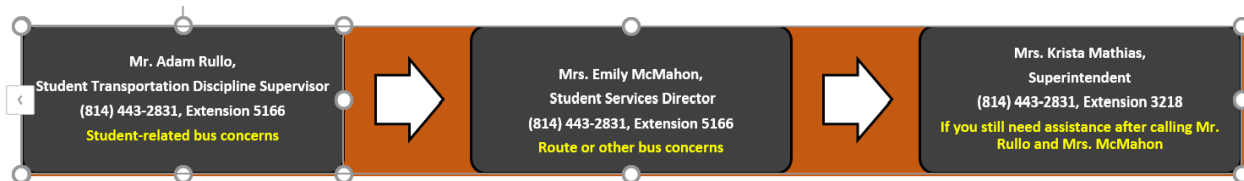
Once a student boards the school bus he or she becomes the responsibility of the district. Such responsibility of the district shall end when the child is delivered to an approved bus stop at the close of the school day. In view of the fact that the school bus is an extension of the classroom, the Somerset School Board shall require students to conduct themselves on the school bus in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior. The school bus driver is responsible for the safety and welfare of each passenger while the bus is in transit. Also, the responsibility for maintaining discipline on the school bus begins with the bus driver. The use of video/audio cameras on a school bus as an aid to monitor student behavior does not replace The School Bus Discipline Policy or the authority and responsibility of the bus driver or school officials to take appropriate action regarding misconduct.

The Board hereby delegates authority to the contractor to monitor the behavior of students riding on school buses and to assist in administering the discipline and video/audio policies.

**GUIDELINES:**

- 1.** The Bus Incident Report shall remain the primary tool for use by the driver in reporting misconduct that cannot be corrected by less formal means such as assignment of seats or verbal warnings.
- 2.** The contractor will install video camera boxes on all regular route buses. Notices stating the presence of video/audio monitoring equipment will be placed on all buses. Parents of Somerset Area School District students are hereby notified that video/audio surveillance may be utilized on buses.
- 3.** The taping on school buses shall be video and audio. The district is not responsible for the malfunctions of audio/video recordings.
- 4. To protect student privacy,** parents/guardians will not be given the opportunity to review bus recordings unless criminal charges are filed as a result of the child's conduct. The recordings become the property of the appropriate law enforcement agency and parents should request to view the recording from that agency.
- 5.** Bus recordings will be stored at the contractor's office for a period of ten (10) days. If no incidents are reported in ten (10) days, the tapes will be recycled. The contractor and/or the Director of Transportation shall periodically review videotapes randomly selected to ensure proper school bus conduct. If incidents are reported to the administrative staff, or if incidents are viewed during random selection, the videotapes are to be kept until final resolution and time for appeals. The district will provide the tapes for use by the Contractor. The tapes will remain the property of the District.

For information on student bus discipline matters, please contact Mr. Adam Rullo at (814) 443-2831, extension 5166. For information on bus routes or other bus-related concerns, please contact Mrs. Emily McMahon at the same number and extension. Unresolved transportation concerns can be directed to the Superintendent's office.



### **Conclusion:**

It is the continuing goal of the Somerset Area School District to ensure the safest possible student transportation system. Incidents, which may seem insignificant or meaningless in other settings, can create a serious hazard on the school bus. The driver response to such an incident – relative to a split second of distraction – can have disastrous results. The use of the video/audio camera system is designed to assist in maintaining a safe environment, which also encourages appropriate student conduct. A student's use of bus transportation provided by the district will be considered as the relinquishment of any expectation of privacy in regards to the use of the video/audio monitoring camera system.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- A. Students who have an excused absence from school due to illness must make up work within one week following their absence. The make-up period may be extended in cases of prolonged illness at the subject teacher's discretion. Tests scheduled on the return day are expected to be taken unless otherwise communicated by the classroom teacher.
- B. Students must inform the office immediately if changes in family status (guardianship, address, telephone number) occur during the school year.
- C. PIAA requires all participants in athletics and cheerleading to have a physical examination before they begin a specific sport activity.
- D. To be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities students must arrive at school by 10:00 am.
- E. Pennsylvania law requires high schools to provide armed forces recruiters access to lists of senior students. Students must be notified of the

requirements of this law and given 21 days to request in writing to be excluded from the list. Any parent or student, who wishes to have his or her name excluded for this list, should notify, in writing, the guidance office.

### WORK PERMITS

Minors under 18 years of age are required by law to have a work permit in order to be employed either part or full time. Exception - Work permits are no longer required for those 17-year-old minors who have graduated from a regularly accredited high school or who have withdrawn from school and are no longer on the active school roll because they have attained their academic potential.

In order to obtain a work permit, the following procedure must be followed:

1. Obtain an application for a workers permit in the Sr. High Office.
2. Apply to the office for an application; bring your birth certificate, baptismal certificate, or passport as proof of age.
3. Complete the application.
4. Return the application to the office; you will be issued the work permit which the applicant must sign in the presence of the issuing officer.

### Books/Calculators

A student is responsible for all books and/or calculators assigned to him/her. Should the item become lost or disfigured, the student who was assigned the item will be held responsible for the cost of the item.

### Bringing Money to School

**The school does not wish to see students experience problems involving theft of money therefore the easiest way to avoid problems is to not bring large amounts of money to school unless necessary.**

If circumstances require the bringing of large amounts of money to school, students are urged to make their payment(s) immediately upon arrival to school. This will eliminate the necessity of carrying the money for extended periods of time. When payment cannot be made quickly, the student is urged to ask the office to hold the money until payment is made.

### Bringing Valuables to School

When valuable personal items are brought to school for school-related purposes, the student is urged to bring them to the attention of the homeroom teacher or office. Attempts will be made to provide secure storage for the

items until the student returns it to home. Students should avoid bringing valuables to school. **Please note that the administration will not investigate theft of valuables or money, as students are urged not to bring valuable objects or money to school!!**

**Skateboards are not permitted on school property.**



### Cafeteria Procedures

The cafeteria supervisors are responsible for overseeing all activities that occur during the lunch period. Responsibilities include discipline, calling students to lunch, dismissing lunch tables, assisting students with problems during lunch, etc. Student responsibilities include conducting themselves in an orderly manner, following instructions, maintaining a clean cafeteria, and keeping noise to a minimum.

**It is not permissible for students to have food items from restaurants or convenience stores delivered for lunch.**



### Junior and Senior High School Dance Regulations

The following dance regulations are in effect for all **Junior and Senior High School** Sponsored Dances: Dances are restricted to students of Somerset Junior High School, Senior High School. Junior High School dances will be for Somerset students in grades 6-8 only. The Senior High School dances are for students in grades 10-12. Ninth (9<sup>th</sup>) graders may attend as guests of students in grades 10 – 12 only and only one guest is permitted per student. Guest attendance is subject to approval from the administration. A Guest must complete a "Guest Dance" form and have their current school administration approve their request. Additionally, the guest must have a parent/guardian signature to complete the dance form. Any guest that does not attend a high school must provide a copy of their driver's license. A "clear" background

check may be requested from the guest at the administration's discretion. Dances are limited to students under the age of 21.

**All detention/suspension must be completed prior to the event.**

**Statement:** Dances during the school year are held for the enjoyment of students enrolled and attending the Somerset Junior and Senior High School on a full time basis only. Students enrolled and attending Alternative Educational Programs are not eligible to attend dances, unless pre-approved by administration.

The following Dance Regulations are in effect for all **Junior and Senior High School** Sponsored Dances:

1. The Code of Student Conduct and Behavior is applicable as with any extracurricular activity.
2. The Dress Code as outlined in The Code of Student Conduct and Behavior will be strictly enforced.
3. Outside guests are not permitted to attend dances unless pre-approval is attained from the building principal.
4. Anyone found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.
5. No one will be admitted after ½ hour of the start of the dance unless accompanied by a parent or guardian or with prior administrative approval.
6. No one is permitted to leave before the dance is over unless they are picked up by a parent or guardian; however, administrators may release students early to accommodate junior driver's license regulations.
7. Any student owing any amount of detention/suspension time will not be permitted to attend the dance.
8. Student must be in attendance by 10:00 AM on the day of the dance in order to be permitted to attend the dance.

Debts Owed by Students to the School

All student debts or bills must be cleared prior to the student's withdrawal or leaving for summer vacation. No transcripts, promotions, or student scheduling will be provided until clearance of bills is made.

## Somerset Area Junior/Senior High Bullying Response Rubric

**Definition of Unwanted Teasing:** To disturb or annoy by persistent irritating or provoking especially in a petty or mischievous way.

**Definition of Bullying:** A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending him or herself.

1. Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.
2. Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
3. Bullying involves an imbalance of power or strength.

Nothing in the Somerset Area School District's bullying policy or this document prevents a parent/guardian from taking legal action against a student who is proven to bully another person. Further, any conduct proscribed by the Criminal Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any local ordinance, occurring while a student is under the jurisdiction of the school or which is determined to be detrimental to the operation of the school may be considered grounds for expulsion or suspension.

| What should a student do if he or she is a victim of unwanted teasing or bullying?   |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Person Being Teased or Bullied</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: Ask the person to stop the unwanted behavior</li> <li>2: Tell a trusted adult in a timely fashion. (teachers, staff member, principal and/or guidance counselor)</li> <li>3: Write down what happened with a time and location</li> <li>4. If the adult you told doesn't believe you or is unable to stop the behavior, tell another trusted adult immediately</li> </ol> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Bystander</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1: Don't join in the teasing or bullying; don't laugh or make it worse for the person being teased.</li> <li>2: Support the student being teased or bullied.</li> <li>3: Ask the person doing the teasing or bullying to stop the unwanted behavior if that feels safe.</li> <li>4: Tell a trusted adult about the teasing or bullying and/or help the person being teased go tell a trusted adult.</li> </ol> |   |
| <p><b>*If the unwanted teasing/bullying is an immediate threat to the student's safety it should be reported to the Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students and/or Guidance Counselor immediately.</b></p>  |   |   |
| Unwanted Teasing   |   |   |
| Student Misconduct   | Teacher Procedures  | Discipline Response   |
| <p>Name calling<br/>Making fun<br/>Talking negatively about a classmate<br/>Starting rumors<br/>Mocking<br/>Other behaviors that can be connected to teasing.</p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Stop behavior with appropriate classroom management techniques.</li> <li>2. Support the student being teased.</li> <li>3. Name inappropriate behavior.</li> <li>4. Explain why the behavior is not acceptable as related to the expectation of respect.</li> <li>5. Contact assistant principal/dean of students.</li> </ol>  | <p>Follow progressive discipline:<br/><b>First Offense</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Verbal warning</li> <li>2. Document incident</li> <li>3. Victim meets with counselor or social worker if needed</li> </ol> <p><b>Second Offense</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Detention</li> <li>2. Document incident and notify both parents.</li> <li>3. Victim meets with counselor or social worker if needed.</li> <li>4. Refer offender for counseling if needed.</li> </ol> <p><b>Third Offense</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administrator issues consequence</li> <li>2. Document and notify both parents</li> <li>3. Victim meets with counselor or social worker if needed</li> <li>4. Contact outside agency that is counseling offender</li> </ol> <p><b>Any further incidents will require administrative action as outlined in the district's Bullying Policy</b></p> |

| <b>Bullying</b>   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Student Misconduct</b>   | <b>Administrative Procedures</b>  | <b>Discipline Response</b>   |
| <p><b>Continuation of Unwanted Teasing Behaviors</b></p> <p><b>Verbal /Written Bullying:</b> Teasing, name calling, insulting remarks, verbal harassment, written, cyberbullying, and other forms of negative communication.</p> <p><b>Social/Relational Bullying:</b> Purposeful exclusion, gossiping, spreading or starting rumors, damaging reputations, and loss of friendships for social status (includes social media).</p> <p><b>Physical Bullying:</b> overt bodily acts to gain power over peers. Can include kicking, punching, hitting or other physical attacks.</p>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Talk with the student.</li> <li>2. Individually talk with the victims, bystanders, and others.</li> <li>3. Consult with teachers, guidance counselor, and social worker.</li> <li>4. Contact parents.</li> <li>5. Document</li> </ol> | <p><u>Follow progressive discipline</u></p> <p><b>First Offense</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Verbal warning</li> <li>2. Document incident</li> <li>3. Victim meets with counselor or social worker if needed</li> </ol> <p><b>Second Offense</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Detention</li> <li>2. Document incident and notify both parents.</li> <li>3. Victim meets with counselor or social worker if needed.</li> <li>4. Refer offender for counseling if needed.</li> </ol> <p><b>Third Offense</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Administrator issues consequence</li> <li>2. Document and notify both parents</li> <li>3. Victim meets with counselor or social worker if needed</li> <li>4. Contact outside agency that is counseling offender</li> </ol> <p><b>Any further incidents will require administrative action as outlined in the district's Bullying Policy</b></p> |
| <b>Parents/Guardians Who Feel their Child has Been Bullied</b>  |   |  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keep a written record of all bullying incidents your child reports to you. Record the names of the children involved, where and when the bullying occurred, and what happened.</li> <li>2. Immediately ask to meet with your child's teacher or guidance counselor. Explain your concerns in a friendly, non-confrontational way.</li> <li>3. Ask the teacher or guidance counselor about his or her observations. Has he or she noticed or suspected bullying? How is your child getting along with others in class? Has he or she noticed that your child is being isolated, excluded from activities with students? Ask the teacher or guidance counselor what he or she intends to do to investigate and help to stop the bullying.</li> <li>4. Relieve the stress. If you are concerned about how your child is coping with the stress of being bullied, ask to speak with your child's guidance counselor or other school-based mental health professional.</li> <li>5. Set up a follow-up appointment with the teacher or guidance counselor to discuss progress. If there is no improvement after reporting bullying to your child's teacher, speak with the school principal. Keep notes. Keep an organized file of notes from your meetings with teacher and administrators.</li> <li>6. If bullying continues, write to the school's principal or administrator and include evidence from your notes to back up your complaint. Putting a complaint in writing is important so there is record of your concern.</li> <li>7. Give the school reasonable time to investigate and hear both sides of the story.</li> <li>8. Please remember that school officials will not be able to give you details on the punishment of other students in compliance with FERPA.</li> </ol> |   |  |

### Emergency Drills

Emergency drills are held periodically for the safety of everyone in the building. Some drills require sheltering-in-place, evacuation, or lockdown procedures. Actual emergencies will be announced via the District's electronic communication system and/or via social media. Parents/guardians should ensure current contact information is provided on student update forms and should follow the Somerset Area School District on FaceBook to receive related updates.

Room evacuation directions will be displayed in each room. It is imperative that everyone moves quickly and quietly to the appropriate outside exit when the fire alarm rings. Upon reaching the outside, all persons should move to a safe area away from the building and traffic lanes.

### **School Safety**

The safety and welfare of our students and staff are our highest priority. We take every step possible to create a safe and positive school environment. Somerset Area School District has worked with consultants. Local emergency agencies, along with state and federal officials to develop a comprehensive emergency plan. Our faculty and staff received training on our emergency plans and have participated in ALICE training. ALICE is a comprehensive program which addresses communication technology, building infrastructure, and citizen training to build strategies for an intruder event. Alice stands for: Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate.

The philosophy of ALICE is to use technology and information in a way so that staff and students can make informed decision in a crisis, remove as many people as possible from the danger zone, and provide realistic trainings so that those involved know how to possibly handle the situation. In short, using the above ALICE method will teach our students and staff multiple tools to use in order to evade an intruder who may enter our school.

### Homeroom

Students are required to report directly to their lockers and then their respective homeroom by 7:27 a.m.

Various routine duties are performed during this homeroom period. Student attendance is checked, absences and appointments are cleared with the attendance office, and other homeroom activities are performed.

The Pledge of Allegiance and daily announcements will occur during homeroom. All homerooms will follow this expectation.



## Lockers

To reduce congestion in the halls, locker visits should occur only before homeroom, during lunch, and at dismissal. Locker care is also emphasized. Please do not damage your lockers. If damage occurs, you will be responsible for costs of repair. Students are reminded that they will be held financially responsible for lost or stolen books, workbooks, or other school-owned items. Students are to use only the locker that has been assigned to them. Students are responsible for the contents of their lockers and are reminded to keep them locked throughout the school day to avoid theft of materials. **Inappropriate items found in your locker are assumed to be yours and may subject you to disciplinary action. Students are not permitted to place any items in their locker that utilize paint or adhesive materials. Students are responsible for damage caused by unauthorized use of lockers.**

**Do not give your locker combination to others. Lockers provide a safe place for keeping valuables.**

**Turn right** two or more whole turns and stop at first number.  
**Then turn left** one whole turn past first number and stop at second number.  
**Now turn right** and stop at third number.  
**Lift Locker Handle**

## **Somerset Area Junior and Senior High School Physical Education Regulations and Guidelines**

### Dress Policy:

Every student will change for class in the following attire regardless of his/her participation status.

**White T-shirts** (JHS) when in the gym (If class is going outside a sweatshirt of any color may be worn as the temperature gets colder)  
Shirt must cover the midriff

**Gym shorts** (JHS) must be worn in the gym. (If class is going outside, sweats or wind pants of any color may be worn as temperature gets colder)

Shorts or pants must entirely cover undergarments.

Undergarments may **not** be showing! Student will not participate until he/she is in compliance. This will have an adverse effect on student's grade.

**Athletic socks** – any color

**Athletic shoes** - rubber soled dress shoes or boots will **not** be permitted.

Student may forget clothing one (1) time per semester.

**Not Dressing for Physical Education - Summary of actions:**

1<sup>st</sup> Time – Alternate Activity/Lose points for the day

2<sup>nd</sup> Time – Alternate Activity/Lose points

3<sup>rd</sup> Time – Lunch hour detention/Lose points/Student must call home

4<sup>th</sup> Time – Lunch hour detention/Alternate Activity/Lose points

5<sup>th</sup> Time – 2 Lunch detentions/Alternate Activity/Lose points

6<sup>th</sup> Time and Beyond– 3 Lunch detentions/Alternate Activity/Lose points

Students should not forget clothing as locks and lockers can be provided for P.E. clothing storage.

Jewelry is not permitted

- This helps avoid unnecessary injuries.
- No piercing of any kind. A new piercing must be covered with athletic tape until it can be removed, usually 3 weeks.
- No watches, necklaces, bracelets (wrist or ankle) or rings (finger or toe) made out of anything.
- Medic alert information on a bracelet or necklace is permitted.

Nothing is permitted in the mouth during class

- This helps eliminate a choking hazard. Exception: necessary dental equipment

**Make-Up Classes**

- a. Permitted one (1) absence per nine weeks

- b. Students are required to make up a maximum of two physical education classes missed due to school-sponsored activities in each semester.
- c. Student will be responsible for informing the P.E. teacher prior to the date they will not be in class.
- d. Classes missed and not made up after this will result in a one-letter grade drop for each class missed.
- e. Make-up classes may be done ahead of time (If you know you are going to miss in the future for some reason such as: vacation, field trip)
- f. Make-up classes will cover, as much as possible, the material the student missed.
- g. Classes may be made up after school in the weight room or pool, providing arrangements are made with both the PE teacher and the weight room or pool supervisor.

Excuses for Gym Class:

- h. Students on a medical will still dress for class. They will be given alternate exercises to perform to fulfill their PE requirement (Walking, stationary biking, etc.) The physical education teacher will develop a plan for the student to participate in class without affecting the student's medical situation.
- i. Medical Excuses – **Must be turned into the school nurse prior to reporting to phys. ed. The school nurse will keep a copy for her records and send a copy to the student's P.E. teacher. The student may still be required to perform an alternate activity based on the nature of the medical excuse.**
- j. Parent Excuses – Must be turned into the school nurse prior to reporting to P.E. The school nurse will determine whether the excuse will be honored or not. The nurse will keep a copy for her records and send a copy to the student's P.E. teacher. Nurse may phone parent/guardian for confirmation.
- k. Effort will be made to have the student participate in some sort of physical exercise that will not affect the child's medical situation.

If no physical activity can be prescribed, then the student will be required to do some written research work covering the material being missed in class. The written report should cite the resources used. The length of the medical excuse will determine the length of the report. The P.E. teacher will grade the report. Anyone not completing the assignment will receive an incomplete ("I") for that grading period. This will result in failure ("F") for the year if work is not completed.

### **Game Days**

No athlete will be permitted to sit out of physical education on the day of a game. Failure to follow this guideline will be treated as Non-Participation. Athletes will face disciplinary action for refusing to participate.

### **Non-Participation/Incompletes**

Not participating during class, or failure to complete the unit's written work, will result in an incomplete ("I") for the nine weeks, and possible disciplinary action. Disciplinary action is at the discretion of the physical education teacher and/or the building administrator. Incompletes ("I") not made up will result in failure ("F") for the year.

### **Theft**

Lock up your valuables, as you--not school personnel--are responsible for your possessions. Locks can be rented or students may bring his/her own lock. Student's found stealing others' possessions will face disciplinary action.

### **Late to Class or Roll Call**

Treated as per policy (See summary recommendations for detention/suspension)

### **Leaving the Locker Room Area without Permission**

Leaving the locker room area before the bell rings, without permission will be treated as a class cut.

### **Lost and Found**

A lost and found exchange is located in the Junior and Senior High School Offices. The office secretaries handle lost items. Periodically the exchange is cleared out. Check lost and found immediately. Fill out a report with the office staff.

## **School Insurance – Claim Procedure**

School insurance is available for all students. The enrollment period occurs during the first several weeks of school. Junior High School athletes are especially urged to enroll due to the athletic policies regarding insurance. Homeroom instructors will supervise enrolling. Please see your homeroom teacher about the appropriate application.

Insurance Claim Forms may be obtained in the office. The student and parents are responsible for the proper completion and filing of the claim form.

## **School Ipad Insurance**

Please examine student iPads regularly for damage. This should include, but not limited to, inspecting the screen for cracks and removing the case to check for signs of bending.

iPad insurance is offered to all students during the first weeks of school. Please see Schoology for additional details.

## **Junior and Senior High School Smart Pass System**

The Smart Pass system is used for the Junior and Senior High School. Smart Pass is a digital hall pass to help reduce time spent out of class. Smart Pass allows teachers and principals the ability to monitor hall pass usage. The digital system also increases student safety during emergencies by identifying which students are in the hallway.

Teachers have the authority to deny students the privilege of leaving the room, especially if a pattern of abuse of the pass privilege occurs. Please be considerate of bathroom requests.

Several important rules must be followed when requesting a pass:

1. Only the Smart Pass system will be utilized.
2. Students must have their iPad charged and ask permission to start a pass on their tablet. Students need to end the pass upon return.
3. **Exceptions:** Students summoned by a teacher will be sent a written pass.
4. Students reporting to locations without a legitimate pass subject themselves to disciplinary action.

# **Discipline Procedures**



## **CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT AND BEHAVIOR**

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Each member of the school community must bear full responsibility for his or her individual action, and that action must--in no way--deprive any other person of his or her individual rights. To this end, this code of conduct is designed to encourage:

- A. Concern for the welfare and dignity of others.
- B. An understanding that individual rights and freedoms are restricted by the responsibility of protecting the rights and freedoms of others.
- C. The maintenance of order and respect for the law through the observation of reasonable and necessary rules.
- D. The acceptance of responsibility for personal action.

### **I. Free Education and Attendance**

- A. All persons residing in this Commonwealth between the ages of 6 and 21 years are entitled to a free and full education in the Commonwealth's public schools.
- B. Parents or guardians of all children between the ages of 6 and 18 are required by the compulsory attendance law to ensure that their children attend an approved educational institution, unless legally excused. Students who have not graduated may not be asked to leave school merely because they have reached 17 years of age if they are fulfilling their responsibilities as students. A student may not be excluded from the public schools nor from extra-curricular activities because of being married or pregnant.

### **II. Student Responsibilities**

- A. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort in classroom work and conformance to school rules and regulations. Most of all, students share with the administration

and faculty, a responsibility to develop a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.

- B. No student has the right to interfere with the education of his fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process.
- C. Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner.
- D. It is the responsibility of students to conform to the following:
  - 1. Comply with Commonwealth and local laws.
  - 2. Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accord with them. Students should assume that, until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed, it is in effect.
  - 3. Volunteer information in matters relating to health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property and the people therein.
  - 4. Dress and groom to meet fair standards of safety and health, and not to cause substantial disruption to the educational processes.
  - 5. Assist the school staff in operating a safe school for all students enrolled therein.
  - 6. Exercise proper care when using public facilities and equipment.
  - 7. Attend school daily and be on time at all classes and other school functions.
  - 8. Make up work when absent from school.
  - 9. Pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by the Commonwealth and local school authorities.
  - 10. Report accurately with no indecent or obscene language in student newspapers or publications.

### **III. School Rules**

- A. The school board has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules governing the conduct of students in school. The rulemaking power, however, is not unlimited; it must operate within statutory and constitutional restraints. A school board has only those powers which are enumerated in the statutes of this Commonwealth, or which may reasonably be implied as necessary for the orderly operation of the school.

- B. School boards may not make rules which are arbitrary, capricious, or outside their grant of authority from the General Assembly. Their rules must stand the test of fairness and reasonableness. A rule is generally considered reasonable if it uses a rational means of accomplishing some legitimate school purpose.
- C. Each board of school directors shall adopt a code of student conduct, which shall include policies governing student discipline, and a listing of student rights and responsibilities as listed previously. This conduct code shall be published and distributed to students and parents. Copies of the code shall also be available in each school library.

### **Discrimination**

Consistent with the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act (43 P.S. #95 1-963), no student shall be denied access to a free and full public education on account of race, religion, sex, national origin, or handicap.

### **Harassment**

It is the policy of the Somerset Area School District to provide its staff and students with a pleasant, non-hostile environment, which encourages efficient, productive, and creative work.

To ensure a pleasant, non-hostile environment, the Somerset Area School District will not tolerate any form of harassment by any individual. Each administrator and supervisor has a responsibility to maintain the workplace free of any form of harassment.

The term harassment includes, but is not necessarily limited to, slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, age, sex, national origin, handicap, or disability.

1. Ethnic harassment includes the use of any derogatory word or phrase characterizing a given racial or ethnic group.
2. Conduct constituting sexual harassment shall include, but not be limited to:
  - a. Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and all other verbal or physical conduct or a sexual or otherwise offensive nature, especially where:
    - i. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
    - ii. Submission too or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment; or

- iii. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with job/education performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
- b. Examples of sexual harassment include:
  - i. Sexual flirtations, touching, or propositions.
  - ii. Graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body.
  - iii. Sexual degrading words to describe an individual.
  - iv. Jokes, pin-ups, calendars, graffiti, vulgar statements, abusive language, innuendoes, references to sexual activities, overt sexual conduct, or any conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

Any individual who believes that the actions or words of another individual constitute unlawful harassment has a responsibility to report or complain as soon as possible to the appropriate administrator or supervisor.

All complaints of unlawful harassment will be investigated promptly and in an impartial and confidential manner. All individuals should be aware that privacy of the charging party and the person accused of harassment will be kept as confidential as possible. The district will retain confidential documentation of all allegations and investigations. In all cases, the individuals involved will be advised of the findings and conclusions.

If an individual is not satisfied with the way his/her complaint is handled, the person may discuss the matter with another district representative appointed by the Superintendent of Schools.

Retaliation taken against individuals, who bring unlawful harassment charges or who assist in investigation charges, is strictly prohibited.

False accusations of harassment can have serious effects on innocent individuals. Therefore, false accusations will result in the same severe disciplinary action applicable to one found guilty of harassment.

**Harassment will be dealt with at the discretion of the administration and is punishable by detention, suspension, or, in severe cases, expulsion.**

### **Policies and Guidelines of Student Control**

The following acts are considered to be violations of the official policies and regulations of the Somerset Area School District.

When a violation occurs, the building administrator may suspend the student offender from attending classes for a period of from one (1) to ten (10) days; the administrator may also refer the student offender to the Board of School Directors for a hearing to exclude the student from school for a period exceeding ten (10) school days or for permanent expulsion from the school rolls.

School administrators also have the right to refer the offense to the appropriate civil authorities if the offense constitutes a violation of the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

It shall be understood that offenses resulting in personal injury and property damage shall result in the student's and parents' being held responsible for all damages to the extent provided by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Any conduct proscribed by the Criminal Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any local ordinance, occurring while a student is under the jurisdiction of the school or which is determined to be detrimental to the operation of the school **may be considered grounds for expulsion or suspension.**

#### **A. Class Cuts**

Class cut is the failure to attend a particular class without authorization when the student is present at school. If the student is absent from school for the entire day, his or her absence from a particular class that day shall not be considered a class cut. The only acceptable excuse for not reporting to a class without authorization is illness, and then only if the student has reported to the school nurse or the office at the beginning of the period. (See Page 69 for Consequences)

#### **B. Tardiness**

1. This includes being late to school.

2. Tardy to School:

3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> occurrence

Detention served that day

Seven or more times

At the discretion of the principal, which may include a CYS referral and revocation of privileges such as attendance at school-sponsored activities, etc.

3. Unexcused class tardiness will result in lunch detention.

4. Students under the age of 18 are required to attend school on time or face legal action under PA compulsory attendance laws. Students 18 or older can be dropped from the roles for excessive violations.

### **C. Insubordinate Action**

1. The deliberate refusal to follow the instructions of any member of the school staff is an act, which cannot be tolerated in a school setting. An insubordinate act will result in a three-day suspension. Parents must accompany the student to the principal for readmission to class.
2. The use of auditory and/or visual obscenities toward a member of the school staff is an act, which totally opposes the goals of the school. Use of obscenities will result in a three-day suspension. Parents must accompany the student to the principal for readmission to class.
3. The use of foul language and/or gestures between students is forbidden.
  - a. Flagrant violators will receive a one-day suspension.
  - b. Non-flagrant violators will receive a verbal reprimand unless the violation becomes persistent.
4. Clothing displaying vulgar language or obscenities can become a disruption of the classroom process. Such clothing is also offensive to other students and faculty. Students wearing such clothing will be referred to the principal's office for proper action.
5. Written material or illustration deemed inappropriate for a school setting will be confiscated and turned over to the principal who will contact parents.

### **D. Stealing**

Students caught stealing private or school property will receive an automatic three-day suspension. Charges may be filed with a magistrate.

### **E. Serious Disruptions of Education Process**

1. These disruptions include:
  - a. Setting fires on school property
  - b. False fire alarms
  - c. Tampering with fire extinguisher
  - d. Bomb scares
  - e. Explosive devices, firecrackers and smoke bombs
  - f. Intimidation and extortion
  - g. Terroristic threats

h. Any conduct determined by the administration to be significantly disruptive to the education process

2. Any student involved in the commission of the above offenses shall receive a three-day suspension and have an informal hearing before the principal. Parents must accompany student to the principal for the informal hearing. A suspension for up to seven (7) additional days may result from the informal hearing with the possibility of an alternative education placement site assigned. The student may also be referred to the Board of School Directors for a formal hearing and appropriate Board action. All such offenses shall be referred to the proper authority for appropriate legal action. Criminal offenses could include 1) A false alarm to agencies of public safety under PA crime code 49-05 subsection A, or 2) Disorderly conduct under PA crime code 55-03 subsection A-4. Students shall be required to pay for all damages related to the preceding acts. Parents must accompany students to the principal before being readmitted to class.

3. Any conduct proscribed by the Criminal Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any local ordinance, occurring while a student is under the jurisdiction of the school or which is determined to be detrimental to the operation of the school may be considered grounds for expulsion or suspension.

### 3. Misconduct at Assemblies

a. Any student who is disruptive and/or discourteous during a school assembly shall:

- 1) Upon the first offense, be removed from the assembly and not permitted to attend or participate in the next two assemblies.
- 2) Upon the second offense, be removed from the assembly and lose all assembly privileges for the remainder of the school year.

### 4. Misconduct During Lunch Period

a. Running – students will be placed at the end of the lunch line.

b. Any student who is disruptive and/or discourteous during lunch shall:

- 1) Upon the first offense, be removed from the cafeteria and not permitted to return for a period of up to two (2) weeks.
- 2) Upon the second offense, be removed from the cafeteria and lose all cafeteria privileges at the Administrators discretion.
- 3) Upon the starting of a food fight, be suspended for ten (10) days and be referred to the Board of School Directors for an expulsion

hearing. Any student who becomes involved in throwing food in the cafeteria shall be removed from the cafeteria for the duration of the school year. Students either starting or becoming involved in food fights will be referred to proper civil authorities and be held legally responsible for all damages incurred.

#### 5. Harassment

Students found guilty of harassing a fellow student will be dealt with at the discretion of the principal.

### **F. Possession of Weapons and Dangerous Objects**

1. In accordance to Act 26, any student who is determined to have brought onto or is in the possession of a weapon on any school property, any school-sponsored activity, or any public conveyance providing transportation to a school or school-sponsored activity shall be expelled from school for a period of not less than one year.
2. Any student expelled for possession of a weapon or dangerous object shall, prior to reinstatement in the educational program, be required to meet in person with the school principal or his designee. The purpose of this meeting shall be to review the student's violation.
3. The school principal or his designee shall file a written report of the findings of the meeting with the district superintendent and the board of school directors. This report shall be permanently retained in the student's school file.
4. School officials shall notify the police department with jurisdiction over that school whenever a student is in possession of a weapon or dangerous object.
5. The term **weapon** shall mean a knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle, or any other tool, instrument, or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

### **G. Assault**

A student who assaults a school employee or fellow student shall be given a three (3) day suspension and an informal hearing. Parents must accompany student to principal for the informal hearing. If evidence warrants, the student shall receive a suspension of up to seven (7) additional school days. The student may also be referred to the Board of School Directors for a formal hearing and appropriate Board action. Such offenses will be reported to Civil Authorities for further action. Parents must accompany student to principal before being readmitted to class.

## **H. Vandalism**

Willful destruction or defacing school property or personal property shall result in suspension at the discretion of the building administrator. Restitution will be required, including the cost of labor and materials. Referral to civil authorities will be made by the building administrator. Parents must accompany student to principal before being readmitted to class. Anyone witnessing an act of vandalism shall report it to the office.

## **I. Falsification of Passes and Excuses**

1. Falsification of passes and excuses will result in detention and loss of privileges for one calendar month. The only exception is that passes will be accepted for make-up work.
2. Periodically, as the office is informed of the names of students who are forbidden passes; a list will be composed and circulated to the faculty.

## **J. Disorderly Conduct**

Student conduct between classes, during study halls, and in homeroom must be appropriate for the setting. The school cannot accept behavior, which can lead to injury or harm to others. The major responsibility for student conduct lies with the student; thus, the student will be assessed disciplinary action as a result of inappropriate behavior.

### **1. Inappropriate Conduct:**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a reasonable manner. Rowdy behavior such as excessive noise, pushing others, hitting others, tripping another student, faking a fight, etc., will not be permitted. Students may be assessed detention for each incident of inappropriate behavior. Repeated offenses may be assessed more severe discipline at the discretion of the administration.

### **2. Fighting:**

The school's responsibility for student conduct exists during school hours and while traveling to and from school. Students must control their behavior during that time. Fighting is not a permissible solution to any student problem; furthermore, fighting displays an out-of-control attitude on the part of the fighters and those who urge a fight.

When a fight occurs between students, the offending individuals will be turned over to the police, who will investigate the problem. Charges of disorderly conduct and/or other appropriate charges will be assessed. Citations will be filed with the magistrates. School discipline will consist of a three-day suspension.

## **School Employee "Hands-On Policy"**

An employee of the Somerset Area School District may place hands on a child, with **No Intent to Harm**, in the following situations:

- To separate students who are fighting or in their judgment are about to fight.
- To defend themselves.
- To come to the aid of a student. Example: student trips, falls, and becomes dizzy. School employees can help them to their feet and steady them with their hand as he or she walks the student to the nurse's office.
- The school employee gives a direct order to a student and the student refuses to follow through. If the order is repeated and the student still refuses, then the school employee may place his or her hand between the student's shoulder and elbow and escort them to the office.

### **K. Detention/Suspension**

After 10 hours of detention has been accumulated, subsequent consequences will be at the discretion of the principal. A teacher has the responsibility to notify students when assigning detention.

#### Completion of Detention Time

Detention is to be made up immediately after it has been received during lunch.

1. **Detention responsibilities take precedence over all other after-school activities, including band, athletics, organization meetings, and work. Any student who has overdue detention may be held out of all extra-curricular activities until detention has been completed.**
2. All detention assignments will be periodically reviewed by the principal or his designee.
3. All detention must be made up prior to receiving a schedule for the next school year. Undergraduates will have their report cards held, if detention hours are not made up at the end of the school year. Seniors will have their diplomas held, if detention hours are not made up by graduation.

## DETENTION RULES

The following rules apply to detention hall. All students are urged to read them carefully:

1. After school detention begins promptly at 3:00 PM. To receive credit, students must report on time.
2. Detention will be held in room 150 or Admin office. Detention will be held during lunch and after school from 3:00 – 3:30 Monday through Friday.
3. Students must bring assignments to study or a book to read.
4. Students are expected to work on school-related assignments during the entire time.
5. The use of electronic devices is prohibited.
6. No food, gum, candy, beverage, etc. will be permitted.
7. No talking is permitted.
8. No sleeping is permitted.
9. Student behavior, as per the coordinator's discretion, that causes a disturbance and/or deviates from the above rules and regulations will cause the entire detention time to be forfeited.

### 5. Suspension

- a. Suspensions are removal of the student from the routine school setting. Typically, suspensions last for a three-day period of time. Full suspensions last up to ten days and must be preceded by a hearing before the principal.

The best advice that can serve all students is that they should make every effort to be cooperative with all school personnel. Receiving detention or suspension time is not an acceptable substitute for good conduct in school!

**Note: Nothing in this policy precludes the building administrator from assigning out-of-school suspension when and if it is deemed appropriate.**

### L. Tobacco Policy and Regulations

#### Student Possession and Use of Tobacco and Nicotine Products

##### A. Purpose

The Somerset Area School District recognizes that tobacco and e-cigarette (or vaping) products present a health and safety hazard that can have serious consequences for users, nonusers, and the school environment. Nicotine, the chemical found in tobacco products, is a highly addictive drug that causes changes in brain chemistry, leaving the brain craving more. The purpose of this

tobacco and nicotine policy is to show the SASD's commitment to the health and well-being of its students, teachers, administrators, and staff.

*B. Definitions*

The term tobacco product includes but is not limited to:

- a) Any lighted or unlit cigarette, cigar, little cigar, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, hookah, snuff, and snus.
- b) Any electronic device that delivers nicotine or another substance to a person inhaling from the device such as electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes or e-cigs), or vaping device (disposable or reusable)
- c) Any product containing, made, or derived from either natural or synthetic tobacco or nicotine

*C. Prohibitions*

The Somerset Area School District prohibits possession, use, purchase, or sale of tobacco and vaping products as defined above by or to students at any time in a school building, on school busses or other vehicles owned, leased, or operated by the District, on property owned, leased, or controlled by the District, or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property.

*D. Communication*

This Tobacco and Vaping Policy shall be posted in the school office and published on the SASD website and student handbooks. No Smoking and No Vaping signs shall be posted at school entrances, in restrooms, and other locations where students, staff, and teachers gather.

*E. Enforcement*

Nicotine dependence makes smoking and vaping cessation extremely difficult. Programs such as Not-On-Tobacco (N-O-T) provide resources, education, and support for students struggling with nicotine addiction.

Students found in violation of this Tobacco and Vaping Policy shall be enrolled in and required to attend the American Lung Association's four session INDEPTH program for nicotine education, prevention, and health.

Repeated violations of this Tobacco and Vaping Policy shall result in additional penalties commensurate with SASD procedures, including referral to law enforcement and the Smokeless Saturday's program.

**Use/Possession of Tobacco**

- 1 st Offense – 1 Day ISS and/or Tobacco Prevention Program with the possibility of charges being filed.
- 2 nd Offense – Up to 3 Days ISS + charges filed with the local magistrate + Tobacco prevention class

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense and subsequent Offenses – discipline at the discretion of the principal; which could result in ISS, OSS, Alt. Ed. Placement, Charges, etc.

### **M. Cheating**

Students found cheating in a class will receive a failing grade for the grading period in which the cheating occurred. A subsequent infraction will result in a failing grade for the course.

### **N. Other Infractions**

1. The principal may assign disciplinary measures for an infraction not listed. Measures may include: detention, suspension, or any other measure deemed appropriate for the offense incurred.
2. Any conduct proscribed by the Criminal Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any local ordinance, occurring while a student is under the jurisdiction of the school or which is determined to be detrimental to the operation of the school may be considered grounds for expulsion or suspension.

### **O. Flag Salute and the Pledge of Allegiance**

It is the responsibility of every citizen to show proper respect for his/her country and its flag.

1. Students may decline to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and may refrain from saluting the flag on the basis of personal belief or religious convictions.
2. Students who choose to refrain from such participation shall respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

### **P. Dress Code**

- **In cases not clearly defined by this policy, administration reserves the right to determine “what is” and “what is not” school appropriate attire.**

Because they are in a school setting, students' clothing should be conservative and not provocative or revealing in any way.

Clothing (including face coverings when applicable) cannot have any pictures, words, advertisements, or references of any kind to drugs (including tobacco and alcohol), sex, private body parts, or vulgar language (this includes shirts with “double-meaning” slogans or sayings)

## Shirts/Coats:

- Must have shoulder straps no less than 3 inches in width
- Must be long enough that they could be tucked in and would remain tucked in when seated (**with no bare midriff visible**)
- Must not be low cut. The décolletage (chest/breast area) must be completely covered.
- Must cover all undergarments, including bra straps.
- Trench coats are not permitted during any school activity.

## Shorts, pants, and skirts:

### **Definition of Short Skirts/Shorts/Skorts/Dresses/Etc...**

If the article of clothing in question does not meet or extend to a point half way between the hip and the knee, the article of clothing in question will be considered too short and must be changed.

- Jeans, shorts, or pants with excessive rips or holes that expose undergarments, areas of the body that would generally be covered by undergarments or body parts in an indecent or vulgar manner are not permitted.
- Must extend to a point half way between the hip and the knee.
- Must not be so low-cut or worn so low that they reveal undergarments, skin, or body parts

General Guidelines: **School officials may impose limitations on dress if the attire causes the disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health or safety hazard this includes masks.**

- See-through clothing, or clothing which is too tight or revealing are not permitted.
- Clothing with sexually suggestive or derogatory pictures or phrases including the advertising of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco may not be worn.
- Baggy pants or baggy shorts are not permitted.
- Shoes or sandals must be worn. (Shoes with wheels are **not** permitted!)
- Clothing which reveals any part of the undergarments such as lace-up jeans or low-rise jeans is not permitted.
- Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, shops, extra-curricular activities, or other situations where special attire may be required to insure the health or safety of the student.
- Students have the responsibility to keep themselves, their clothes, and their hair clean. School officials may impose limitations on student

participation in the regular instructional program where there is evidence that the lack of cleanliness constitutes a health hazard or causes a classroom disruption.

- Wallet chains, dog collars, studded/spiked collars, or similar items are not permitted.
- Costumes or costume accessories are not permitted.
- **Head gear (hats, hoods, caps, bandanas, sunglasses, etc.) is not permitted!**

### **Dress Code Discipline Policy**

The student's parents or guardians will be notified if an appropriate change of clothing must be brought to the school.

**1<sup>st</sup> Offense** – Verbal Warning + change into appropriate attire

**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense** – Lunch Detention + change into appropriate attire + Parent Contact

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense and Thereafter** – 3 Detentions + change into appropriate attire + Parent Contact

Hair:

Students have the right to govern the length and style of their hair, including facial hair. Any limitation of this right shall include evident that the length or style of hair causes a disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health or safety hazard. Where length or style of the hair presents a problem, some type of covering should be considered. Hats are not permitted to be worn and must be removed upon entering the Junior and Senior High School.

#### **LICE/NIT POLICY**

The issues surrounding lice and missed school time are highly volatile. Parents/guardians, educators, and students alike have many misconceptions about lice and the spread of lice among students. Parents faced with lice treatment are understandably upset. There are numerous internet sites dealing with treatment and blame. Schools are often targeted, incorrectly, as sources of infestation.

A review of several legitimate and respected sources of lice and a no nit policy information reveal the following information.

- ❑ Lice do not jump or fly. Lice are acquired by direct head to head contact.
- ❑ Lice infestations are rarely spread by inanimate objects. Lice cannot survive more than a day or two off the host. Viable lice will not leave a healthy host.
- ❑ Animals do not spread lice.

- ❑ Nits or lice eggs do not mean an active infestation; nits more than 1/4 inch from the scalp are not viable.
- ❑ By the time a student is diagnosed with lice they probably had the infestation for a month or more.
- ❑ Lice shampoos contain toxic chemicals and caregivers must follow the directions carefully.
- ❑ Many screeners incorrectly diagnose lice infestation and school nurses remain the best trained screeners.
- ❑ Personal hygiene has nothing to do with lice infestation.

School nurses need a rational policy and plan to deal effectively with lice. The best plan includes a strong education program for staff, parents and students. Education is the most effective tool in dealing with lice. A review of the literature reveals several evidence based practices and procedure that may not be aligned with common behavior and beliefs surrounding the screening and treatment of lice.

- ❑ Head lice while irritating do not pose a health risk
- ❑ Lice infestation is not a public health issue
- ❑ Treatment of nits alone (more than 1/4 inch from the scalp) is not advised.
- ❑ Treatment should be considered when active lice or viable eggs (nits) are observed
- ❑ Mass screenings are ineffective and not cost effective.
- ❑ No healthy child should be excluded on the basis of nits alone.
- ❑ Removal of nits is not necessary to prevent the spread of lice but will aid in the diagnosis of lice
- ❑ A no nit policy is not advised or necessary.

The District's reasonable, evidence based lice policy includes the following:

- ❑ Mass screenings may be conducted for elementary students at the beginning of the school year.
- ❑ Students will be excluded from school ONLY for active infestation (live bugs and nits within 1/4 inch of the scalp)
- ❑ Parents/guardians and students are expected to remove nits, for both cosmetic reasons and to aid in diagnosis
- ❑ Students should miss no more than one day of school for the treatment of active lice infestations (the day the child is sent home, plus one day for treatment). All other missed days will be considered illegal.
- ❑ Close contacts will be screened, rather than conducting massive class and school screenings
- ❑ The nursing department will provide printed educational materials for staff and parents

- ❑ The nursing staff will follow up, via telephone call and re-examination upon return to school, with every child sent home for active lice.
- ❑ Students sent home for active lice infestations must be accompanied by the parent/guardian upon return to school for examination by the school nurse.
- ❑ School nurses are given the latitude to use their professional judgment for further exclusion following treatment.
- ❑ In extreme cases, the help and support of the public health system may be necessary to help educate caregivers.

#### **Q. Searches**

School authorities may search a student's locker, belongings, or personal vehicle parked on school property and seize any illegal materials. Such materials may be used as evidence against the student in disciplinary proceedings. Prior to a locker search, students shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. However, where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials, which pose a threat to the health, welfare, and safety of students in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning. An administrator may seize any evidence indicating that a student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule, which the administrator may find as a result of a search of a student's property, clothed body, or areas designated for student's use if the search is proper and reasonable.

#### **R. Student Assistance Program**

The Student Assistance Program is a referral mechanism designed to aid school personnel in identifying students with long term problems that inhibit the educational process, as well as problems referred through violation of the district's drug and alcohol policy. The Student Assistance Program Core Team will not administer discipline nor provide counseling.

When the SAP Core Team receives a referral, it shall have the responsibility of gathering background information from all school personnel involved with the student, of interviewing the student and parents, and of making a recommendation for the resolution of the problem. Possible recommendations for referral may include: school counselor, insight/intervention group, medical services, MH/MR, and/or the Twin Lakes Treatment Center for Drug and Alcohol Abuse. Should the student and parent not abide by the recommendation of the SAP Core Team, the team shall have the authority to request a school board hearing.

The SAP Core Team records will be kept in a manner consistent with Category E data as defined in the Student Records Policy, Policy JO.

## **S. Student Accountability**

All students are expected to report to assigned areas and classes on time. Failure to report to assigned classes is considered a class cut. Senior High School students are not permitted in the Junior High School building unless they have a class there or they have a written pass. Similarly, Junior High School students are not permitted in the Senior High School building unless they have a class or a written pass. No student is permitted in the parking lot during or between classes without a written pass from a building administrator. Students violating student accountability guidelines will be assigned two (2) hours detention. **Discipline for addressing any issue related to student accountability remains within the authority of the administration and can vary from situation to situation.**

### **The School's Authority**

Students traditionally feel that the school's authority over them ends at the school property line. Please read the paragraph below (taken from the School Code); which states that the school's authority goes beyond that boundary.

Sec. 1317 (24 PS 13-1317) Authority of Teachers, Vice Principals, and Principals over Pupils.

Every teacher, vice principal, and principal in the public schools shall have the right to exercise the authority as to conduct and behavior over the pupils attending his school, during the time they are in attendance, including the time required in going to and from their homes, as the parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to such pupils may exercise over them.

### **Somerset Area School District/Department of Special Education Behavior Management Policy**

The Pennsylvania Department of Education requires that behavior management plans be written for eligible special education students whose behavior problems interfere with learning.

**Positive Behavior Support Plans** are written programs designed to develop, change, and maintain selected behaviors through the systematic application of behavior change techniques. Behavior management programs include a variety of techniques to develop and maintain skills that will enhance an individual student's opportunity for learning and self-fulfillment. Positive rather than negative measures will form the basis of behavior management programs. The planned behavioral program is part of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and is to be based upon the written

policy of behavior management techniques adopted by the Somerset Area School District.

For additional information, please contact the Director of Special Programs.

The Administration reserves the right to use an alternative school placement to complement behavior management plans and/or when the student's needs are greater than what the District can effectively address.

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
DETENTION/SUSPENSION  
Approved July 8, 2013**

**Reason for Detention/Suspension and Time  
Assignments:**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Tardy to School</b> - 3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> Time | Detention   |
| Seven or More Times   | At the discretion of the principal, which may include a CYS referral and revocation of privileges such as attendance at school-sponsored activities, etc. |
| <b>Late to Class</b> ( <i>Under 5 Minutes</i> )                 | Lunch detention   |
| <b>1st Disruption of Educational Process</b>                    | Lunch detention   |
| 2nd Disruption of Educational Process                           | 2 Lunch detentions  |
| 3rd Disruption of Educational Process                           | 4 Lunch detentions  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> + Disruption of Educational Process             | Principal discretion  |
| <b>1st Class Cut</b> (5 Minutes or More)                        | 2 Lunch detentions  |
| <b>2nd Class Cut</b> and Each Subsequent                        | 4 Lunch detentions  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Truancy</b>  | 1 day ISS   |
| <b>Possession/Use of Tobacco</b> on School Grounds, School Buses, or At School-Sponsored Activities | See Page 62   |
| <b>Smoking</b> Inside/Outside School Buildings  | See Page 62   |
| <b>Delinquent Detention</b>   | Principal Discretion  |
| <b>Leaving the Building without Permission</b>  | 1 Day ISS   |
| <b>Falsification of Pass</b>  | 4 Lunch detentions; loss of privileges for 1 month  |
| <b>Not Reporting to Designated Office When Notified in Writing To Do So</b>                         | 2 Lunch detentions  |
| <b>Inappropriate Physical Display</b>   | Lunch detention   |
| <b>No Hall Pass</b>   | Lunch detention – Situations Appropriate for Reference. Administrative/Principal Decision |
| <b>Violation of Personal Electronic Device Policy</b>   |   |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Offense   | Lunch detention   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense   | 2 Lunch detentions  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense   | Half day *ISS   |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Offense   | Full day *ISS   |

PED's will be confiscated for every infraction and will be kept in the office until the end of the day.

**Fighting**                      **1<sup>st</sup> Offense** – 3 Days OSS + Charges Filed  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Offense** – 5 Days OSS + Charges Filed

**3<sup>rd</sup> Offense** – Students will be placed in an alternative setting for a minimum of 45 school days, but no more than 1 calendar year.

\*ISS – In School Suspension

DETENTION RESPONSIBILITIES TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER ALL OTHER AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING BAND, ATHLETICS, ORGANIZATION MEETINGS, AND WORK.

A STUDENT ON OSS SUSPENSION IS NOT PERMITTED TO ENGAGE IN ANY EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ON THE DATE OR DATES OF SUSPENSION, INCLUDING OUT-OF-SCHOOL HOURS. SUSPENSION ASSIGNMENT DATES ARE NOT NEGOTIABLE.

# POLICIES OF THE SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT



## SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY FOR USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Philosophy/<br/>Purpose</p> <p>2. Definitions</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES</u></b></p> <p>The Somerset Area School District Board of School Directors believes that students should have an educational environment free from unnecessary disruptions, distractions and threats. The Board has determined that the presence of personal electronic devices in schools have the potential to distract students from their primary purpose of receiving education and otherwise disrupt the educational environment. Therefore, the School Board adopts this policy to establish reasonable rules and regulations to authorize students to possess personal electronic devices in school while still ensuring the presence of these devices do not disrupt the educational environment or are used to distract, harass, or threaten other students or staff.</p> <p>The following definitions shall apply for the purposes of this policy:</p> <p>“Personal Electronic Device” or “PED” is an electronic device that emits an audible or visual signal, displays a text message, visual image or otherwise summons the user of the device in some manner. This definition includes but is not limited to the following devices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cellular telephones</li><li>• Smart phones (iPhone, Android, and similar devices)</li><li>• Digital audio players (iPods or MP3 players)</li></ul> |
|---|---|

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <p>3. Guidelines</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital cameras</li> <li>• Digital video recorders</li> <li>• Electronic e-mailing devices</li> <li>• Laptop computers</li> <li>• Tablet computers (iPads and similar devices)</li> <li>• Pagers</li> <li>• Portable game players</li> <li>• eReaders (Nooks, Kindles and other similar devices)</li> <li>• Any device that provides a wireless connection to the internet</li> </ul> <p>“Use” shall mean any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carrying or possessing a PED that is either visible (regardless if it is on or off) or can be heard</li> <li>• A PED that emits an audible signal, vibrates, is in sleep mode, displays a message, or otherwise summons the device user</li> <li>• A PED device in an off position and stored out-of-sight in a backpack, book bag, locker, pocket, purse, vehicle, etc. shall not be deemed in use.</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Students shall not use PEDs during instructional times unless permission is granted by a teacher or principal. Instruction times include classrooms, home room and study halls.</li> <li>2. Students shall not use PEDs in locker rooms, lavatories, assemblies or the nurse’s office for any reason.</li> <li>3. Students shall not engage in the unauthorized audio or video recording of another person during the school day.</li> <li>4. Students shall not use PEDs to bully, harass, or threaten another person in violation of District policies and rules.</li> <li>5. Students shall not use PEDs to take, display, or transfer video images depicting nude or partially nude individuals. Students who have received such images must report such activity to school officials without violating this policy.</li> <li>6. Students may use PEDs in the classroom during the school day for instructional purposes if they have the prior permission of the teacher or building administrator to do so.</li> <li>7. Students may use PEDs after school hours, on school grounds, and at school functions so long as such use does not disrupt school activities, violate state or federal law, or violate any school policy or directive associated with a student’s participation in interscholastic athletics, extracurricular activities, or school-sponsored events.</li> </ol> |
|----------------------|---|

8. Students who serve as members of volunteer fire company, ambulance or rescue squad may use PEDs during the school day for the exclusive purpose of being called by the company or squad in order to respond to an emergency, if the students have received the prior permission of the building principal.
9. A student who has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan may use a PED during the school day if the authorized plan outlines the student's use of the device for instructional purposes and the device is to be used in a manner consistent with the stated purpose in the plan.
10. Coaches of interscholastic athletic teams and sponsors of extracurricular activities shall have discretion to regulate and limit student use of PEDs while participating in interscholastic athletics, extracurricular activities and school-sponsored trips.

**Loss or Damage to Personal Electronic Devices:**

Students are solely responsible for safe storage of the PEDs they choose to bring to school. The District shall not be liable or responsible for the loss or damage to any PED that a student brings to school, interscholastic athletic events, extracurricular activities, or school-sponsored events or any financial loss stemming from the confiscation of a PED as a result of a policy violation.

**Penalty for violation of this Policy:**

Disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the school administration. School administrators may impose additional disciplinary sanctions against students for policy violations, including suspensions from school or recommendations for expulsion from school as warranted by the facts and circumstance in a particular case. Please refer to the student handbook for further discipline policies.

Prior to using any PEDs during school time, all district users must sign the Policy for Use of Technology Resources Agreement to verify that they will abide by the rules set forth within the policy.

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## **SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT K-12 STUDENT DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**



Students who wish to participate in interscholastic athletic/extra-curricular/co-curricular activities and those who wish to drive to school and park on school property and their parents/guardians must read and comply with the following four Somerset Area School District policies regarding the use/possession of drugs and/or alcohol:

- A. The District’s K – 12 Student Drug and Alcohol Policy (“General D/A Policy”)
- B. The District’s K – 12 Drug, Alcohol and Weapon Search Policy (“Search Policy”)
- C. The “Eligibility Policy” (this policy)
- D. The Random Drug/Alcohol Testing Policy (“Random D/A Testing Policy”)

### **A. SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT K-12 STUDENT DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY (“General D/A Policy”)**

#### **PREAMBLE**

The Somerset Area School District (the “District”) prohibits the use, possession, or distribution of alcohol or other drugs during those hours when the school district administrators and employees have the right to exercise *in loco parentis* powers over the student in accordance with the Public School Code, including but not limited to, school hours, at any school-sponsored event, and during the time required in going

- a) from their homes to school, and
- b) from school to their homes.

The Board of School Directors further prohibits the use, possession or distribution of alcohol or other drugs on school property at any time.

The Board further prohibits students from being present at school events during the times described in this document where they are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

Furthermore, it is the intent of the Somerset Area School District that all students demonstrate high personal standards and good citizenship, and especially while participating in school-sponsored activities and athletics. These extra-curricular activities cause the students to interact with the public and thus represent the District and the community of Somerset. Therefore, it is imperative that District students conduct themselves in an exemplary manner outside of school and at all times. Participation in extra-curricular activities/athletics is a privilege earned by observing these expected standards.

## **PURPOSE AND FINDINGS:**

Drugs pose a real and present danger to the health, safety and well-being of our community and schools. The District's role as a significant source of knowledge to our community's youth regarding this danger requires that this district include, as a part of their education, a clear and fair policy for the detection and eradication of drugs in our schools. The district, working with families, government agencies, and church and charitable organizations, should always strive to provide a safe and drug-free environment. The purpose of any District policy must be the welfare and well-being of the individual student, staff member, and the school population in general. These regulations direct the handling of situations within the jurisdiction of the District. It is the goal of this policy to provide a solid foundation that includes procedures that provide a consistent means for addressing drug-and alcohol-related difficulties while recognizing the needs and rights of all parties involved, within the confines of the law and sensible judgment. The District's policy outlines expectations to promote an alcohol-and drug-free school setting for all students (K-12) and District employees on all district property, during the school day and at athletic events, on the school buses and at school-sponsored or -sanctioned events. In order to ensure safety and enforce this policy, the school has the right to conduct searches and use drug-trained dogs and other surveillance and investigative tools at all times to conduct searches of lockers and elsewhere on school grounds when individuals are suspected to be in violation of this policy (see Search Policy Below).

In development and adoption of this policy, a reasonable effort has been made to establish procedures for students, teachers, parents, and administrators to aid individuals experiencing drug-and alcohol-related difficulty in compliance with Act 63 of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania while ensuring the discipline and safety of the school population. References in this policy to a "drug" or "drugs", unless the context clearly requires otherwise, shall mean in addition to the definition provided below:

- Controlled substances and alcoholic beverages as defined in the Pennsylvania Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act, the Pennsylvania Crimes Code, and the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code (The "Pennsylvania Criminal Statutes")
- Commercially available inhalants
- Over-the-counter preparations and medicines
- Herbal preparations
- Prescription drugs
- Drug look-a-likes
- Other substances defined as a "drug"

For purposes of interpretation and implementation of this policy, the definition of any terms used in this policy (for example, "possession" or "delivery") in the Pennsylvania Criminal Statutes shall be controlling.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

Drug (mood-altering substance): as used in this policy shall be defined as any controlled substance, non-controlled substance, or “designer drug”, “look alike” substance or health-endangering substances.

Controlled substance: A controlled substance is any drug or substance listed in schedules 1-5 of the Pennsylvania Drug Device and Cosmetic Act of 1972. Examples include, but are not limited to, alcohol, marijuana, stimulants, depressants, and hallucinogens.

Non-controlled substance: A non-controlled substance is any substance containing phenylpropanolamine, pseudoephedrine, ephedrine, or any depressant effect on humans. In addition to the items stated above, any product that includes chemical solvents or aerosol carcinogens is also considered a non-controlled substance.

“Designer Drug”: A controlled substance analog is a non-controlled substance which either produces the pharmacological effect or is represented to produce pharmacological effects similar to a controlled substance in Schedule 1 or 2 of the Pennsylvania Drug Device and Cosmetic Act of 1972.4.

“Look-alike” substance: A non-controlled substance whose physical appearance of the finished dosage form containing the non-controlled substance is substantially identical to any controlled substance, taking into account size, shape, color, markings or lack thereof.

Health-endangering substance: Any substance that may be harmful to the individual and that is not covered in the Pennsylvania Drug Device and Cosmetic Act of 1972. Drug paraphernalia: All equipment, products and material of any kind which are used, intended for use or designed for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing, concealing, injection, injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing to the human body a controlled substance.

Student Assistance Team (also known as ST.A.R.T. – student assistance and referral team): A referral mechanism designed to aid school personnel and parents in identifying students with problems that inhibit the educational process, as well as problems referred through violation of the District’s Drug and Alcohol Policy.

School event: A school-sponsored event or a school-sanctioned event.

School-sponsored event: Any event sponsored by the Somerset Area School District on district property in which students (grades K-12), who are presently enrolled in the Somerset Area School District, are representing the school district as participants or spectators.

School-sanctioned event: Any event conducted on property owned by the district in which students (grades K-12), who are presently enrolled in the Somerset Area School District, are representing the school district as participants or spectators.

School property: All locations under the jurisdiction of the Somerset Area School District including away events in or out of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Student: Any individual who is currently enrolled in the Somerset Area School District as an active kindergarten (K) through grade twelve (12) students.

General drug policy: References to the district's general drug policy shall mean the policy, procedures and sanctions contained in this section.

## **GENERAL DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY AND PROCEDURES:**

If any student is suspected of:

- Possession
- Being under the influence of or use during or prior to school hours or at a school event or otherwise on school property at any time, or
- Delivery, sale or distribution of drugs in the school, at a school event, while on school property or on a school bus operated for any school event, purpose or function, including daily transportation of students to and from school, the school official having disciplinary responsibility for the student (the "administrator") will immediately investigate the situation.

If the administrator determines that a violation of this policy has occurred, the administrator shall:

- (1) The administration shall consider the potential impact on student safety in consultation with medical professionals before deeming a violation has occurred. Regardless of substance type, repeat offenders will receive disciplinary sanctions as outlined in the policy below.
- (2) Obtain proper medical attention for the student if deemed appropriate.
- (3) Notify the student's parents of the administrator's determination and the student's rights under this policy.
- (4) Inform the police agency having jurisdiction over the possible offense when appropriate (even if the administrator may be the opinion that no violation of the Pennsylvania Criminal Statutes has occurred).
- (5) Follow the state mandated discipline protocol:
  - a. 3 day suspension/informal hearing
    - i. SAP referral
    - ii. Drug and alcohol screening
    - iii. Referral to UPMC Somerset Hospital for drug test at the discretion of administration.
  - b. 10 day suspension
  - c. Administration shall consider additional disciplinary measures, including alternative placement or recommendation for expulsion.

The student must agree to comply with any recommendations resulting from the assessment before returning to school and must provide the school with documentation of the assessment and recommendation. This documentation must include confirmation in writing from the

counselor of the student's full cooperation with the counselor including consent to the release of all information used in developing the assessment and recommendation to the administrator.

- (6) In appropriate cases, or where required by this policy, the administrator shall recommend expulsion from school under the authority and procedures contained in the School Code of Pennsylvania. In cases where a student is involved in the delivery, sale or distribution of drugs in school, on school property, or at a school event, the administrator shall request that the student be expelled unless the administrator submits a report to the school board recommending punishment not including expulsion and the school board approves. If the school board does not approve the alternative punishment, the superintendent shall recommend expulsion and an expulsion hearing shall be scheduled.
- (7) Any student who is a member of an interscholastic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular organization, or is a student driver and who (1) violates this policy, or (2) is adjudicated by a court of law (or agrees to an alternative disposition of an offense in lieu of such determination) to have committed a violation of any criminal statute of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any other jurisdiction of which the use, possession or attempted use or possession of any drug or alcoholic beverage is an element will be subject to the disciplinary measures outlined in the District's Interscholastic/Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular/Student Driver Policy (see below).

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Self-referral information is available from the school's Student Assistance Team (see Student Assistance Policy in student handbook). If you need to make a referral or have information to share regarding violations or concerns relevant to any of the District's drug/alcohol-related policies, please contact the building administrator at 443-2831.

#### **B. SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT K-12 DRUG, ALCOHOL, AND WEAPON SEARCH POLICY**

The Board of Directors of the Somerset Area School District has concluded that this community expects the school district to provide an environment for its students that is safe, alcohol- and drug-free, and conducive to learning. To provide such an environment the School District must take appropriate steps to see that the schools are free from the intrusion of weapons and alcohol or controlled substances. This obligation creates a compelling interest upon the School District to adopt and enforce a consistent policy statement, which clearly states that the commitment to provide an environment, that is safe and conducive to learning, by far outweighs any expectation of privacy held by anyone who comes upon school property.

In this regard, the Somerset Area School District hereby states that all school property is public property, and that any person coming upon school property for any purpose must be aware that there is no expectation of privacy for one's personal belongings or effects, including concealed items, upon school property. Therefore, it is hereby established that all lockers and all parking

areas within the property of the Somerset Area School District are owned by the School District. Students are merely granted permission to use same by the School District. As a condition of the use of the Somerset Area School District's lockers and parking areas each student must acknowledge that the student has no expectation of privacy within them and must consent to searches by school officials having a reasonable basis to suspect a violation of school policy, of each of the school district's lockers and each car parked the district's parking areas. Further, it is emphasized that the ability of students to carry belongings to school property in such carriers as backpacks, knapsacks, pockets in the student's clothing, book bags, valises, gym bags or any other type of containers is not a right, but is by permission of the School District. As a condition of the use of such carriers and containers upon school property, each student must acknowledge that the student has no expectation of privacy within them and consent to searches by school officials having a reasonable basis to suspect a violation of school policy.

The District reserves the right to use a police dog or K-9 team to conduct searches. The searches shall be at the discretion of the administration when reasonable suspicion indicates that such a search may be necessary.

The use of lockers and parking areas will be considered as the relinquishment of any expectation of privacy in regard to the use of lockers and parking areas. The adoption of this policy and the publication of it shall be considered as notification of the potential of such searches.

Notice is also given that actions such as taunting, teasing, kicking, or striking a police dog are considered a felony under the Pennsylvania Crimes Code. It is also emphasized that non-students have even less of an interest in privacy when coming upon school property.

Non-students whether juveniles or adults, subject themselves to the provision of school policy when coming onto school property. Therefore, any person as a condition of coming onto school property subjects himself, his vehicle and his possessions to searches by school officials having a reasonable basis to suspect a violation of school policy, and his coming upon school property is consent to detention for searches.

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 student's use if the search is proper and reasonable. The superintendent is authorized to communicate this policy and its applicability to all persons in or upon school property in any appropriate manner, including permanent signs erected on school property.

Finally, it is the policy of the Somerset Area School District that any weapons, alcohol, or other controlled substances found as a result of searches authorized by this policy, in the nature of weapons and alcohol or controlled substances, will be the basis of disciplinary procedures by the school district and will be delivered to law enforcement authorities for appropriate action.

## C. SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT GRADES 6-12 INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC/EXTRA-CURRICULAR/CO-CURRICULAR/STUDENT DRIVER ELIGIBILITY POLICY

### (“Eligibility Policy”)

#### **PURPOSE AND FINDINGS:**

The Somerset Area School District (the “District”) recognizes interscholastic, extra-curricular, co-curricular activity participation, and the permission of student drivers for the use of district facilities to park a personal vehicle as privileges, and not rights. Student participation in extra-curricular/co-curricular activities/driving is voluntary. Students and their parents or legal guardians must recognize that because of their choice to participate in these activities, they have a lesser expectation of privacy than do other students. Students volunteering to participate are expected to accept the responsibilities associated with these privileges.

As representatives of the District, students involved in extra-curricular/co-curricular activities/driving are observed by the public, may serve as role models for children, as well as peers, and are special representatives of the community. They have chosen to accept this role and, with it, the responsibility of a drug-and alcohol-free lifestyle. Student drivers who are seeking permission for and use of district facilities to park a personal vehicle also accept the responsibility that is inherent in operating a vehicle.

Administrators, teachers, and coaches recognize that drugs and alcohol have detrimental effects on motivation, memory, judgment, reaction time, coordination, and performance. These effects, in conjunction with other health and safety factors, have led to the development of this policy.

This policy is viewed as a viable drug- and alcohol-free school policy.

The School Board recognizes that use, possession, consumption prior to or during participation, and delivery or distribution of alcohol and other drugs is a serious problem, carrying with it legal, physical, and social implications for the entire school community. Accordingly, the District and its employees should strive to prevent the use of alcohol and drugs.

This policy encompasses all students in grades six (6) through twelve (12) wishing to participate in any extra-curricular activity/co-curricular/driving (or seeking permission for use of District facilities to park a personal vehicle). No participation in extra-curricular activities/co-curricular/driving will be allowed unless students and their parents or guardians consent to drug testing under the District’s Random Drug/Alcohol Testing Policy that follows this policy and comply with the District’s General D/A Policy.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

Interscholastic athletic/co-curricular/extra-curricular activities: All activities that meet beyond the regular school day.

Note: Participation in these activities is a privilege, not a right

Student drivers: Students enrolled in the Somerset Area School District who are operating a vehicle on school property and wish to obtain a student-parking permit.

Note: Seeking permission for use of District facilities to park a personal vehicle is a privilege, not a right.

The activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- All athletics, including cheerleading
- All music groups such as band, chorus, and orchestra (participation beyond the school day)
- All competitive academic teams (such as student congress, forensics, scholastic quiz, reading competition, etc.)
- All District club activities
- All District events
- National Honor Society
- Drama (plays/theater productions/all musical groups);
- Operating a vehicle on school property and seeking to obtain a student-parking permit
- School dances
- School groups whose members serve as representatives of the District
- Any activity that may develop and be considered a privilege after the writing of this policy

## **PROCEDURES**

This policy applies to the use of alcohol and drugs both in and out of school. Each participant in any extra-curricular/co-curricular activity and each driver is required to refrain from the use of alcohol and drugs (unless prescribed by a practitioner licensed to do so by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or United States of America).

**“In-school” violations:** Any violation of the District’s General D/A Policy (generally, being found to be in possession or under the influence at a school-related/sponsored/sanctioned event or on school property) shall result in the suspension of the offender from all extra-curricular/co-curricular activities/driving, including the one at which the violation occurred and loss of parking privileges, in addition to any other disciplinary action authorized by this policy. The above includes admitted use, consumption prior to participation, or possession, during any school activity--on or off school property that is known to a coach or school personnel, faculty, or administration. Students who violate this policy will also be subject to all disciplinary measures and conditions outlined in the District’s General D/A Policy.

**Outside-of-school violations:** Outside-of-school violations are those not occurring at school or school –related/sponsored/sanctioned events. It is a violation of this policy for a student to engage in any unlawful conduct, including, but not limited to using, possessing, giving, selling, or otherwise transmitting a prohibited substance. It is also a violation for a student to attend a social gathering of his/her peers where the student has knowledge that another person illegally possesses a prohibited substance. Confirmation of such conduct may originate through the following avenues:

1. **Law enforcement/judicial sources:** Information lawfully received by the District from law enforcement or judicial sources, such as notice of the issuance of a citation or through the student’s own admission.
2. **Other school districts:** Information received from another school district’s building principal as a result of criminal activity at their event (athletic, dance, etc).
3. **Self-referral by Students :** Students may take advantage of a self-referral procedure to seek information, guidance, counseling and/or assessment in regard to his/her use of alcohol and/or drugs. First time voluntary referrals **do not** carry any punitive consequences.

Please note the following information:

1. Students are allowed one (1) voluntary referral during their middle/high school participation.
2. Self-referrals can be made by the student or by his/her immediate family.
3. Self-referral cannot be used as a method to avoid consequences once this policy is violated and a student has been identified as having violated that rule.
4. Students must make self-referrals to an advisor, coach, athletic director, teacher, administrator, or guidance counselor.
5. Self-referrals will lead to a Student Assistance and Referral Team (ST.A.R.T.) referral. The student must follow all recommendations made by the ST.A.R.T. Team and all required assessments by outside agencies. Students must be compliant with the entire ST.A.R.T. process. Failure to follow through will result in a violation of this policy.
6. Those referrals to an assessing agency will remain confidential; however, proper release of information forms must be on file with the designated trained chemical dependency personnel.

#### **OFFENSES:**

The following actions will be taken with any individual who violates this policy:

#### **FIRST OFFENSE:**

1. Participation and attendance in extra-curricular activities/driving - suspended for 15 school days
2. Interscholastic Athletics
  - a. Suspended for one (1) week of practice
  - b. Suspended for twenty percent (20%) of season's total contests
  - c. If twenty percent (20%) of season's total contests are not available, or student is not in season of participation, the uncompleted percentage will carry over to the student's next available sport.
3. The student will be tested on all future in school drug tests.
4. The student will be referred to the Student Assistance Program (SAP)

#### **SECOND OFFENSE:**

1. Participation and attendance in extra-curricular activities/driving
  - a. Suspended for thirty (30) school days
2. Interscholastic Athletics
  - a. Suspended for two (2) weeks of practice
  - b. Suspended for forty percent (40%) of season's total contests
3. If forty percent (40%) of season's total contests are not available, or student is not in season of participation, the uncompleted percentage will carry over to the student's next available sport.
4. The student must participate in the Student Assistance Program (SAP). The student will be required to participate in a drug and alcohol assessment with a certified drug and

alcohol evaluator. Failure to comply with the evaluator's recommendations will result in the student being prohibited indefinitely from further participation in extra-curricular activities/driving until he/she completes the recommended treatment plan.

5. The student must be retested at the parents cost and test negative prior to his/her return to activities.
6. The student will be tested on all future in school drug tests.

### **THIRD OFFENSE:**

1. The student will be banned from all participation, practice, competition, and attendance and from parking privileges for the remainder of enrollment in the District **or in a cyber or home-school program approved or paid by the District.**

### **ADDITIONAL TERMS:**

Accumulation: Offenses are cumulative in grades 6, 7, and 8 and begin accumulation again at the first offense in grade 9 and are cumulative in grade 9, 10, 11, and 12.

Suspensions from school: Acts or violations that result in out-of-school suspension from school (or in-school suspension, if the administrator deems appropriate) will result in the forfeiture of all participation in school events for a period of time equal to the suspension. During the time of out-of-school suspension, the participant will not be permitted to attend practices or rehearsals, be on school grounds, or participate in any school-sponsored events.

Expulsions: Expelled students will forfeit all participation and attendance in school events and will not be permitted on school grounds at any time.

No student will be penalized upon return for not practicing interscholastic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular activities during evening, or after-school performances, when declared ineligible.

Season: A season is defined as the first legal practice date allowed by the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) or similar governing body and the final competitive playing date. Student driver permits are issued on a school-year (180 days) basis.

Other possible sanctions: Sanctions imposed on a student by any organization that is affiliated with or is governed by National, Federal, or State guidelines will be applied in addition to the procedures listed in this policy.

## **D. SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT GRADE 6-12 MANDATORY RANDOM DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY** **(“Random D/A Testing Policy”)**

**NOTICE: Students who participate in interscholastic athletic, extra-curricular, co-curricular activities or are student drivers must participate in and comply with this policy. Other students may voluntarily participate with permission/request and the consent of their parents/guardians.**

### **PURPOSE**

The Somerset Area School District (herein referenced as the “District”) recognizes interscholastic, extra-curricular, and co-curricular activity participation, and the permission of

student drivers for the use of District facilities to park a personal vehicle as privileges, and not rights. Student participation in extra-curricular/co-curricular activities is voluntary. Students and their parents or legal guardians must recognize that because of their choice to participate in these activities, they have a lesser expectation of privacy than do other students. Students volunteering to participate are expected to accept the responsibilities associated with these privileges.

As representatives of the District, students involved in extra-curricular/co-curricular activities are examined by the public, become role models for children, as well as peers, and are special representatives of the community. They have chosen to accept this role and, with it, the responsibility of a drug- and alcohol-free lifestyle. Student drivers who are seeking permission for use of District facilities to park a personal vehicle also accept the responsibility that is inherent in operating a vehicle.

All students have a responsibility to themselves and others to set a good example and to conduct themselves in a way that will not cause harm to themselves or others through the use of drugs or alcohol.

Administrators, teachers, advisors, and coaches recognize that drugs and alcohol have detrimental effects on motivation, memory, judgment, reaction time, coordination, and performance. These effects, in conjunction with other health and safety factors, have led to the development of this policy. This policy is viewed as a viable drug- and alcohol- free school policy.

Therefore, the District has adopted this mandatory Random D/A Testing Policy for all students in grades 6 through 12 choose to participate in extra-curricular/co-curricular activities/driving. In addition, parents of children in grades 6-12 who are not participants in the above activities are strongly encouraged to consent for their child to voluntarily participate in the testing program. A parent letter will be sent home for such consent.

Please help us to maintain a drug and alcohol-free school by consenting to have your child participate voluntarily.

## **PROCEDURES**

Every member of a District interscholastic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular program (as designated by the Principal), and student drivers shall be a participant in this Random D/A Testing program. For students involved in extra-curricular/co-curricular activities, testing will be during the activity season/school year in which the student is participating. Student drivers who are seeking permission for use of district facilities to park a personal vehicle may be tested throughout the school year. Students not otherwise required who participate in the Random D/A Testing program, but whose parents consent shall also be participants to the program throughout the year. An independent laboratory of the District's choosing will evaluate the sample, and the laboratory shall follow strict chain of custody procedures.

Costs: All costs associated with the drug and alcohol testing will be paid by the District. Prescription medications that the student is taking must be identified by the student and verified by a copy of the prescription or a written statement by the prescribing practitioner.

Test results: All test results will be provided to the district within a timely manner following administration of the test. The administrator will receive a confidential report of the test results in writing from the chosen laboratory.

Positive test result: If the student's test is positive, a medical review physician ("MRP") designated by the District or testing facility will confirm all positive test results. The MRP will investigate to determine if any legally prescribed medications or health factors affected the positive result. If no other medical reason exists for the positive result, the student will be deemed to be in violation of the District's General D/A Policy and the Eligibility Policy.

If the MRP confirms the positive results, the building Principal or his/her designee and the athletic director/advisor will hold a parent conference to inform the parent/guardian of test results. Should the parent/guardian or student provide additional information relevant to interpretations of the test results, the Principal, or his/her designee may contact the MRP for further review of the results.

**Students who test positive for drugs or alcohol will complete the following:**

The student will be referred to the Student Assistance and Referral Team (S.A.R.T) and must participate in the Student Assistance Program (SAP). The student will be required to participate in a drug and alcohol assessment with a certified drug and alcohol evaluator. Failure to comply with the evaluator's recommendations will result in the student being prohibited from further participation in extra-curricular activities/driving.

A confirmed positive test is considered a violation of all District drug and alcohol-related policies and is cumulative with any prior drug and alcohol violations covered in the SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT GRADES 6-12 INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC/EXTRA-CURRICULAR/CO-CURRICULAR/STUDENT DRIVER POLICY ("Eligibility Policy").

Accumulation: Offenses are cumulative in grades 6, 7, and 8 and begin accumulation again at the first offense in grade 9 and are cumulative in grade 9, 10, 11, and 12.

Retesting: Any confirmed positive test will require the student to be retested at the parents'/guardians' cost and test negative prior to his/her return to activities. The student must participate in the SAP program. The student will be required to participate in a drug and alcohol assessment with a certified drug and alcohol evaluator. Failure to comply with the evaluator's recommendations will result in the student being prohibited indefinitely from further participation in extra-curricular activities/co-curricular/driving until he/she completes the recommended treatment plan.

Testing selection: Students will be randomly selected to participate in the screening from each interscholastic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular activity, and student drivers and from a pool of those not involved in school activities who have volunteered to participate or from a random selection of the entire pool of participants.

Random selection method: Students will be randomly selected for testing by a computer-generated program using the student's identification (ID) numbers. The

specific percentage of students will be selected from each activity or from the total pool. The percentage may vary from 5% to 100% depending on the activity and circumstances.

Refusal to participate when selected: Should any student, at any time, refuse to submit a sample for testing, this shall result in the student's disqualification from participation and the student will not be permitted to participate in extra-curricular activities/driving until he/she submits to a drug and alcohol test and tests negative. The student will comply with the suspension guidelines as described in this policy.

Failure to follow testing protocol: If a student fails to follow the directions for testing or violates any requirement thereof, the student will be deemed to have refused testing and the provisions above will apply.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All tests results will be confidential and access to results shall be limited to the MRP, the student, parents, or guardians, persons authorized by the student or parents or guardians, or as directed by any subpoena or court order, the administrator or his or her designee, the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, Director of Education and to the extent necessary for them to perform their duties, the coach or activity advisor, the guidance counselor, school nurse, SAP personnel, certified drug and alcohol evaluators or drug and alcohol counselors, and others approved by the Superintendent as needing the information to implement and enforce this policy and otherwise carry out their duties.

This policy is directed toward prevention and treatment. However, this policy does not limit the scope and extent of other laws, regulations or school policy dealing with drugs and alcohol.

## **TESTING PROTOCOL**

Testing pool: A list of eligible students will be prepared by the advisors/coaches of each activity and by the administrator (administrator information is provided with respect to the pool of students not involved in an activity). This list will be forwarded to the administrator or designee for the random selection of students who will be asked to submit urine or saliva specimens for testing.

Random selection from pool: The administrator will use a computer system to assure that students are selected in a random fashion. Student ID numbers will be used in the selection.

Test dates: Urine or saliva testing is unannounced. The day and date are selected by the administrator and confirmed with Somerset Hospital. Random testing may be done weekly.

Determination of season dates for testing purposes: A competitive season begins the date of the first official practice/organizational meeting for that activity and continues until that competitive season concludes. For other activities, the administrator will establish the beginning and ending of the season.

The District's testing provider (currently Somerset Hospital) is responsible for assuring proper drug testing custody and control forms are used to satisfy the requirements of this policy. A student number will be used for identification with that number appearing only on the copies that go to the donor, MRP, and school official. Students will complete a form that will list his/her ID number and name. That form remaining with the administrator. The purpose of this form is for the students to verify, via signature, that this is his/her school-assigned ID number.

Urine collection process:

Selected students report from class to the collection site.

1. Student is brought to the collection site.
2. No purses, bags, or containers may be taken into the collection area with the student. All extra coats, vests, jackets, sweaters, etc. are to be removed before entering the collection area.
3. The student and collector complete the drug testing custody and control form.
4. Student is first asked to wash his/her hands with soap and water and dry them. (If water is unavailable, a non-alcoholic wipe may be used instead).
5. The collector adds a bluing agent to the water in the urinal or toilet.
6. The student is told to urinate directly into the provided container and should provide sufficient amount of urine (45ml) in one attempt. The student is also told he/she is to hand the container of urine to the collector.
7. The student enters the stall to collect the specimen, and then hands the container to the collector. The student may rewash his/her hands after watching his/her specimen being sealed.
8. The collector checks the volume, reads and records the temperature within four minutes of collection, and looks for evidence of tampering. If tampering is suspected, a second specimen will be requested. A second suspected tampered specimen would be considered refusal to test. The Principal will be notified.
9. With the student watching, the collector will pour the specimen into the two bottles and recap the specimen bottles tightly.
10. The collector will take the properly signed and initialed bottle seals and place them over the caps and sides of the bottles.
11. The sealed bottles are placed inside the transport bag and the top sealed as directed.
12. The top lab copies of the drug testing custody and control form are folded with the top portion visible to the outside and placed in the requisition pouch. This pouch is then sealed as indicated. The student is given the donor copy of the form.
13. The student may now rewash his/her hands and is then sent back to class.
14. The collector distributes the remaining copies of the form as required and is required for getting the appropriate copy of the form to the MRP in a timely manner.
15. The Principal will be notified immediately of any student who refuses to give a urine sample. Protocol for saliva testing will be distributed to students when saliva testing is available to the District.

**Medical Review Physician (MRP) Responsibilities:**

1. The MRP will review all results of urine or saliva drug testing. Any urine or saliva specimen testing positive for illicit or banned substances after a second test on a portion of the original sample will be handled in the following manner:

2. The MRP determines if any discrepancies have occurred in the chain of custody.
3. Depending on the substances found in the urine or saliva, if necessary, the MRP will contact the designated school official for information needed to contact the parent/guardian/custodian to determine if the student is on any prescribed medication from a physician or if there are any other legitimate circumstances that might have affected the test result.
4. If the student is using prescription medication legally prescribed to him/her, the parent/guardian/custodian will be asked to obtain a letter from the prescribing physician, within five working days, to document what medications the student is currently taking. If there are any other circumstances presented, the parent shall also furnish appropriate documentation within five (5) working days. Failure to provide such requested information will be considered a positive result.
5. The MRP will then determine if any of the prescribed medications or other legitimate circumstances presented resulted in the positive drug screen.
6. Finally, the MRP will utilize the information obtained to certify the drug test results as positive or negative, and report this to the building Principal, initially reporting positive results by phone. The MRP will also notify the Prevention Coordinator of the testing facility that a drug test returned positive giving only the dates of the collection and reporting.
  - a. For example, a drug screen positive for codeine may be ruled negative by the MRP when he receives a letter from the treating physician that the student has been prescribed Tylenol with codeine as a pain medication following tooth extraction.
  - b. Or, if the student has a positive drug screen for codeine and has no documented physician order for the medication (in the event, for example, a parent gave the student one of his or her pills, this would likely be ruled a positive drug test by the MRP).

Testing positive for illicit drugs: Drug screens positive for illicit drugs (amphetamines, cocaine metabolite, marijuana metabolite, opiates-heroin, phencyclidine, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, methadone, methaqualone, propoxyphene, etc. and alcohol) and not explained by the taking of prescribed medicines or other legitimate circumstances would automatically be considered positive by the MRP.

Other factors considered: The MRP may use quantitative results to determine if positive results on repeat tests indicate recent use of illicit or banned substances or the natural decline of levels of the illicit or banned substances from the body. If the MRP feels the quantitative levels determined to be above the established cutoffs do not reflect current use but natural decay, then negative results may be reported. The MRP will complete the final review on the drug testing custody and control form and return the appropriate copy to the building Principal in a confidential manner.

Specimen pick-up process: The District's testing provider (currently UPMC Somerset) personnel is responsible for seeing that specimens are delivered to or picked up by the testing laboratory and the chain of custody form properly annotated.

Procedures in the event of a positive result: See above *Procedures* section of this policy

## **EXCEPTIONS**

If a student participates in more than one extra-curricular activity and if the student is randomly selected for drug testing in more than one activity at or about the same time, the appropriate administrator shall have the right to excuse a student from repetitive testing if he or she deems an excuse warranted.

## **REQUESTED TESTING**

In addition to random testing, students may be tested, at the Principal's discretion, upon parental request. Such testing will not be part of or reduce the random pool and student consent is not required unless the student is eighteen (18) years of age or older.

## **OTHER TESTING**

In addition to testing on a random basis as described above, the Principal or his or her designee may require testing on a non-random basis when there is a specific reason or reasonable basis to suspect that it may be warranted.

## **DIRECTIONS TO STUDENTS : DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENTS**

You have been randomly selected to participate in a drug and alcohol screening of students involved in interscholastic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular activities, and student drivers under the District Random D/A Testing Policy or who are part of the pool of students not participating in the above listed activities but whose parents consent, or have been designated for testing by parental request, or because of a specific reason or reasonable basis to suspect that testing is warranted a problem (in such a case, you will be told what the reason is.)

You must follow these steps:

1. If you have questions regarding the screening, ask the technician prior to the testing.
2. Do not eat, drink, or alter your body chemistry after you have been notified of your selection.
3. Follow the procedure as described by the medical technician or person in charge.
4. Do not, in any way, try to dilute, discolor, alter, or mask the specimen.
5. Please sign off on all paperwork following the testing.
6. If you are taking any specific medication at this time, please notify the technician before screening.
7. Get a note and return to your classroom.
8. If you test positive, you will be notified and a parent/guardian conference will be scheduled with the building Principal.
9. If you refuse the drug and alcohol screening after being selected or if you fail to follow the above directions or instruction from the technician or person in charge, you will be disqualified from participating in interscholastic, extracurricular, or co-curricular activities, and as a student driver as outlined in the Board-approved Random Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy. You will be required to follow the policy provisions with respect to any future participation in extra-curricular activities.

**Somerset Area School District**  
**PARENT LETTER GRADES 6-12**  
**MANDATORY RANDOM DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING POLICY**

Drug Testing Program

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parents and Students of the Somerset Area School District:

The Somerset Area School District has adopted a policy of mandatory random drug and alcohol testing for all students in grades 6-12 who are participants in interscholastic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs and all student drivers who are seeking permission and use of school facilities to park a personal vehicle.

In addition, parents of children in grades 6-12 who are not participants in the above activities are strongly encouraged to consent for their child to voluntarily participate in the testing program. A parent letter will be sent home for such consent. Please help us to maintain a drug and alcohol-free school by consenting to have your child participate voluntarily.

Students who are selected will provide a urine or saliva sample that will test for amphetamines, cocaine metabolite, marijuana metabolite, opiates-heroin, phencyclidine, barbiturate, benzodiazepines, methadone, methaqualone, pro-poxyphene, adulterants, and alcohol. The screening will be co-supervised by Somerset Hospital personnel and Somerset Area School District personnel in a private setting in the high school. The Somerset Area School District will observe all legal rules for chain of custody at both the collection and analysis sites. (Chain of custody refers to the security of handling the obtained sample from the point of collection to the final destination of the laboratory including identification, labeling, sealing, and testing.)

The Principal of the Middle School or High School will receive a confidential report of the test results. The Principal will promptly notify the parents of the students upon receipt of any positive test results.

The test is to be used as a deterrent rather than a disciplinary tool; however, those who test positive will be notified by the Principal and will be required to do the following:

1. Meet with the Principal and with his/her parents/guardians.
2. Participate in the District's Student Assistance Program and complete a drug and alcohol evaluation.
3. Comply with the drug and alcohol evaluator's recommendations. Failure to comply will result in exclusion from participation in all school activities and student driving. For a student not involved in an activity, the school will cooperate with parents to determine appropriate follow-up action based on the District Policy.
4. Be disqualified from further participation in the activity as outlined in District's K – 12 Drug and Alcohol Policy.

5. Be retested before the start of another interscholastic, extra-curricular, co-curricular activity in which he/she participates (including student driving) and to test negative prior to his/her return to the activity.

Students will be selected randomly for testing by a computer-generated program using the student's ID number. A student may also be called for testing if there is a specific reason to suspect that there may be a problem. Should any student refuse to submit a sampling for test, he/she will be disqualified from participation in the activity as specified in the policy.

Students will be selected randomly to participate in the screening from each interscholastic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular activity, student drivers and from a pool of those not involved in school activities who have volunteered to participate or from a random selection of the entire pool of participants. The percentage may vary from 5% to 100% depending on the activity and circumstances. The test will not be announced prior to the actual date of screening. Testing results will be held in strict confidence as provided in the policy. The District will continue to follow the Board-approved K – 12 Drug and Alcohol Policy concerning the use, possession, or distribution of illegal substances on school premises and possessing, using, or distributing on non-school time.

Parents may also request, through the Principal of the Middle School or High School, that their child be tested. (Such test will not affect the random sampling percentage for an activity or testing pool.) These students will still be subject to the drug- testing provision of the policy. The cost of this testing will be paid for by the school district.

We thank you for your support and assistance in keeping drugs and alcohol out of our school. This letter includes a great deal of information about the District's Random Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy; however, you are strongly encouraged to read all three District policies related to student drug and alcohol use, as listed below:

- A. The District's K – 12 Student Drug and Alcohol Policy ("General D/A Policy")
- B. The Interscholastic Athletic/Extra-Curricular/Co-Curricular/Student Driver Eligibility Policy ("Eligibility Policy")
- C. The Random Drug/Alcohol Testing Policy ("Random D/A Testing Policy")
- D. The District's K – 12 Drug, Alcohol and Weapon Search Policy ("Search Policy")

If your child is not a participant in the mandatory school activity pool, we urge you to consent to having your child voluntarily participate in this program. Please complete the Consent/Referral Form (whether you consent or are refusing) and return to your child's teacher through your child or if you prefer, mail to the "Principal of the Middle School OR Principal of the High School", Somerset Area School District, 645 S. Columbia Avenue, Ste. 130, Somerset, PA 15501.

Respectfully,

SOMERSET AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
645 South Columbia Avenue Suite 110  
Somerset, PA 15501-2513

**IMPLIED CONSENT FORM: PERMISSION TO TEST  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR STUDENTS GRADES 6-12**

**PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS:**

The Somerset Area School District has adopted a policy of mandatory random drug and alcohol testing for all students in grades 6-12 who are participants in interscholastic, extra-curricular, co-curricular programs and all student drivers who are seeking permission and use of school facilities to park a personal vehicle.

The Somerset Area School District is committed to providing safe, drug and alcohol- free schools. The district appreciates your support, encouragement, and cooperation. The cost of the test will be covered by the Somerset Area School District. Tests will be confidential as stated in the drug and alcohol testing policy of the district. A random sampling process as provided in the policy will determine the selection of the students to be tested. In some cases, 100% of participants in a particular activity may be tested. Testing may also be done if a parent or guardian requests it. The district may also require a test if there is a specific reason or reasonable basis to suspect that testing is warranted.

I hereby give permission for the Somerset Area School District and UPMC Somerset Hospital to perform drug and alcohol tests on my son/daughter. I realize the purpose and ramifications of the testing and will follow the guidelines set forth in board policy for positive test results.

I understand that my son/daughter will follow the procedural section of the District's Random Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy for a positive test results as indicated. They will be disqualified from participation in activities as outlined in board policy on drug and alcohol testing for students. I also understand that my son/daughter will be required to comply with specific requirements of the board policy for further interscholastic/extra-curricular/co-curricular participation as set forth in the policy. I acknowledge that I have reviewed a copy of the policy.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM FOR ALL STUDENTS**

I have received and reviewed the District's Random Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy. I understand that as a condition to participate in interscholastic, extra-curricular, co-curricular programs and all student drivers who are seeking permission and use of school facilities to park a personal vehicle, I must comply with the mandatory drug testing policy. My signature does not necessarily indicate that I agree with the policy but acknowledge that I received and understand the content of the policy.

If you choose to opt your child out of this program, please return the completed form below. Also please note that your refusal to participate in this program will result in your students ineligibility to take part in interscholastic, extracurricular, co-curricular programs and on-campus parking. This form only needs to be returned if you are refusing participation in the district's random drug and alcohol testing. If you prefer, you may mail the form to the school district. Please print your name, address, and your son/daughter's name.

Student Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family physician name and contact information:  
\_\_\_\_\_

I REFUSE FOR MY CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DISTRICT'S DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING PROGRAM

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **I. General Policy**

Regular attendance at school is necessary so that students may have every opportunity to progress in their studies to the fullest. Excessive absenteeism not only impedes the student's academic achievement and social growth, but also limits the time a teacher can devote to a student. It has definitely demoralizing effect on our schools as a whole, as well as, on the academic progress of the specific absentee student.

### **II. Excused Absences**

An absence of three (3) or more consecutive days must be covered by a doctor's excuse. A doctor's note must be provided when a student is absent for three or more consecutive days. Parents/guardians must attempt to ensure that all days missed due to illness are listed on the doctor's note; however, parent notes may run consecutive with

physician-excused days up to five combined days of absence due to illness, as long as the parent/guardian has not exhausted his/her allotment of ten days.

An absence will be considered as excused only for the following reasons:

1. Personal illness
2. Serious illness or death in the immediate family
3. Emergency medical or dental attention
4. Absences approved in advance with school administration (college days, military tests, or physicals)
5. Students may be excused from school for educational travel for a period of up to five (5) school days per year. Parents/Guardians must submit a request to the school prior to the departure date and must make arrangements for the student's work to be completed. Educational days are subject to approval by the school administration and will count towards the maximum of 10 parental excused days.
6. Authorized religious holidays
7. A student absent from school because of fulfilling official duties of a position or as a result of a school-approved absence may be excused if the following conditions are met:
  - a. The student's parent/guardian prior to the activity submits to the district a written request for the excusal.
  - b. The student's participation in the activity has been approved by the Superintendent or designee.
  - c. An adult is directing and supervising the activity who is acceptable to both parent/guardian and the Superintendent.

All other absences will be considered as unexcused and unlawful.

All excuses are required to be submitted within three (3) school days of the absence. This includes **both** those written and signed by the parent/guardian **and** those provided by the treating medical practitioner. If such an excuse is not submitted within three (3) school days upon return to school, the absence will be recorded as unexcused and unlawful.

A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification may be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days will require an excuse from a physician.

Students may be excused from school for educational travel for a period of up to five (5) school days per year. Parents/Guardians must submit a request to the school prior to the departure date and must make

arrangements for the student's work to be completed. Educational days are subject to approval by the school administration and will count towards the maximum of 10 parental excused days.

Bereavement days do not count toward ten (10) parent excuses, but they are considered absences.

### **III. Unexcused Absences**

A. The following are **not excusable** absences in accordance with attendance laws. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all unexcused absences; rather, it provides examples of unexcused activities:

1. Truancy
2. Missing the school bus
3. Parent/Sibling Appointments
4. Trips not approved in advance
5. Shopping
6. Hunting and fishing
7. Birthday or other celebrations/Weddings
8. Gainful employment
9. Work at home/Babysitting relatives

B. All absences, other than those defined as excused absences in Section II above, are considered unexcused absences.

1. If a student is absent, he or she must present a parental or medical excuse within three (3) days of returning to school after the absence or the absence shall be declared unlawful.
2. In an effort to encourage school attendance, students may receive a grade of zero for all work graded on the unexcused day. Likewise, students may not be given an opportunity to make up tests, quizzes, homework, etc. for days missed that are unexcused/unlawful. Once the administration determines and communicates to the teaching staff that the student is truant, he/she **will** receive zeros for all graded work on future unexcused absences.
3. After a student has accumulated three (3) days or more of unexcused absences, the student's parents or guardians shall be notified by a three (3) day letter.
4. After a student has accumulated five (5) days of unexcused absences, the student and parents or guardians must take part in

- a truancy elimination plan (TEP) and will be contacted by the principal or designee.
5. Students who are under the age of eighteen (18) will be referred to Children and Youth Services, contacted by a school social worker, and referred to the appropriate Student Assistance Program (SAP) team after **7 days** of unexcused absences.
  6. Students under the age of eighteen (18) will be referred to the magistrate at **7 days** of unexcused absences.
  7. A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful excused absences verified by parental notification and unexcused absences are permitted during a school year. After ten days of excused/unexcused absences all absences must be accompanied by written confirmation from a doctor or the days will be marked unexcused. Ten-day letters will be mailed to parents/guardians at this time.
  8. A doctor's note must be provided when a student is absent for three or more consecutive days. Parents/guardians must attempt to ensure that all days missed due to illness are listed on the doctor's note; however, parent notes may run consecutive with physician-excused days up to five combined days of absence due to illness, as long as the parent/guardian has not exhausted his/her allotment of ten days.
  9. Any student who accumulates 10 or more medical absences will be required to submit a chronic illness verification form signed by his or her regular family physician. This verification shall be in addition to excuses as required for each absence. After the tenth medical absence, all other medical excuses will be deemed unexcused until this form is submitted.
  10. Any students deemed chronically absent as defined by the state of Pennsylvania (missing more than 10% of school year or approximately 17 days regardless of reason-medical/parental/other) may face the loss of privileges including, but not limited to:
    - a. Loss of electronic device privileges
    - b. Loss of extracurricular activity privileges/participation, such as: athletics, sporting events, clubs, dances (including prom), incentives, etc...
    - c. Loss of parking pass privileges
    - d. Loss of work permits
    - e. Loss of work release privileges
    - f. Loss of position/privilege to attend SCTC (at administration's discretion)

- g. Loss of the privilege to participate in graduation ceremonies
  - h. Loss of other activity privileges/attendance, at the discretion of administration
11. A student of any age who has accumulated a total of thirty-five (35) days of either excused or unexcused absences may be retained in the same grade level for the succeeding year at the discretion of the principal. However, in exercising this discretion, the principal shall consider any prolonged medically excused absences if all of the academic assignments have been completed.
  12. Any student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older and who has accumulated a total of twelve (12) unexcused days of absence may be dismissed at the discretion of the principal.
  13. Students who are of compulsory attendance age become subject to the provision of Act 29 of the PA School Code:

### **Proceedings and Penalties for Violation of Compulsory Attendance Requirements (24 PS 13-1333 and 1338.1)**

#### **A. School Code**

Every parent/guardian of any child of compulsory school age is subject to penalties if compulsory school-age attendance requirements are not met. While school districts are required to give three days written notice of violation of compulsory attendance prior to proceeding against the offending party it is strongly recommended that school districts make a concerted effort to address the cause of a child's truant behavior before referring the child to another system.

Possible sentences for parents found to be in violation of compulsory attendance law:

1. Paying a fine up to \$300 for each offense and court costs, or
2. Completing a parenting education program, and
3. In cases where the party convicted fails to pay the fine or complete the parenting education program, a subsequent sentencing to the county jail for no more than five days.
4. Completing in lieu of, or in addition to the previous penalties, community service within the school district for a period of no more than six months.
5. Magisterial district judges may suspend all or portions of the sentence if the child is no longer habitually truant.

The board of school directors may bring a student before the court. Possible dispositions for children found in violation of compulsory attendance law:

1. If the parent/guardian is not convicted by the magisterial district judge because the parent/guardian took every reasonable step to insure the child's attendance at school and the child has attained the age of 13, the child may be:
  - Subject to a fine of no more than \$300 for each offense, or
  - Assigned to an adjudication alternative program pursuant to 42 Pa.C.S. § 1520, and
  - Alleged to be dependent under 42 Pa.C.S. §6303(a) (1) by the magisterial district judge if the child fails to pay the fine or comply with the adjudication program.
  - Referred by the school district for services or possible disposition as a dependent child as defined under 42 Pa.C.S. § 6302(5), in lieu of prosecution or assignment to an adjudication alternative program, if the child fails to comply with compulsory attendance provisions and is habitually truant

(Magisterial district judges may suspend all or portions of the sentence if the child is no longer habitually truant.)

2. Any child who has not attained the age of 13 who fails to comply with the compulsory attendance requirements and is habitually truant, shall be:
  - Referred by the school district for services or possible adjudication as a dependent child as defined under 42 Pa.C.S. § 6302(5).
3. For children convicted of violation of compulsory attendance requirements by the magisterial district judge, the court, including a court not of record, must send a certified record of the conviction or other disposition to the Department of Transportation.
  - a) Upon first conviction, the child's operating privilege for operating an automobile will be suspended for 90 days.
  - b) Upon the second or subsequent conviction, the child's operating privileges will be suspended for six months.
  - c) Children who do not yet have a driver's license will be ineligible to apply for a license for the time periods of 90 days for the first conviction and six months for the second and any subsequent conviction.

4. If a student of compulsory school age cannot be kept in school on account of truancy, the school district may proceed against the student before the juvenile court.

### **B. Further corrective measures for violation of compulsory attendance**

General protective services are defined as services to prevent the potential for harm to a child. Under Title 55 Pa Code, Chapter 3490.223, children who are habitually and without justification truant from school while subject to compulsory school attendance are subject to an assessment to determine if there is a need for general protective services. Children shall not be referred to the county children and youth agency for assessment as possibly needing services until after the school district has made a formal effort to involve the family and child in resolving the cause of the truant behavior.

**Students absent from school for non-school-approved activities will be considered unexcused, and notice will be sent after three unexcused days. If absence is because of a non-school-approved activity, arrangements must be made beforehand for class work makeup.**

### **IV. Truancy**

Truancy is an unexcused absence. You are truant if you:

- 1) Leave the school without permission from the office.
- 2) Are absent from class without permission.
- 3) Obtain a pass to go to a certain place and do not report there.
- 4) Are ill and go home or stay in the restroom instead of reporting to the nurse or high school office.

If students are absent and school authorities are unable to contact their parents or guardian, they will be considered truant unless they present a doctor's excuse upon returning to school.

If students, whose parents have designated them as ill, are observed by a school official outside their home, they will be considered truant unless they present a doctor's excuse.

A student absent without the consent of his/her parent is truant. This is an unexcused absence. Repeated truancy will be cause for disciplinary action: suspension, expulsion, or legal action.

## V. Tardiness

1. A student tardy to homeroom should not be admitted without a pass from an authorized person. Passes must be cleared at the office for attendance purposes.
2. Secondary students will be considered tardy until 9:59 AM. After 9:59 AM their late entry will be considered as one-half day's unexcused absence until 1:59 PM and one day's unexcused absence after 1:59 PM.
3. All students must be in school by 10:00 AM to participate in any extra- curricular/co-curricular activities on any given school day.

## VI. Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedures

1. A student leaving school before 1:59 PM will be considered absent for one-half day. A student arriving to school after 9:59 AM must be signed in by a parent, guardian, or grandparent. *Phone calls from parents will only be utilized in extreme circumstances.*
2. Students signing out early must be signed out by a parent, guardian, or grandparent and **photo I.D.** must be presented by the individual signing the student out of school. (Appointments should be made for out-of-school hours in all cases.) As long as students are living with parents or guardians, they will follow this procedure regardless of their age.

## VII. Withdrawal From School

Upon withdrawal from Somerset Area Schools, the student's parents/guardians should make every effort to re-enter the student in the new place of residence as soon as possible. If no request for records is received within thirty (30) days, Somerset Area Schools will take appropriate action to ensure continuity in the student's educational program.

## VIII. Attendance Guidelines

If you arrive late to school, report to the main office for a late slip.

If you have been detained in the office or by a teacher, get a written pass from the person who detained you before going to your next class.

Seniors and juniors may have excused absences for college interviews and visits, armed service examinations/physicals, and employment interviews. These must be prearranged through the attendance office. The following procedure must be followed:

- 1) You must bring a note from parent/guardian requesting the appointment day prior to the visit.

- 2) You must bring a note back on letterhead of the above confirming the visit.

**If this procedure is not followed, it will be an unexcused day.**

All appointment forms from doctors, state police, etc. must be signed and returned to the Jr. or Sr. high school office within 3 school days.

#### **IX. Parental Signature**

Parents will be required to submit a signed, revised STUDENT UPDATE/CHANGE FORM. Parental signature will also serve as confirmation that the parent has read the Student Planner/Handbook.

#### **X. Collection of Homework When Absent**

Students who are absent from school are encouraged to get assignments from other students who are in the same class. If a student is unable to do this, the office staff will attempt to get homework for students who miss at least three consecutive days due to illness. Requests must be made before 10:00 AM on the day assignments are needed. Students on out of school suspension or absences of less than three days are responsible for securing their own homework during the time out of school as this will not be done by the school office personnel.

### **COMPUTER RESOURCE LABS**

#### **Operating & Pass Procedures**

1. All users will be given access to the District's network via a username and password upon signing the appropriate Acceptable Use Policy.
2. No students will be admitted to the lab unless their classroom teacher accompanies them or the Computer Lab Assistant has issued them a computer lab pass.
3. Students must arrange for computer room-to-room passes before the start of homeroom. Such passes will appear as a stamp on the appropriate day in student planners. Passes will be issued only to students who have an assignment or project to be completed. Passes when issued by computer lab personnel will be signed by the person issuing the pass. A teacher will provide verification of a student's need to use the computer lab facilities by countersigning the student's pass. Without a teacher's counter signature, the pass is **not** valid and the student should **not** be permitted to leave study hall or his/her classroom.

## **Somerset Area School District Student Acceptable Use Policy**

### **Guidelines:**

#### **Use of the Internet by Students**

1. Students shall not access inappropriate material on the Internet, including but not limited to, pornography, obscenity, child pornography, or other materials that may be "harmful to minors."
2. Students shall use electronic mail for educational purposes only. All email addresses must use non-descriptive identifiers (such as numbers instead of names.) Names must use non-descriptive identifiers (such as numbers instead names).
3. Students will not use chat rooms.
4. Students shall use other forms of direct electronic communications (such as newsgroups) for educational purposes only. All student names in such direct electronic communications must use non-descriptive identifiers (such as numbers instead of names).
5. Students shall not engage in unauthorized access of computers, including 'hacking'.
6. Students shall not engage in unlawful activities.
7. Student's shall not disclose, use, or disseminate any personal identification information of themselves or others.
8. The provisions of this policy shall also apply to student and employee use of the District's internet access through personal electronic devices, including cellular telephones, smart phones (iPhone, Android, and similar devices), digital audio players (iPods or MP3 players), digital cameras, digital video recorders, electronic e-mailing devices, laptop computers, tablet computers (iPads and similar devices), pagers, portable game players, eReaders (Nooks, Kindles, and other similar devices), or any device that provides a wireless connection to the internet, when such access occurs during school hours, on school grounds, or at school functions. Personal devices will be subject to the same levels of monitoring and access as any District owned technology device.

#### **Use of Hardware and Software by Students**

1. All computer equipment, including hardware and software, is owned by the school district and will be used for educational purposes only.
2. All copyright laws, including those of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the United States of America, or any international conventions must be followed.

3. The accessing or acquiring of files, passwords, or data belonging to other users is prohibited.
4. Any attempt to disrupt or destroy any hardware, software, or the work of others, either physically or electronically, is prohibited.
5. Data disks carried to and from school must be scanned for viruses each time usage is to take place on any District-owned computer equipment.

### **Consequences for Illegal or Inappropriate Use**

1. The principal will decide whether inappropriate usage has taken place. The existing "incident report form" will be the vehicle by which notification of the inappropriate usage will be reported.
2. Failure to follow the rules and regulations outlined in this document may result in the loss of computer/network privileges or other appropriate disciplinary action.
3. Illegal activities while using the District's technology systems may be considered a violation of state and/or federal laws and subject to prosecution by the appropriate authorities.
4. Intentional deletion or damage to systems or personal files of programs or data on the networks will cause the violator to be banned from further usage. The violator will be held responsible for the costs incurred for such damages.
5. Copyright violations and/or theft of services are a violation of the law. Violators will be prosecuted and banned from further usage.

**\*Any changes to the "Acceptable Use Policy" will be included in subsequent S.A.S.D. mailings.**