

# Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School

Parent & Student Handbook

2024-2025



Francis S. Grandinetti  
Elementary School

**2024-2025**  
**Parent and Student Handbook**

**Ridgway Area School District  
Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School**

**2024-2025**

**Parent / Student Handbook**

This student handbook describes briefly the major policies and procedures of the Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School. This handbook is not sufficiently comprehensive to answer all questions and/or represent the RASD Board Policies, which can be found on the district website. Please keep in mind this handbook is specific to the elementary school and is designed to help answer the most frequently asked questions. **Once you have read the contents with your child, please sign the Student Handbook Agreement contained in the Back to School packet. Students must return the agreement to his or her classroom teacher the next school day.**

If you have questions that are not answered in this booklet, please feel free to contact the school. We believe that maintaining open communication with you, as parents/guardians, is an extremely important element in your student's education. Your child's success in school reflects your support for their educational needs.

Dr. Michael Guidice  
FSG Elementary Principal



# FSG Elementary School Staff

## 2024-2025

### Elementary School Office

Dr. Michael Guidice...Principal  
Ms. DeAnna Zuchowski ...Secretary  
Mrs. Roben Dagher...Elementary Guidance  
Mrs. Luann Dybowski...School Nurse

### Elementary Professional Staff

Mrs. Tammy Amacher  
Mrs. Shea Brigger  
Mrs. Donna Bundy  
Mrs. Megan Dellaquila  
Mrs. Anna Fernan  
Mrs. Tara Frank  
Mrs. Joleen Friedl  
Mrs. Hali Goodrow  
Ms. Abby Grumley  
Mrs. Mary Beth Guyer  
Mrs. Heather Hess  
Mrs. Bonnie Hoffman  
Mrs. Beth Horning  
Mrs. Brianna Kelly  
Mrs. Katie Kline  
Mr. Jared Kuleck  
Ms. Nicole Kuleck  
Mrs. Holly Morelli  
Mrs. Colette Mosier  
Mrs. Erica Nida  
Mrs. Mary Jo Peterson  
Mr. Jason Phipps  
Ms. Dureena Pierce  
Mrs. Marcia Raubenstrauch  
Mrs. Melissa Rich  
Mrs. Pam Schoeder  
Mrs. Jackie Simon  
Ms. Erica Vogt

### Elementary Paraprofessional Staff

Mrs. Kabrina Compton  
Mrs. Melinda Emery  
Mrs. Kristin Eshbach  
Ms. Lilyanah Gorske  
Mrs. Julie Hart  
Ms. Courtney Mitchell  
Ms. Kelly Nicklas  
Ms. Katrina Rhoads  
Mrs. Crystal Tutton  
Mrs. Sharlene Wall  
Ms. Melinda Washburn

### Cafeteria Staff

Mrs. Claudine Karpinski  
Ms. Suanne Lenze  
Mrs. McClain

### Elementary Maintenance and Custodial Staff

Ms. Donna Covell  
Mrs. Diane Carobine  
Mr. Joseph Elias....Maintenance/Custodian Supervisor  
Mrs. Carol Jacobs  
Mr. Bailey Wall

### Student Services

Mrs. Kerrie Cowan – Secretary  
Mrs. Francesca Goodman – School Psychologist  
Mrs. Erica Heindl – Director of Special Education & Student Service

## **ELKER Pride at Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School**

FSG Elementary School fosters a feeling of school pride through its school-wide effective behavior program, entitled “**ELKER Pride**”. During the school year, students learn about the rules of good behavior and the behavioral expectations we have as a school. In addition to building sound academic skills, our school realizes that we must also work to provide an atmosphere in which students can grow in character, self-concept, self-image, self-respect, self-worth, and self-esteem. The skills emphasized in the ELKER Pride Program are designed to support our students’ growth into successful adults. The administration, faculty, and staff at FSG believe our school-wide ELKER Rules will help establish common expectations and a positive atmosphere. Engaging in positive behaviors will result in students enhancing both school and personal pride.

### **The rules are:**

- E** – Expect the Best
- L** – Lead by Example
- K** – Kindness Counts
- E** – Everyone Matters
- R** – Responsible and Ready

We strongly encourage parents to talk with their children about feeling ELKER Pride and following the ELKER concepts at home. Teachers will also be reinforcing these concepts in the classroom all year long!

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# A

## **ABSENCE (EDUCATIONAL TRIPS)**

Occasionally parents/ guardians will have an opportunity to take their children on trips that can legitimately be considered educational; the State Department of Education permits such trips providing parents secure permission from the Superintendent or his designee. Parents/guardians of elementary children should complete an Extended Vacation Waiver Form, one week in advance, to the Elementary Principal. The proposed itinerary and length of stay must be attached to the request form. Parents are responsible for contacting the teachers concerning homework or missed classwork. Five days only will be approved for "Educational Trips" in one school year. Daily attendance will be taken into consideration. Grades 3, 4, and 5 should take note of PSSA testing dates before making arrangements.

## **ABSENCE (FREQUENT)**

School policy states that any child who is absent from school for ten (10) or more days is required to provide a physician's excuse for any absence beyond the ten days (student must be seen by the physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner), providing the absence is sporadic, as opposed to being consecutive. Consecutive absence due to an injury, illness, operation, etc., is understandable and is exempt from the above rule and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Upon return to school after an absence, a pupil must present a statement written by a parent or guardian to his homeroom teacher listing the dates absent and explaining the reason for the absence. If the above-stated "ten-day rule" has been invoked, you must provide a written excuse from a physician if the absence was due to illness, the student must be seen by the doctor. If a valid excuse is not presented within three days, the absence will be recorded as illegal. The District is required by law to issue such a notice to the parents of students of compulsory school age (under 17 years of age) when the student has been illegally absent (i.e., has not submitted an acceptable excuse) from school for six days (the six days may be consecutive or non-consecutive). Once three calendar days have elapsed after this legal notice has been received by the parents with no response, notification will be sent explaining that if the student receives one additional illegal absence (and every illegal absence thereafter) a criminal complaint for violation of compulsory school attendance laws shall be lodged with the magistrate without further notice (School Code of Pennsylvania sections 1326-1338). To avoid the issuance of such a notice, students should attend school on a daily and regular basis and if absent the student must submit acceptable excuses promptly (within three days of the absence).

All subsequent illegal absences could result in monetary fines levied by the District Judge. Absences due to medically excused illness, death in the immediate family, and exceptionally urgent reasons affecting the pupil are classified as excused absences.



## **ABSENCE (CALLS REGARDING)**

If your child should be absent from school, you may receive a call from the school office. The primary purpose of these calls is to establish the whereabouts and safety of the child. Without this contact, in the event of an unusual occurrence, the parents would not know that the child is missing until late afternoon, and school officials would assume that the child was home because of illness. If there is a concern for the child's safety, law enforcement will be contacted to make a home visit.

## **ACCESS TO GRADES**

Parents will be provided directions to secure online access to their child's grades at the beginning of each school year.

## **ACCIDENTS**

Accidents occurring on school premises are reported to the school nurse or designee and an accident report is filed. First aid will be administered by the teacher in charge or by the nurse. Attempts will be made to notify parents by phone, when the seriousness of the accident warrants, using contact information located on the FSG Information Card (Every child has an Information Card which is to be filled out by the parents at the beginning of each school year).

**Every student is expected to do his part in observing and promoting the rules of safety.**

**Hazardous conditions should be reported to a teacher or the building administration.**

## **ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

A student who wishes to be enrolled in the Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School must provide the following information at the time of enrollment:

Proof of the child's date of birth: (Acceptable documentation includes birth certificate, baptismal certificate or transcript of the record of baptism - duly certified and showing the date of birth, notarized statement from parents indicating the date of birth, duly attested transcript of the birth certificate, or duly certified transcript of birth).

Verified record of immunization as prescribed by state law. This may include an assurance from the former school district or a medical office that the required immunizations have been done with a record to be sent.

Completion of a Parent Registration Statement attesting to whether the student has been or is suspended or expelled for offenses involving drugs or alcohol, weapons or violence per 24 PS. 13-1304-A.

Required proof of residency which may include a valid PA Driver's license, a bill (electric, gas, etc.), a rental agreement, completed USPS address change form.

Students residing with adults other than parents or legal guardians must secure and complete an affidavit form and return it to the respective office.

**A parent or legal guardian must fully complete the school district's registration form.**

If there is a delay in the enrollment process that extends beyond five (5) business days, homebound instruction may be provided until all necessary transfer/enrollment documents described above are received by the school office. Upon receipt, review, and acceptance of all necessary transfer documents, the new student would then report to the school office for classroom assignment.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is essential to your child's success in school. A day's absence from school can never really be made up because the teaching and learning that takes place during the day may not be repeated.

### **ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES**

Student attendance is a requirement of the PA School Code (the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania). The Ridgway Area School District's Board of Directors is required by law to adopt and enforce policies and procedures regarding the daily attendance of school-aged pupils. It is the belief of the Board of Directors, Administration, Faculty, and Staff that the educational opportunities provided to the students of RASD are predicated upon daily school attendance. Student achievement and successful classroom participation in well-planned educational activities under the direction of highly qualified teachers require continuity of instruction. Daily and regular school attendance is important for students to be exposed to the full range of knowledge and experiences necessary to complete grade-level objectives. There are many instructional activities such as demonstrations, presentations, class activities, and discussions that cannot be made up. The development of good attendance habits prepares students to become responsible and competent community members.

Regular, daily attendance is the responsibility of parents/guardians. Parents need to know the attendance policies and procedures that are outlined in the District's policy manual (available at <http://www.rasd.us>) and this Student Handbook.

### **The school is responsible for your child:**

1. During the instructional hours of the school day.
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 hours and that are directly observed and supervised by school district staff

### **When a student is absent from school:**

- Parents/guardians notify the elementary office before 8:00 am and inform them of the reason for the absence.
- When the student returns to school, he/she must submit an acceptable excuse within **3 SCHOOL DAYS AFTER THE ABSENCE.** *Excuses that are not submitted by the due date shall be recorded as an illegal absence.*
- Excuses must include the student's name, the dates of the absence, and the specific reason for the absence, and should be signed by the parent/guardian.

- When a student’s absence results from a medical appointment/court appointment the **parent/guardian must secure the medical/court appointment excuse, from a physician, attorney, etc., at the time of the appointment AND submit it to the elementary office personnel.**
- It is the parent’s / guardian’s responsibility to obtain an excuse and submit it; office personnel will not obtain medical excuses on behalf of students. Parents may request that medical excuses be faxed to the elementary office from the physician’s office. The FSG office fax number is (814) 776-4297.
- **The following list includes acceptable and unacceptable excuses:**

**ACCEPTABLE**

- illness/quarantine
- recovery from an accident
- death in the family
- impassable roads
- court attendance
- educational field trips
- family education trip (5 days)
- religious holidays
- out-of-school suspension
- School-sponsored activities
- other reasons approved by the board

**UNACCEPTABLE**

- personal business (EX. hair appointment/shopping)
- oversleeping
- missing the bus
- car problems
- hunting

**General Excuses:** When an excuse is submitted with a general reason such as “out of town”, “an appointment”, “family emergency”, “personal business” etc., the building principal/attendance secretary may contact the parent/guardian for more information.

**\*Family education trips:** Special permission to take a family educational trip (**up to five school days**) during the school year must be presented in writing from the parent/guardian to the principal at least five business days in advance of the trip. Upon receiving the written request, the principal will review the student’s records (attendance, disciplinary, and academic) to determine whether or not approval of the trip will be granted. Approved family educational trips **up to five school days** will not count towards a student’s accumulated absences from school days. Students’ absences of up to five school days, as a result of a family education trip, will be recorded as “other”. A student’s absences that extend beyond five school days, as a result of a family educational trip, will count towards a student’s accumulated absences of school days. School days of absences beyond five for a family educational trip will be recorded as “excused” or “illegal”, depending upon the student’s records (attendance, disciplinary and academic).

Students who have a history of attendance issues, discipline issues, and/or who are in academic jeopardy **will not be approved** by the principal to take a “family education trip”. **Please avoid scheduling family trips (educational) during PSSA testing dates.**

When absent, it is the student’s responsibility to get the assignments they missed from their teachers. Students and parents can access their Schoology account to retrieve assignments.

**Routine Medical Appointments (make every effort to schedule routine medical appointments after school hours):**

If required to make appointments during school hours, please do so at a time that will have the least impact on your child's education. For urgent appointments, you will be excused in accordance with travel time and the time of your appointment. For example: if you have an appointment in Ridgway at 10:00 am, you are expected to report to school, be excused at 9:45 am and you are expected to return to school following your appointment, unless a doctor specifies otherwise.

**Early Release:**

Early releases from school should be for urgent reasons such as medical appointments, court appointments, etc. To be excused early, the student must submit to the school office a written note from his/her parent/guardian that indicates the reason for the early dismissal, time, date, and be signed by the parent/guardian.

**When a student is late to school:** It is important that students arrive at school on time. Chronic tardiness can be construed as a form of truancy. Truancy is a violation of the Public School Code relating to compulsory school attendance. Students must present a signed note as to the reason for the tardiness. Students may be considered EXCUSED LATE under the following circumstances: illness, accident, medical, dental, and health-related appointments, court appearances, etc. All other excuses shall be deemed as unexcused/illegal.

**Tardy To/Truant from School:** Being tardy/truant from school results when a student arriving at school late. A note of explanation is required from the parent. A parent/guardian is required to come into the office and sign in all students who arrive after 8:05 AM. Please note – If a child is tardy to school 15 times, a referral will be made to the District Justice, resulting in a possible fine or other consequences as determined by the District Justice.

**Five-Day Illegal Absence Notice:** The District is required by law to issue such a notice to the parents of students of compulsory school age (under 17 years of age) when the student has been illegally absent ("I" - has not submitted an acceptable excuse) from school for five days (the five days may be consecutive or non-consecutive). Once five calendar days have elapsed after this legal notice could have been received by the parent/guardian if the student receives one additional illegal absence (and every illegal absence thereafter) a criminal complaint for violation of the compulsory attendance laws shall be lodged with the magistrate without further notice (School Code of Pennsylvania sections 1326-1338). To avoid the issuance of such a notice, students should attend school on a daily and regular basis and if absent the student must submit acceptable excuses on time (within three days of the absence).

**10-Day Absence Notice (All students enrolled in the District's schools):** If a student accumulates more than ten (10) absences during one school year, the school administration shall require that student to provide a medical statement or excuse from a physician for every subsequent absence. Failure to provide the requested medical excuse shall result in such absences being classified as unexcused or illegal depending upon the age of the student.

**PLEASE NOTE:** A child should not be in school, however, if his presence is detrimental to his health or that of others. A doctor's excuse is required when children need to be excused from physical education classes.

## **ATTENDANCE LETTERS:**

**7-Day Letter:** This letter will notify a parent/guardian that the student is close to reaching a 10-day absence letter.

**10-Day Letter:** This letter will notify a parent/guardian that the student will need a doctor's excuse for any absence hereafter.

**One Day Illegal Letter:** This letter will notify a parent/guardian that the student has one illegal day. Five more illegal days will result in legal action.

**Two-Day Illegal Letter:** This letter will notify a parent/guardian that the student has two illegal days. Four more illegal days will result in legal action.

**Three-Day Illegal Letter:** This letter will notify a parent/guardian that the student has three illegal days. Three more illegal days will result in legal action.

**Four-Day Illegal Letter:** This letter will notify a parent/guardian that the student has four illegal days. Two more illegal days will result in legal action.

**Five-Day Illegal Letter:** This letter notifies a parent/guardian that on the next illegal day, legal action will be taken without further notification.

**Tardies Letters:** These letters notify the parent/guardian that a student is at the six-day tardy mark and the twelve-day tardy mark.

**Corrective action will take place for all unexcused and unlawful absences** according to the age of the student as outlined below.

### **a. Students Less than 17 Years Old:**

- i. **First Offense and Second Offense:** Attendance Letter mailed home.
- ii. **Third Offense:** Parents will be served with a legal notice indicating that there have been three (3) or more days of unlawful/illegal absences. The building administration will convene a Truancy Elimination meeting with the parent (s) and student (depending upon the age of the student). A Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP) will be developed and implemented. In addition, referrals to Juvenile Probation (if applicable) and a referral to Family Group Decision Making will be made at this time to assist the family with the development of a plan to assist with truancy needs.
- iii. **Fourth Offense:** Meeting with the student (if applicable), parent, and building principal to review TEP guidelines and consequences.
- iv. **Additional Offenses** - Citations will be served through the local district judge's office whenever a student reaches 6 illegal absences. (NOTE: Each unlawful absence may result in substantial fines up to \$300 per day plus court costs may be imposed by the district magistrate.)
- v. Concurrent with the filing of the first citation with the district magistrate, a referral to Children and Youth Services for the respective county of residence. Children and Youth Services will conduct a home visit to the family's home.

# B

## BEHAVIOR TEAM

THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORT (PBIS) TEAM AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL IS DESIGNED TO ASSIST STUDENTS WHO ARE EXPERIENCING BEHAVIORAL DIFFICULTIES THAT ARE AFFECTING THE CHILD'S ACADEMICS IN THE REGULAR EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT. THE TEAM CONSISTS OF, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, GRADE LEVEL TEACHER(S), SUPPORT STAFF, SCHOOL COUNSELOR, SCHOOL NURSE, AND OTHERS DEPENDING ON THE NEEDS OF THE CHILD. THE CHILD'S PARENTS ARE ALSO VITAL MEMBERS OF THE TEAM AND WILL BE KEPT INFORMED OF THE PROCEDURES PUT INTO PLACE TO HELP THEIR CHILD BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE SCHOOL SETTING. THE TEAM MEETS TO DETERMINE WHAT STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED TO ASSIST THE STUDENT ACHIEVE SUCCESS IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT.

## BELL SCHEDULE

### REGULAR SCHOOL DAY:

8:00 – 8:14 HOMEROOM

8:15 – LATE BELL

8:15 – 2:50 INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

2:50 – 3:00 STUDENT DISMISSAL

### TWO-HOUR DELAY:

10:00 – 10:14 HOMEROOM

10:15 – LATE BELL

10:15 – 2:50 INSTRUCTIONAL TIME

2:50 – 3:00 STUDENT DISMISSAL

## BOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Books, computers, and necessary instructional materials are furnished by the Board of Education. Damage to district property will be assessed to the pupil responsible. Lost Items will be assessed according to replacement cost.

## BUILDING SECURITY / SAFETY PROCEDURES

The safety and security of our elementary students and staff is of utmost importance. The following safety procedures are enforced at the elementary school building. The elementary building is "locked down" immediately following the morning student arrival. Entrance to the elementary building must be made through the front office door. Visitors are first visually identified from the elementary office and only then permitted to enter the building. All visitors wishing to enter the elementary school hallways must wear one of our elementary school "Visitor Badges." Your cooperation is appreciated on this important matter: your child's safety is our concern.

## BULLYING

Bullying is when one child, or group of children, repeatedly hurts another child through words (written or orally) or actions. Bullying harms students, creates an atmosphere of fear, and reduces students' abilities to learn. There are 3 forms of bullying: Physical (includes hitting, kicking, pushing, and taking belongings); Verbal (includes taunting, teasing, name-calling, and making threats), and Psychological/Relational (involves spreading rumors, ignoring, telling lies, intimidating, and excluding others). Sometimes bullying might be mistaken as "just teasing" or kids "having fun". An episode of bullying has three identifying characteristics:

- A power difference between the bully and the person being bullied
- A negative intent on the part of the bully to hurt, embarrass, or humiliate another
- Repeated behavior with others, with the same person, or with the same person over time

BULLYING is an intentional, electronic, written, verbal, or physical act, or a series of acts:

- directed at another student or group of students;
- which occurs in a school setting;
- that is severe, persistent, or pervasive; and
- substantially interfering with a student's education; or
- creating a threatening environment for any specific student or groups of students; or
- substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

"School setting" shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, or in any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school. Bullying is prohibited in the school setting.

Bullying may also rise to the level of unlawful harassment. Students are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to school officials. Students shall report incidents of bullying to the Principal or guidance counselor in the elementary school.

Prohibited bullying acts could also occur *outside* of the school setting which specifically include, but are not limited to, a student's use of his/her personal computer or other electronic device outside of school.

The disciplinary consequences for violating the bullying policy shall vary depending on the seriousness and pervasiveness of the bullying. Students who violate the bullying policy may be referred for counseling and shall also be subject to discipline ranging from afterschool detention, out-of-school suspension, in-school suspension, or referral to the Board of Directors for expulsion. Notification of the police may occur depending on the severity of the behaviors. Our school continually reinforces an atmosphere where bullying is unacceptable. Parents should talk to their children about relationships with others at school. **Warning signs of being bullied could include complaints of headaches or stomachaches, fear of going to school or riding the bus, trouble sleeping and frequent bad dreams, loss of interest in school, loss of appetite, sad/depressed/moody, anxious, poor self-esteem, quiet/passive/sensitive, few friends, and/or clothing or belongings missing or torn.** If your child would show these warning signs, talk with him/her about interactions with peers at school. Notify the school immediately if you suspect bullying so that we can address the issue. Bullying is not acceptable in FSG Elementary and any bullying-related behavior will not be tolerated. Bullying can have serious consequences and school officials are ready to assist your child in having a positive and safe school year.

Bullying Workshops: Students in grades three, four, and five have mini-workshops on bullying, respect for all, and friendship. Students in grades kindergarten, one and two have guidance classes that address friendship,

respect for all, and tolerating differences. Mini workshops and guidance classes are conducted by the building principal, school counselor, and outside agencies when offered. All students follow the FSG ELKER Rules as a preventative to bullying.

## **BUS BEHAVIOR**

Children need to conduct themselves properly while riding a bus. Misbehavior distracts the driver's attention, thereby placing the safety of passengers, other drivers, etc. in serious jeopardy. Because of the potential danger, misbehavior on the bus will be dealt with as an infraction with consequences. **Riding a school bus is a privilege, not a right.** A child whose behavior places others' safety in danger will have privileges suspended temporarily or permanently.

A reminder to parents - for the safety and security of our students on the district's school busses, video equipment may be present with both audio and video recording capabilities, therefore, there are times when your child could be audio and/or videotaped while riding on their school bus.

Students who violate bus rules may be written up by the bus driver or faculty member. Violators may receive a re-teaching of behavioral expectations for the bus and a written warning for a first offense. Consequences for additional violations may include lunch or recess detention, after-school detention, and loss of bus riding privileges. The number of bus suspension days may increase with each additional bus offense depending upon the severity of the incident. The administration reserves the right **to remove a student either temporarily or permanently from the bus based on the nature of the offense.**

Parents/guardians will be responsible for alternate transportation due to suspension from school transportation.



## BUS TRANSPORTATION

Questions relative to bus service should be directed to the Muccio School Transportation Company (772-7256) or one may call the Elementary Office (776-2176). Bus policies and procedures are as follows:

1. **Children riding the school bus must:** Wake up early enough to get ready for school without rushing.
2. Walk to the bus stop and arrive at least five (5) minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive.
3. Behavior at the bus stop:
  - a. Stand at the bus stop at least three (3) giant steps away from the roadway.
  - b. No running, pushing, throwing objects
  - c. Be polite with the other students and adults at all times
4. When getting on the bus, go immediately to your assigned seat and remain seated until it is time for you to get off the bus.
5. While on the bus there should be no yelling, no pushing, no hitting, or throwing objects. Always keep your head, hands, and all other objects inside the bus. Keep aiseways clear of objects.
6. LISTEN TO THE DIRECTIONS OF THE BUS DRIVER.
7. When it is time to get off the bus, wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before standing and walking to the front of the bus.
8. Get off the bus in an orderly manner. Walk at least three steps away from the bus before walking to the left or right.
9. If you need to cross the street after getting off the school bus, always walk in front of the bus and be sure to walk far enough in front of the bus to see the driver. (At least ten (10) steps in front of the bus). Wait for the bus driver to give you the all-clear signal before crossing the roadway.
10. Go straight home so your parents/ guardians know where you are.
11. Do not have items dangling from your backpack, school bag, or personal clothing.
12. Never attempt to pick up items dropped near the bus. Tell the bus driver.

Failure to follow the established bus safety rules may result in the suspension of a student's bus privilege. Children are under school jurisdiction from the time they leave home in the morning until they arrive home in the evening.

Bus-related concerns can be addressed if the administration and bus company are informed of problems. Please report concerns immediately to the above-listed phone numbers.

If a child is to go somewhere other than his home after school, he/she must have a signed note from his/her parent or guardian. This note must be delivered to the school office at the start of the school day; otherwise, your child will be put on the regularly assigned school bus.

Children are discouraged from requesting permission to ride a bus other than the bus to which they are assigned to spend the evening or night with a friend. In the case of an emergency, we will permit a child to ride another bus (providing there is space available on that bus and that parents send a note to the school requesting such permission). If the bus is filled, we cannot accommodate an additional child.

## BUS CHANGES – DROP-OFFS OR PICK-UPS

For the safety of all students, bus changes must be in writing directly from the student's parents/guardians. Notice must be received by 8:30 AM and will only be honored for **emergency purposes**.

# C

## CAFETERIA

### Ridgway Area School District Cafeteria Student Cafeteria Account Procedures

The Ridgway Area School District will be participating in the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) in all the Ridgway Area School District schools. This means that all students enrolled are eligible for a FREE breakfast AND a FREE lunch at school, at NO CHARGE to your household each day of the 2024-2025 school year. No further action is required of you. Your child/children will be able to participate in these meal programs without having to pay a fee or submit an application.

The Ridgway Area School District schools follow the National School Lunch Program Offer vs Serve meal pattern and all meals must meet federal and state guidelines. This means that students must take 3 items out of the 4 items offered at breakfast and 1 of those items must be a ½ cup fruit at lunch, students must take 3 items out of the 5 items offered and 1 of those items must be a ½ cup fruit or vegetable.

This program does NOT allow students to take just milk. Students who choose to pack a lunch may not take a milk free. However, for students wanting to pack a few of their favorite options, students may choose our “Lunch Box” option. We will provide a fruit choice (apple, banana, orange, pear, etc.) a veggie choice (baby carrots, tossed salad, for example), and a choice of milk, the students may take these items as they go through the serving lines. These items, along with their packed items, will help complete their lunch. There is absolutely no charge!

Students who wish to purchase a second full lunch, an extra entrée, or one of our snack options must pay for them. In other words, this program does not apply to ala carte items.

Students who wish to purchase an additional full lunch or any ala carte items must have funds in their account to do so, students will not be permitted to purchase these extras if they have no account balance.

#### Accessing Cafeteria Account

RASD Cafeterias uses a computerized declining balance system for tracking student purchases and deposits.

- Students access their account at the time of service via a five-digit PIN or thumbprint.
- Cashiers complete the transaction by entering meal and additional items purchased.
- Students are expected to have cash on hand or money in their accounts in anticipation of purchases.
  - To serve students quickly, payments are not accepted during meal service in the elementary school. Payments are collected in the classroom in the morning and sent to the cafeteria to be deposited into student accounts.
  - Middle and high school students may deposit funds in secure boxes located throughout the school. They may also bring funds to the cafeteria during the meal service.

- Students must maintain an account balance for the purchase of milk or other a la carte items as they desire. They cannot carry a running balance.
- To avoid unwanted purchases, parents/guardians may request restrictions be placed on their student's account. This can be accomplished by contacting the food service director.
- Checks and money orders are accepted for deposit into student accounts. Electronic deposits can be made online. A link to the online system can be found on the District website at [www.rasd.us](http://www.rasd.us). One payment can be split between several members of the household. Ridgway School District receives no profit from this payment system. It is offered as a convenience for our busy families.
- Cash payments sent to the school but not received by the cafeteria cannot be honored. Checks or online payments are encouraged as the safest payment method.

#### Providing account balance information

- The easiest and surest way of monitoring your student's account balance is by creating an online account. This is a FREE service that allows purchases and fund balances to be monitored. The online system provides low-balance email alerts.
- In addition to alerts, cashiers in the middle and high schools shall verbally provide account balance information to all customers. This will be done in a gentle quiet manner to be helpful and not threatening or embarrassing. Once a student's account is in arrears, all communication will be directed to the parent/guardian.
- Low balance and negative balance email alerts will be sent to parents/guardians every week.
- Negative account balance letters will be mailed weekly to accounts greater than \$10 in arrears.

#### Charging/ IOU's

- Students may not charge a la carte (extras) purchases.
- Students will never be denied a complete meal. A lunch tray will never be taken away from a student.
- The Food Service Director, or his/her representative, will review account balances and contact parents/guardians of students with negative account balances greater than \$10.00.
- The Food Service Director will work actively with administrators and parents to avoid excessive charges, support the repayment of funds, and approve families for subsidized school meals.

#### Breakfast and Lunch Balance Collections

- Parents/Guardians will be informed of the district's policy regarding meal charges and collection procedures in the student handbook on an annual basis.
- A written notice will be sent to parents/guardians indicating that charges are accruing and advising the parents/guardians of the district's collection policy. Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing of the charges on their student's account and their responsibility for payment every week. Parents/Guardians will be contacted by telephone regarding such matters if there has been no response to the written communication.

#### Collection Procedures

- Student account balances will be reviewed semi-annually. Any account that has reached \$50.00 by January 30, and June 30 will be turned over to a third-party collection agency and any fees incurred will be charged to the parents/guardians.

- The district will attempt to collect payment for checks returned due to insufficient funds. Parents/Guardians will be responsible for all costs and fees associated with the returned check. Following the receipt of two (2) returned checks, the parent/guardian/student will be required to pay cash and or a U.S. Postal Service money order or certified check for all school meals.

#### Year End Balances

- Students' account balances, both positive and negative, are maintained on record at the end of the school year and carried over as the beginning balance for the next school year.
- Families will be provided information about year-end balances and repaying charges in May of each year.
- At the start of each school year families will be provided information about beginning balances.

#### Account Closures/Refunds

- Refunds are provided with the intent of closing the student's cafeteria account.

When students withdraw from the district a refund check will be issued to the parent/guardian upon request. If a refund is not requested:

- If possible, the remaining balance will be transferred to a sibling's account.
- If there is no sibling and the remaining balance is greater than \$5.00, a refund check will be issued and mailed to the last known address.
- If there is no sibling enrolled and the remaining balance is less than \$5.00, the remaining balance is forfeited and transferred to the Bad Debt Fund.

#### Cafeteria Rules

All students are expected to eat in the school cafeteria. A closed lunch program will be in effect--no take-out food ordered from outside the school is allowed to be delivered or consumed in the cafeteria. No electronic devices are permitted in the cafeteria during lunch. Faculty members and adults are given priority in the cafeteria lines at all times. Specific additional guidelines for the cafeteria will be administered by the lunch monitors. Only beverages in sealed containers may be brought into the cafeteria. Pop will not be permitted.

Eating in the cafeteria is a privilege. Students unable to comply will be provided lunch in an alternative environment.

## COMPUTER AND NETWORK USAGE

**ALL STUDENTS OF THE FRANCIS S. GRANDINETTI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ARE REQUIRED AND EXPECTED TO ABIDE BY THE ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT (AUA) WHICH MUST BE SIGNED BY BOTH THE STUDENT AND HIS OR HER PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN. ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENTS ARE DISTRIBUTED TO STUDENTS BY THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL AND ARE PROMULGATED BY BOARD POLICY #815.**

**Purpose:** All use of the Internet and computer network must be in support of education, instruction, and research and it must be consistent with the purposes of the Ridgway Area School District. The Internet and computer networks will be used to support the district's curriculum, the educational community, communications, and research conducted by the District's students, faculty, staff, and administrators for legitimate purposes that relate directly to the purpose of the Ridgway Area School District.

**Authority:** The Ridgway Area School District reserves the right to log internet use, monitor fileserver space utilization, to review files and communications by District users while respecting the privacy rights of both School District users and outside users. The Ridgway Area School District reserves the right to permit the unblocking of blocked sites for legitimate educational, instructional, and/or research purposes when requested by a faculty member. A blocked site is a site that contains content that could expose the user to obscenities, pornography, and/or other material that is deemed harmful to the user. However, many blocked sites are of significant educational value and are also blocked when taking these security measures. The Ridgway Area School District reserves the right to deny the unblocking of blocked sites as requested by a faculty member when the blocked site is determined to be a security risk to the District's network and technological infrastructure and/or is determined to potentially have a detrimental effect on our students, faculty, and/or administration (for example those sites containing obscenities/pornography and/or other material that is deemed harmful to the user). The Ridgway Area School District reserves the right to remove a user account from the network to prevent further unauthorized or illegal activity.

**Procedures:** Only the authorized owner of the account will use network accounts for authorized purposes. Network users shall respect the privacy of other users on the system and all communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property and shall not be disclosed except for District purposes which are consistent with the objectives of this and related policies. Use of Ridgway School District's computer hardware, software, network, Internet, or e-mail requires the signing of the AUA form by all users. If the user is under the age of 18 and/or is a student living with a parent or guardian, the signature of the parent or guardian is also required. The district, at its sole discretion, may waive the signatures of young users or those unable to read or fully comprehend these policies and the AUA. (Parent or guardian signature is still required.)

**Prohibitions:** The use of the Internet and computer network for illegal, inappropriate, or unethical purposes by students, employees, or other authorized users is prohibited. More specifically:

- ◆ Use of the network and/or the Internet to facilitate illegal activity is prohibited.
- ◆ Use of the network and /or the Internet for commercial or for-profit purposes is prohibited.
- ◆ Use of the network and/or the Internet for non-work or non-school related communications is prohibited.
- ◆ Use of the network and /or the Internet for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
- ◆ Malicious use of the network and/or the Internet to develop or install programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer system and/or damage the software components of a computer or system is prohibited.
- ◆ The creation, use, or sharing of computer viruses is prohibited.
- ◆ Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other illegal communications on the network and/or the Internet are prohibited.

- ◆ The illegal installation, distribution, reproduction, or use of copyrighted software on district computers is prohibited.
- ◆ Use of the network and/or the Internet to access material that is obscene or pornographic, material that advocates or condones the commission of unlawful acts, or material that is harmful to minors (i.e. pictures or visual depictions which, taken as a whole appeal to a prurient interest in nudity, sex or perverted or lewd acts is prohibited.
- ◆ Use of the network and/or the Internet intentionally to obtain or modify files, passwords, or data belonging to other users is prohibited.
- ◆ Use of the network and/or the Internet to misrepresent other users on the network and/or the Internet is prohibited.
- ◆ Use of school technology, the network, and/or the Internet for fraudulent copying, communications, or modification of materials in violation of law is prohibited and will be referred to appropriate authorities.
- ◆ Loading or use of unauthorized games, programs, files, or other electronic media is prohibited.
- ◆ The network and/or the Internet shall not be used to disrupt the work of others; and the hardware or software of other users shall not be destroyed, modified, or abused in any way.
- ◆ Use of the network and/or the Internet that results in any copyright violations is prohibited.
- ◆ Students are not permitted to have open beverage containers near computers.

Students are advised that the school district has implemented a technology protection measure that blocks or filters internet access to the above categories of materials or information, as well as other categories or materials or information with the school district has deemed inappropriate for viewing by students in the educational setting.

**Consequences:** Ridgway Area School District may implement disciplinary consequences and/or may terminate accessibility to the Internet and/or network at its sole discretion. Additionally, criminal charges may be pursued.

**Inappropriate Use-** The network and/or the Internet user, whether student, employee, or other user, shall be responsible for damages to the equipment, systems, or software resulting from deliberate or willful acts. Costs for any accidental damage to the student devices/adapters will be billed to the parents and/or guardians of the student.

Failure to follow the procedures and prohibitions listed above will result in the loss of privileges to utilize the network and/or the Internet for some time to be determined by the building administrator whose decision shall be the result of an investigation into the nature of the violation, the extent of damage, the frequency with which the user has violated the AUA and policy, and the potential for destruction that the user's action may have had on the security of the network and technological infrastructure.. Other appropriate disciplinary procedures may be chosen as needed, for students, employees, or other authorized users. Illegal use of the network; intentional deletion or damage to files of data belonging to others; copyright violations or theft of services will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution. In no event shall the Ridgway Area School District be liable for damages, whether direct, indirect, special, or consequential arising out of the use/abuse of its hardware, software, and network technologies. This includes any interruption of user access.

# D

## **DISMISSALS**

Unless a student has a reason to stay after school, they are expected to leave the building at dismissal time. Children should not be in the halls or loitering in the classroom after school hours.

Children are not dismissed early from school except in rare cases, and then only with the permission of the building administration or a designated person. Written notification must be submitted to the office before the child is dismissed stating the reason for the early dismissal.

All parents/guardians must come to the elementary office - students will be called to the office for dismissal. Parents picking their child up after school are asked to go to the pick-up area in the back of the school at the cafeteria doors.

## **DOCTORS' APPOINTMENT OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

When children are to be dismissed early for a doctor's appointment, or other appropriate reasons, parents are required to send a note to the main office. This procedure ensures a safe dismissal and allows children to be supervised at all times.

## **DRESS REGULATIONS**

### **DRESS CODE (Board Policy 221)**

The Board recognizes that each student's mode of dress and grooming is a manifestation of personal style and individual preference. The Board will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance except when their choice has a substantial impact on the daily operation of the classroom or broader school environment.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to enforce school regulations prohibiting student dress or grooming practices that present a hazard to the health or safety of the student him/herself or to others in the school; materially interfere with school work, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program; cause excessive wear or damage to school property; and prevent the student from achieving his/her educational objectives because of blocked vision or restricted movement.

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 ensure the health or safety of the student.

The Superintendent shall develop procedures to implement this policy which designate the building principal to monitor student dress and grooming in his/her building; in the preparation of a dress code that may specify

prescribed dress and grooming practices, but may not amplify the rationale for prohibition established by Board policy; instruct staff members to demonstrate by example and precept wholesome attitudes toward neatness, cleanliness, propriety, modesty, and good sense in attire and appearance; and ensure that all rules implementing this policy impose only minimum necessary restrictions on the exercise of the student's taste and individuality.

Guidelines:

1. Boys and girls are permitted to wear shorts all year round (grades 6 through 12)
2. Boys and girls are permitted to wear shorts before November 1 and after April 1 (grades K through 5)
3. Shorts/Skirts can be no shorter than the mid-thigh of the wearer.
4. Tank tops are acceptable as long as the shoulder straps are a minimum of 1-1/2" wide and undergarments are not showing, as long as arm holes do not exceed the chest line, to reveal undergarments.
5. The following clothing items are never permitted in school during regular school hours:
  - a. Hats in the building, except on designated days. (boys or girls).
  - b. No bare midriff shirts; shirts must come to the top of the jeans/shorts.
  - c. Mesh shirts without an undergarment (t-shirt or tank).
  - d. Clothing that depicts drug/alcohol/~~or~~ sex or violence-related materials.
  - e. Clothing that depicts inappropriate language or pictures.
  - f. Bare feet.
  - g. Open-toed shoes and shoes with more than 1-1/2" heels (grades K-5 only).
  - h. No flip flops (K-5 only).
  - i. Beepers (except for junior firefighters/EMS).
  - j. Backpacks/Book bags may be brought to school, but must remain in lockers until dismissal.
  - k. Any other personal items or jewelry that could be construed as a weapon. (i.e. chains, spikes, etc.).
  - l. No bandanas covering their heads.
6. Students should avoid wearing clothing that reveals undergarments. This includes low-rise jeans that expose underwear.
7. Students who wear hooded sweatshirts to school, must keep their hoods down.

### **USE/POSSESSION OF DRUGS/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO (Board Policy #227 & #222)**

Being under the influence, consuming, using, or possessing alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, and/or tobacco products in school or at any school-sponsored function. Students should be aware that discussions with faculty, staff, and/or peers, within the school setting, that are specific to an individual's substance use/abuse may meet the standard of reasonable suspicion and may result in the administration conducting a thorough investigation of the subject(s) of such discussions. If a student is determined to be in possession of or under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, the student risks suspension/expulsion from school. Repeat offenders will be referred to the Board of Education for expulsion from school.

Alcohol abuse, underage drinking, and substance abuse are community problems that affect individuals without regard to age or economic status.

The administration defines drugs as including but not limited to any illegal substances, unauthorized substances, and /or prohibited substances. Illegal substances are defined as those substances that cannot be



obtained via a prescription. Illegal substances include, but are not limited to, marijuana, heroin, club drugs (ecstasy), cocaine, crack, crystal meth, etc. Students found to be under the influence of, in possession of, using, and /or consuming illegal substances during the school day, on school property, or during school-sponsored activities or events will face a disciplinary investigation that includes the involvement of school administration and local law enforcement. Unauthorized drugs are substances that are prescribed by a physician and /or health care professional AND are being used by a student(s) inappropriately (not as prescribed) and /or by a student(s) who is not the intended recipient (as indicated by the prescription) of the substance. Students found to be under the influence of, in possession of, using, and/or consuming unauthorized substances during the school day, on school property, or during school-sponsored activities or events will face a disciplinary investigation that includes the involvement of school administration and local law enforcement.

Prohibited substances are defined as substances that can be obtained over the counter (OTC) from local pharmacies and grocery stores. Students are not permitted to have prohibited substances on their persons and /or in their desks or lockers. Students are not permitted to use, consume, possess, or dispense prohibited substances. Prohibited substances include, but are not limited to, aspirin, Tylenol, cold and cough medications, Benadryl, and/or sinus medication. If a student needs such medication, he/she should seek medical attention from the school nurse.

Drug paraphernalia is defined as any mechanism, item, object, and /or material that is used by a student to consume and/or use any illegal, unauthorized, and/or prohibited substance(s) while in school, on school property, and/or while participating in school-sponsored activities or events. Drug paraphernalia includes, but is not limited to, roach clips, bongos, rolling papers, mirrors, razor blades, pipes, straws, syringes, eye droppers, spoons, plastic tubing, and/or cards (credit, driver's licenses, etc.). Students found to be in possession of drug paraphernalia during the school day, on school property, or during school-sponsored activities or events will face a disciplinary investigation that includes the involvement of school administration and local law enforcement. The administration has broad discretionary authority to maintain safety, order, and discipline in the school environment, on school property, and during school-sponsored activities and events. If the administration has reasonable suspicion that a student (enrolled in the Ridgway Area School District) is present in school, is present on school property, and/or is present at school-sponsored activities/events, AND is under the influence of, in possession of, using, selling and /or consuming illegal, and/or prohibited substances and/or drug paraphernalia a disciplinary investigation shall be conducted that will involve school administration and may involve local law enforcement.

Students and parents are reminded that the use of tobacco is prohibited within one thousand (1,000) feet of school property. Possession/use of tobacco products for the first offense subject the student to fines and court costs of no less than \$50.00, or to be assigned to an adjudication alternative.

# E

## EXCURSIONS – FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an integral part of the curriculum and are an educationally sound and important component of the instructional program of the schools. Field trips occur off school premises, are conducted as a firsthand educational experience not available in the classroom, and are supervised by chaperones that include a teacher, district employee, and/or board-approved chaperone. Non-school district employee chaperones must be parents/guardians of children on the field trip and must comply with School Board Policy 916 (School Volunteers).

All field trips require Board approval and must adhere to district policies. Field trips shall be governed by guidelines that ensure that: the safety and well-being of students will be protected at all times; permission of the parent/guardian is sought and obtained before any student may participate; the principal approves the purpose, itinerary, and duration of each proposed trip; each field trip is properly planned, integrated with the curriculum, and followed up by appropriate activities that enhance its value; the effectiveness of field trip activities is monitored and evaluated continuously; teachers are allowed flexibility and innovation in planning field trips; no field trip will be approved unless it contributes to the achievement of specified instructional objectives.

A field trip shall include curricular-based field trips or incentive/reward field trips. Curricular field trips are offered as part of a course of study, grade level, and/or credit class. Incentive/Reward field trips include experiences such as the Accelerated Reader reward trips, Stand Tall, 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 8th grade, and Senior class trips. Students participating in school-sponsored incentive/reward trips are expected to meet eligibility requirements regarding grades, attendance, and discipline. Students must be in good academic standing and meet the criteria as established by the trip advisor at the beginning of the school year. Students and parents will have advanced notice of trip criteria to ensure ample opportunity and time for students to meet the criteria. Students not in good standing (unserved detentions, more than three (3) maroon, white days absences per nine (9) weeks not medically excused, failing more than one (1) class for the school year) will not be permitted to participate on the incentive/reward trip. Students who contributed financially to the cost of the trip and who become ineligible will not receive reimbursement. Students/parents/guardians wishing to appeal a student's denial of participation in a field trip must contact the building principal at least seven school days in advance of the trip.

Specific information regarding the type and nature of the field trip will be communicated to both parents and students by the school immediately following the Board's approval of the trip. This information includes student costs (fundraising activities to be completed by students to earn money for the trip); final amounts due must be paid before a student participates in the trip; detailed trip agenda/itinerary; parents/guardians and students are required to sign the field trip agreement. All student handbook regulations, and RASD policies regarding discipline, alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances, apply and are in force during field trips. The Parent Consent Form must be signed by parents/guardians regarding transportation.

For overnight trips, specific guidelines are outlined in advance regarding expectations. Chaperones and advisors will strictly enforce room checks and “lights out.” Students will be restricted to assigned rooms between 11:30 pm and 6:30 am. Luggage for overnight trips must be brought to a designated area 24-48 hours in advance of departure for search by designated school personnel. Carry-on luggage will be searched at departure.

Students who must take medications – any medications must be brought to the school before the day of the field trip in their original container with a physician’s order for the medication. A parental signature is required to authorize school personnel to administer the medication. Decisions regarding the administration of medication during field trips and other school-sponsored programs and activities shall be based on the student’s individual needs. Medication shall be administered by applicable laws, regulations, Board policies, and district procedures.

While participating in a Board approved field trip, students in violation of behavioral expectations are subject to possible immediate suspension of all field trip activities (placed in direct supervision of a chaperone), school discipline, and/or being sent home at parent expense. The Board directs planning for field trips to start early in the school year and to include collaboration between administrators, teachers, nurses, parents/guardians, and other designated health officials.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS/CANCELLATIONS – WEATHER RELATED**

Weather-related closings and delays occur in consultation with various weather resources, neighboring school districts, and the bus company. The decision to close, delay, or release early the District’s student body rests with the superintendent of schools. Parents/guardians’ circumstances dictate their individual decision to send their child to school/pick their child up during a weather emergency. The District provides notification to parents via a District call system (home and cell); texts; the District Facebook page; the District website; radio (WDDH -97.5; WKBI-93.9; WKBI-1400; WOWQ-102.2) and television WTAJ/WJAC; WPSU).

### **ESL (English as a Second Language)**

The Ridgway Area School District offers an ESL program to any student with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Educating these students is the responsibility of the Ridgway Area School District. The program is designed to teach social and academic language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) to our ESL population. It is also designed to meet the cultural aspects necessary to succeed and participate in meaningful educational programs. The ESL program is mandated by the federal and state governments for full implementation by the 2004-2005 school year. For additional information please contact the Office of the Superintendent at 814-773-3146.

Eligibility of a student to be tested:

1. Students born outside the United States
2. Students whose family members speak another language in the home other than English

How a school determines ESL eligibility:

1. Home Language Survey
2. Child find studies

Assessment and Placement of Students:

1. Assess identified LEP students for instructional needs
2. Place the student in an appropriate ESL instructional level
3. Assess students for advancement in proficiency levels or program exit

# F

## **FIRE DRILLS AND OTHER EMERGENCY DRILLS SAFETY AND SECURITY DRILLS**

There will be periodic drills throughout the school year to better prepare the staff and students in case of a real emergency. Drills will include weather emergencies, lockdown procedures, fire drills, and evacuation procedures. These types of drills are to dismiss any fear of being prepared in case of a real emergency and address any concerns or needs for the safety of all FSG Elementary occupants.

# G

## **GUIDANCE INFORMATION**

The elementary school counselor's role is to provide assistance and services to students, parents/guardians, families, teachers, and support staff to help students experience success in personal, social, and academic domains. The school counseling curriculum consists of individual counseling, small group counseling, and classroom guidance lessons. Students are seen on a referral basis by a teacher, parent/guardian, or other school staff directly involved with the student.

# H

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

Children must be healthy to achieve maximum success in school. Good health habits are acquired first at home and continually stressed in school. Aside from the mandated school health programs the following items will be helpful:

1. Your child should have approximately 10 hours of sleep at night.
2. Good nutrition through three balanced meals a day, particularly a good breakfast. Your child is apt to be more alert if nutrition is good.

3. Early appraisal and treatment of illness for your child usually results in less time lost from school. This also keeps the spread of communicable illnesses to a minimum. A child should not attend school when it is evident that he does not feel well.

4. First aid given at school is only a temporary care. No matter how minor the injury, parents should check the injury at home and give any further care or consult their physician.

5. Special Problems: Please notify your child's teacher or the school nurse if your child has any specific health problems.

The School Health Code requires that an individual health record be kept on every child. Entries are made regarding your child's immunizations before entering kindergarten as well as any boosters he receives during his school years (please notify the school nurse of these). It is also used to record the results of the following mandated programs:

- Annual height and weight

Vision screening - All children in K - 5 are given a vision screening by the school nurse. If the screening results are not adequate, the parent is sent a form requesting a more extensive eye examination. **This form should be taken to and completed by an eye doctor and returned to school as soon as possible.** Every child should have a complete eye exam performed yearly by an eye doctor regardless of the results from the school screening.

Hearing screenings: All children in K-3 are given a hearing screening test. If they fail the screening, they are re-tested by the school nurse. Further failures result in referral through the parent to the family doctor. Children in other grades are tested upon request.

Body Mass Index (BMI)-all students will have body mass index calculations performed. Referrals will be made according to guidelines set by the Department of Health.

Physical exams – **Physical examinations** are required by Pennsylvania law for all students upon a child's original entry into school, 6th grade and 11th grade. These examinations may be performed by the District's school physician in school, or parents may have the school medical examination performed by their private family physician and reported to the District on forms provided by the District. These forms are available: in the school nurse's office and on the school website [www.rasd.us](http://www.rasd.us) under the "elementary" tab and "parents". The private medical examination form or verification of an appointment must be submitted to the school by OCTOBER 15. If the private medical examination or verification of appointment is not received by the District by this deadline, the District will begin working with the student's parent/guardian to schedule a school exam with the District's school physician. The private medical examinations can be completed up to one year before the required school year (which begins on July 1<sup>st</sup> of each school year).

Dental exams - According to State law a dental exam is required on all children within one year of their original entry into school, 3rd grade and 7th grade. This exam is to be performed by the child's dentist and the parent or guardian is required to provide the results of the dental examination to the school district school nurse. These forms are available: in the school nurse's office and on the school website [www.rasd.us](http://www.rasd.us) under the "elementary" tab and "parents". Dental exams can be completed one year before or during the required school year. Private dental forms are provided for your child to complete this mandate. Please return the completed forms to the school.

Children entering school for the first time must have the following immunizations: four doses of DTaP vaccine (one must be after their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday), four doses of Polio vaccine (final dose must be after their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday),

three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine, 2 doses of MMR vaccine and two doses of varicella vaccine or history of having had chicken pox disease. All doses must be properly spaced. It is the parent's responsibility to see that the child receives these vaccines before entering school.

**PARENTS AND GUARDIANS ARE URGED TO NOTIFY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IF THEIR SON/DAUGHTER IS DIAGNOSED WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION. THIS INFORMATION IS VITAL AND NEEDS TO BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO ENSURE THAT THE STUDENT IS RECEIVING REASONABLE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS.**

**Note to Parents: If you believe that your child's mental health condition is negatively impacting his/her academic or behavioral performance within the school setting, please contact the Office of Student Services at 814-776-4255.**

## HOMELESS STUDENTS

The Pennsylvania Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (PA ECYEH Program) assures execution of the federal legislation, *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act* of 1988; also incorporated into the 2001 *No Child Left Behind Act*. Implementation of this program ensures that homeless children and youth have equal access to the same, free, appropriate, public education; including preschool education, as provided to other children and youth.

What meets the definition of Homelessness?

Lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Examples include:

- Sharing housing due to a loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Living in hotels, motels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative adequate housing.
- Living in emergency, domestic, or transitional shelters.
- Abandoned in hospitals.
- Using a public or private place not designated for, or normally used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar places.
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in the circumstances described above.
- Living as run-away children, abandoned or forced out of homes by parents/guardian or caretaker, or separated from the parent/guardian for any other reason.

If you have concerns that your child or another student may be experiencing homelessness, please contact Erica Heindl, Supervisor of Special Education and Student Services/Homeless Liaison for the Ridgway Area School District. She will be able to assist you with processes in place to eliminate barriers to enrollment, attendance, transportation, resources, and success in school for identified homeless students.

You may also contact:

Sarah Schroth  
Region 6 Coordinator for Students Experiencing Homelessness  
Phone 724.463.5300 x1203  
Email: [sschroth@iu28.org](mailto:sschroth@iu28.org)

Storm Camara  
State Coordinator for Students Experiencing Homelessness  
Phone (717)772-2066

# I

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Elementary School Office .....	776-2176
Superintendent's Office .....	773-3146
Muccio School Transportation Office .....	772-7256
Office of Student Services .....	776-4255

# L

## L.I.F.E./ Incredible Years Program

In conjunction with Dickinson Center, Inc., our elementary schools offer a unique program that is designed to assist parents in working with their children. The major focus of this program is to facilitate intensive interaction among students, parent(s), and school to address those behaviors that affect the child's education. Additional information about this, and other programs that may be available at the elementary school may be obtained by contacting the school counselor.

## LOST AND FOUND

"Lost and Found" items are maintained in the elementary school. Please have your children check the lost and found box if they are missing articles of clothing (or eyeglasses, jewelry, etc.).

**Suggestion:** Label your child's clothing and items that come to school... this will help the school identify the owner.

# M

## MEDICATION

If your child needs to take any medications during the school day, the school nurse is required to have a physician's order on file each school year. The medication must be brought to the school by an adult; no student is permitted to transport their medication to school. The medication must be in its original, labeled container.

## MOVING FROM DISTRICT

If you should leave the district, please contact the new school where you are transferring and notify the elementary principal's office at least one week before your departure. We will send your children's records when the new district requests them.

# O

## OFFICE OF STUDENT SERVICES

The Office of Student Services (OSS) services students in grades K-12 who are referred for and/or found eligible for school-age student services. These services would include the following:

- School-Age Special Education Services (PA Code Chapter 14)
- 504 Service Agreements (PA Code Chapter 15)
- School-Age Gifted Support Services (PA Code Chapter 16)
- Homelessness
- Foster Care
- Incarcerated Youth
- Mental and Behavioral Health Services
- Related Services including:
  - Speech and Language Therapy
  - Occupational Therapy
  - Physical Therapy
  - Vision Support
  - Hearing Support
  - School-Age Mental/Behavioral Health Support



The Office of Student Services is not only responsible for handling referrals for students suspected of being eligible for school-age services but also manages the screening and Child Find processes within the Ridgway Area School District. In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, gifted screenings are conducted and in grades K, 4, 6, and 11, trauma screenings are conducted. These screenings provide the school with information that can guide potential referrals for more comprehensive assessments and referrals.

In addition to the services described above, the Office of Student Services also collaborates with mental and behavioral health service providers within the school district and the community as a whole. The coordination of these services for eligible students helps to ensure consistent communication, progress updates, and delivery of care.

Further detailed information about special education services is available in our Annual Public Notice (APN). Our APN is available on our district website [www.rasd.us](http://www.rasd.us) and is also provided annually to each family.

If a parent/guardian, staff person, or service provider has questions or concerns about a student or wishes to inquire about the referral process for an evaluation for student services, please contact the Office of Student Services at (814) 776-4255 and ask to speak with one of the professionals listed below:

Erica Heindl, Supervisor of Special Education and Director of Student Services  
Francesca Goodman, District Psychologist and Mental Health Liaison

# P

## **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parent conferences will be held one time per year; at the end of the first nine-week period. Parents will be notified of the date and time.

**NOTE:** A parent or guardian may request a conference at any time during the school year in all grade levels.

## **PARTIES**

Teachers will solicit parents/guardians for items needed for celebrations. A family is not obligated to send these items to school but notify the classroom what will be donated. When sending in food items please keep in mind healthy foods for the students.

## **PARTY INVITATIONS**

Private party invitations, addressed to selected individuals, are not permitted to be distributed in school. This type of activity disrupts the learning process and often singles out children who are not invited. Only the distribution of invitations given to all students in a classroom (or all boys/all girls) is permissible.

## **PHOTOGRAPHING AND VIDEOTAPING OF STUDENTS**

Student activities, special events, assemblies, and programs that take place throughout the elementary school year may be photographed or videotaped for local publicity news releases. Photographs of the elementary students may be in news releases or posted on the school website. Parents who do not wish to have their child's photo released for news publication must notify the elementary office in writing.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

To be excused from participation in physical education classes on a temporary or permanent basis a physician's letter must be obtained. Students who have a doctor's excuse must also present the physical education teacher with a 'Can Do List' signed by the doctor. This sheet may be retained from the physical education teacher to take to your doctor. Students are required to wear sneakers when participating in physical education classes.

## **PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS**

\*Rough playing will not be tolerated on the playground at any time. Students placing themselves or others in danger of injury may lose playground privileges.

\* Proper footwear of sneakers or closed-toe shoes with socks must be worn when playing on the playground.

# **R**

## **REPORTS CARDS AND PUPIL EVALUATION**

Report cards are used to report a child's progress to his parents/guardians. Report cards are issued at the end of each nine weeks. Your child's progress in literacy and math will be given with copies of data collected by the teacher.

## **REQUEST FOR MISSED ASSIGNMENTS**

Student assignments will be posted to Schoology. Please check this website for a list of assignments that your child may have missed while absent from school.

# S

## **SCHOOL DAY**

For your child's safety and a more efficient operation of our school please observe the following rules: Children walking or being driven to school are not to arrive before 8:00 AM. No child will be considered tardy until after 8:15 AM. If children on occasion must arrive before 8:00, special permission must be secured from the elementary principal before they are permitted to enter the building. No student will be permitted to enter the building before 8:00. Children who arrive by bus will stay in the bus with the bus driver until the 8:00 bell. At that time, students report to their homerooms or the cafeteria for breakfast.

## **SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES**

All policies of the Ridgway Area School District are available online at the following website [www.rasd.us](http://www.rasd.us) Under the parent tab, go to "District Policies".

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

Kindergarten - 5th Grade      8:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.

No students are permitted to be dropped off at the elementary school before 8:00 AM, without written notice from a parent or guardian to the elementary office, at least one school day in advance.

## **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

School insurance is made available through a private agency during September. The agreement is strictly between the parent and the agency. The school simply facilitates the dissemination and collection of forms.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

School pictures are taken twice a year fall and spring. All students will have their pictures taken for school files; this is done even if a parent does not order a package. Additional prints are available by filling out a form that is provided in the packet or online from the photograph company.

## **Safety/ Security Drills**

There will be periodic drills throughout the school year to better prepare the staff and students in case of a real emergency. Drills will include weather emergencies, lockdown procedures, fire drills, and evacuation procedures. These types of drills are to dismiss any fear of being prepared in case of a real emergency and address any concerns or needs for the safety of all elementary occupants.

## **SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

## Health Examinations

Although the physical and mental health of each child is primarily the responsibility of the home and parents, the school district provides not only state-mandated health services but also functions to maintain and improve the health of each student while in school.

**Physical exams** - Physical examinations are required by Pennsylvania law for all students upon a child's original entry into school, 6th grade and 11th grade. These examinations may be performed by the District's school physician in school, or parents may have the school medical examination performed by their private family physician and reported to the District on forms provided by the District. These forms are available: in the school nurse's office and on the school website [www.rasd.us](http://www.rasd.us) under the "elementary" tab and "parents". The private medical examination form must be submitted to the school by OCTOBER 15. If the private medical examination form is not received by the District by this deadline, your child will be scheduled for the school exam. The private medical examinations can be completed up to one year before the required school year (which begins on July 1<sup>st</sup> of each school year).

**Dental exams** - According to State law a dental exam is required on all children within one year of their original entry into school, 3rd grade and 7th grade. This exam is to be performed by the child's dentist and the parent or guardian is required to provide the results of the dental examination to the school district/school nurse. Dental exams can be completed one year before or during the required school year. Private dental forms are provided for your child to complete this mandate. Completed forms must be returned to school. Each student's Body Mass Index (BMI) is mandated to be collected in grades Kindergarten through twelfth.

For each pupil transferring to the schools of this district, the Superintendent shall request an adequate health record from the transferring school before enrollment.

Beginning with kindergarten vision and hearing screening and continuing through the twelfth grade, a developmental health history shall be maintained for each student in the district.

The individual pupil records of health examinations shall be maintained as a confidential record subject to statute and the policies of this district.

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS ARE URGED TO NOTIFY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IF THEIR SON/DAUGHTER IS DIAGNOSED WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION. THIS INFORMATION IS VITAL AND NEEDS TO BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO ENSURE THAT THE STUDENT IS RECEIVING REASONABLE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS.

**Note to Parents: if you believe that your child's mental health condition is negatively impacting his/her academic or behavioral performance within the school setting, please contact the Office of Student Services at 814/776-4255.**

## ASSESSMENTS

The Ridgway Area School District has developed the following schedule for screening/assessing/testing our students' performance at strategic grade levels at the elementary levels.

1. Pre-Kindergarten
  - Kindergarten Screening/Readiness
2. Kindergarten through Grade 5
  - STAR K – 5 Assessments

- AIMSweb
  - Study Island
  - CDT's (Classroom Diagnostic Tools)
3. Grade 3
    - Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) ELA (English Language Arts) and Math
  4. Grade 4
    - Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) ELA (English Language Arts), Math, and Science
  5. Grade 5
    - Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) ELA (English Language Arts) and Math

Students with disabilities will participate in statewide and district-wide assessments in one of the three ways as determined appropriate by the IEP team:

- PSSA without accommodations
- PSSA with appropriate accommodations\*
- PASA – Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment\*\*

\*Accommodations provided must be allowable by the test given and be part of the student's educational routine.

\*\*Participation in the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), students must meet specific criteria established by the Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education. **Contact the Office of Student Services for more information @ 814.776.4255.**

The Board shall also grant parents/guardians whatever legal rights they have to excuse their child from the formal district and statewide assessment tests upon receipt, by the school district, of a written request from the parents, before the assessment begins.

The results of assessments shall be made available to the professional staff so that they may better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their particular students.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The Ridgway Area School District Board of Education is committed to providing students with an environment that is free from sexual harassment and impropriety. This commitment is based not only on legal accountability to comply with nondiscriminatory employment regulations but also on a moral responsibility to protect the welfare of students.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any district employee to harass a student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other district employees and other students through conduct or communications of a sexual nature.

Any person who alleges sexual harassment by any district employee or student shall complain directly to the building principal, guidance counselor, teacher, or school nurse. The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the district's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred,

Any suspected incident of unlawful harassment must be reported to the administration immediately. All complaints must be referred to one of the following administrators: Dr. Guidice, Elementary Principal, Elementary School Office, P.O. Box 447, 62 School Drive, Ridgway, PA 15853, (814) 776-2176 or Office of the Superintendent, P.O. Box 447, 62 School Drive, Ridgway, PA 15853, (814) 773-3146.

For additional clarification of the unlawful harassment policies of the Ridgway Area School District log on to [www.rasd.us](http://www.rasd.us). Under the parent tab go to “district policies”. Reference policies 103, 104, 248, 348, 448, and 548.

## **SNOWBALL THROWING**

Snowball throwing is forbidden during school time. School time is defined as the time at which a child leaves home until he arrives home after school. This, of course, includes waiting at a bus stop, on the bus, or walking to and from school.

## **STUDENT ACCIDENTS AND INSURANCE**

Students who have been injured at school must report the injury to the teacher and/or school nurse at the time the injury occurs. The school is responsible for investigating the injury and filing an accident report. However, if the student fails to report the injury, the school cannot complete a thorough investigation and file an accurate accident report.

The school is not responsible for providing medical insurance for students in the event of an accidental injury at school. Parents/guardians are responsible for making sure that their child has appropriate medical insurance in cases of accidental injuries. Please contact the principal or guidance counselor to inquire about insurance options if you do not have insurance for your child. These options may include, but are not limited to parents purchasing insurance through the school, CHIP, medical assistance, etc. Parents/guardians may also contact the local medical assistance office for help purchasing insurance for their child.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Student records are essential to the successful delivery of formal education at the elementary level. Student records are maintained, used, and destroyed in a manner consistent with privacy rights guaranteed by state and federal law.

## Notice of Rights under FERPA for:

- Elementary and Secondary Students of the Ridgway Area School District
- Parents and Eligible Students Who Reside in the Ridgway Area School District
- Parents of Incarcerated Students and Incarcerated Eligible Students 'Who Are Housed at the Elk County Prison

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) grants parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights concerning the student's education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the date the District receives an access request.

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the date the District receives an access request.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal or other appropriate school officials a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The principal will make access arrangements and notify the parent or eligible students of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students may ask the Ridgway School District to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal or other appropriate school administrator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed.

If the District decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the District will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding their request for the amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorized disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company whom the District has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its employees or officials (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 task.

A school official has a legitimate education interest if the official needs to review an educational record to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the District discloses educational records, without consent, to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

The district may also disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, dates of attendance, etc. In the event a parent or eligible student does not want directory information disclosed, the parent or eligible student must

inform the district in writing through the appropriate school administrator within forty-five (45) days of the publication of this notice.

- The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education,  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

The Ridgway Area School District may maintain records in two categories:

**CATEGORY A** - This file contains the minimum personal data necessary for the operation of the school system. Identification of student (name, social security number, student identification number, etc.), names and addresses of parents or guardian, last known home address and telephone number, birth date, attendance records, classes attended, and academic levels completed or services received, year of program or service completion, and when applicable, grades or marks received, grade level completed, and whether a diploma was received. The file may also include achievement test scores, honors, awards, activities, photographs, suspension records, or other similar types of information. CATEGORY A DATA SHALL BE FILED FOR 100 YEARS.

**CATEGORY B** - This file's data is verified information of clear importance such as intelligence and aptitude scores, interest inventories, health data, family information, teacher or counselor observations, and reports of serious acts of misbehavior and behavior patterns. This file also contains the documents that pertain to evaluation procedures to determine if a student was eligible for special education services or other accommodations such as Chapter 15 Service Agreements. CATEGORY B DATA SHALL BE DISCARDED SIX YEARS AFTER THE STUDENT GRADUATED OR, IN THE CASE OF A TRANSFER OR DROPOUT, WHEN THE STUDENT REACHES AGE TWENTY-ONE. ELIGIBLE STUDENTS MAY ALSO REQUEST A COPY OF THEIR CATEGORY B FILE BEFORE IT IS DESTROYED.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO GRADUATED IN 2015 OR EARLIER AND TO STUDENTS WHO ARE TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE THAT DID NOT GRADUATE FROM THE DISTRICT DUE TO TRANSFER OR DROP OUT THAT ALL DATA MAINTAINED IN THEIR CATEGORY B FILE WILL BE DESTROYED AFTER SEPTEMBER 30, 2021. If the records are requested, the original documents will be provided. The original records will be supplied at no cost to the parent or district. However, for this to occur, records must be picked up at the Office of Student Services during normal business hours. If the district is not contacted before the designated date, the District will presume that the parent or eligible student does not want this information. For an appointment to examine your Category B file, contact: the Supervisor of Special Education Services at (814) 776-4255 before SEPTEMBER 30, 2024.



## STUDENT SEARCHES

The FSG Elementary Administration reserves the right to search the school and its grounds. This includes desks and lockers. Students are to not expect privacy concerning desks or lockers on school property. Searches may be unannounced and may utilize canines to detect contraband such as stolen items, drugs, alcohol, and weapons. Legal authorities may assist the administration during a search. A student's personal effects (including backpack, purse, etc.) may also be searched whenever a school official has reasonable suspicion that a student is in possession of illegal and/or unauthorized material. A student's failure to permit and/or cooperate with a search will be grounds for immediate disciplinary action including suspension from school and law enforcement notification.

# T

## TEACHER IN-SERVICE DAYS

Professional Development Days for 2024-2025  
SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION FOR STUDENTS ON THESE DAYS

**In-Service Days** 8/19-21; 10/25; 1/20; 2/17; 3/17

## TECHNOLOGY/CELL PHONES

The Ridgway Area School District encourages the use of technology to advance student learning. A clear distinction exists between educational technology and entertainment technology. The use of entertainment technology such as radios, CD players, earphones/buds, electronic games, iPods, MP3 players, pagers, cellular phones, watches, and other technologies that connect to cellular devices, laser pointers, etc. is not normally permitted to be used during school hours. Entertainment technology must be turned off and put away between 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Devices being used during this time will be confiscated and turned into the office, and a discipline referral will be issued to the student. For first offenses, students may pick up the device at the end of the school day.

Cell phones must be off/silenced, and stored in the student's locker or backpack at all times. Students are not permitted to use their phones during the school day. If a student needs to contact a parent, they may use the phone in the office.

Students who violate the cell phone expectation and who fail to surrender their cell phone will earn a discipline referral for insubordination and will be subject to disciplinary action as per the student code of conduct.

Educational technology (kindles, iPads, personal computers, electronic books, and tablets) may only be used in coordination with classroom instruction (designated in the lesson plan as a legitimate educational purpose) and when granted permission by the course instructor/supervising professional staff. Professional employees/supervising professional staff have the discretionary authority to determine whether student use

of technology has a legitimate educational purpose or whether it is being used for entertainment.

Cell phones/electronic devices may never be used by students to take pictures or videos during the instructional day or while riding the school bus.

Bringing technology to school is a risk assumed by the student. The Ridgway Area School District nor its employees are responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged technology brought to school by students.

The Ridgway Area School District provides students and employees with a wireless high-speed computer network for internet and e-mail. To access the internet, all students must obtain parent/guardian permission and sign a release. Also, students are required to sign a District user agreement indicating their understanding of and willingness to abide by the District's procedures and regulations. Network storage accounts and folders are treated like a student locker. The administration and network administrators audit student use logs to maintain security, system integrity, and responsible use. If a student violates the rules of appropriate use, they will be held accountable for their actions and may lose network privileges if the Rules of Appropriate Use are violated.

### **TELEPHONE CALLS**

Teachers are not available to receive telephone calls during school hours, except in an emergency. Messages will be taken and delivered to the teachers. Teachers should be called only before school (7:30-8:00) or after student dismissal at 3:00.

Pupils are not to use the school phone, except in emergencies. Parents/Guardians should permit leaving home to take part in or attend after-school activities so that calling home is not necessary.

### **TERRORISTIC THREATS/ACTS**

The elementary school recognizes the danger that terroristic threats and acts, by students, present to the health, safety, security, and welfare of other students, staff, and the community. The school district realizes the need for an immediate and effective response to a situation involving such a threat or act. The School Board prohibits any district student from communicating terroristic threats or committing terroristic acts directed at any student, employee, Board member, community member, or school building. Terroristic threat - shall mean a threat to commit violence communicated with the intent to terrorize another, to cause evacuation of a building, or to cause serious public inconvenience, in reckless disregard to the risk of causing such terror or inconvenience. Terroristic act - shall mean an offense against property or involving danger to another person. Terroristic threats may be written, verbal, through technology but not limited to information. Any threat directed at school personnel and/or the student population will be immediately investigated by school personnel and law enforcement. Parents will be contacted and required to come to school for a conference immediately following the threat.

# Title I

## **What is a Title I Schoolwide program?**

A Schoolwide program permits a school to use funds from Title I, Part A, and other Federal education program funds and resources to upgrade the entire educational program of the school to raise academic achievement for all the students. This contrasts with a Title I targeted assistance program, through which Title I, Part A funds are used only for supplementary educational services for eligible children who are failing or are at risk of failing to meet state academic content standards.

Schoolwide programs have great latitude in determining how to spend their Title I, Part A funds. Schoolwide programs do not have to identify particular children as eligible for services, or separately track federal dollars. Instead, Schoolwide programs can use their Title I, Part A funds in the manner they choose within federal guidelines, as long as they engage in reform strategies that increase the amount and quality of learning time and help provide a high-quality curriculum for all children, according to a comprehensive plan to help children meet the state's challenging academic content standards. Schoolwide programs serve all children in a school. All staff, resources, and classes are part of the overall Schoolwide program. The purpose is to generate high levels of academic achievement in core subject areas for all students, especially those students most in need.

## **Components of a School-wide Program**

- A comprehensive needs assessment of the entire school is conducted.
- School-wide reform strategies provide opportunities for all children to meet the state's proficiency performance standards.
- Highly qualified staff members provide instruction.
- Professional development is conducted continually throughout the year.
- Activities are presented to increase parent involvement.
- Plans are included to provide transitional assistance from preschool to elementary, from elementary to middle school, and from middle school to high school.
- Measures are taken to include teachers in the decisions regarding the use of assessments.
- Activities are conducted to ensure that students who experience difficulty mastering state standards will be provided with effective, timely, additional assistance.

## **Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is an integral part of the Title I program. Parents are encouraged to become partners in helping their children achieve and become actively involved in all aspects of the process of the Title I program, from the writing of the plan to its implementation and evaluation.

A strong connection between the home and the school is a key element in student success. Materials, strategies, and assistance from teachers are available to all parents within a Title I Schoolwide program.

Opportunities for active parent participation include but are not limited to, open houses, parent workshops, school-parent compacts, parent-teacher organizations, conferences, timely newsletters, and more.

The No Child Left Behind legislation requires schools to utilize a portion of their Title I funds to support parent involvement. Parents should contact the school principal with any comments or suggestions regarding the school's parent involvement expenditures. If you would like to participate in the district and/or the school Title I planning team or make comments on the plan, please contact the school office.

## **Parent Involvement Policy and School-Parent Compact**

Each Title I school is required to ask for input from parents regarding the development of a parent involvement policy and a school-parent compact. The parent involvement policy explains how the school plans to work with parents to review and improve parent programs and describes how parents can participate in planning these programs. The School-Parent Compact outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement and how the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the state's high standards. You are asked to read the School and District Parent Involvement policies and the School-Parent Compact and give your suggestions or comments for revisions to the school principal. Changes will be made, when possible.

## **Description & Explanation of Curriculum, Forms of Academic Assessment, and Proficiency Levels Students Are Expected to Meet**

Ridgway Area School District provides a high-quality curriculum based on Pennsylvania's Core Standards. A variety of tests are administered to students to determine levels of proficiency. To monitor student progress throughout the year, student assessment may include:

- Assessments created by teachers and/or provided by textbooks.
- District assessments
- The Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA) will be given annually to students in grades three through eight. These assessments will measure student performance based on state standards.

Results of student assessment are presented at parent/teacher conferences, and utilizing progress reports, report cards, etc.

## **Parents' Right to Know**

In January 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act which was designed to ensure that all children have an opportunity to obtain a quality education.

Under this act, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers and paraprofessionals who instruct your child. If you would like to receive any of this information about your child's teacher(s) or paraprofessionals, you may contact the school office.

At the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, all teachers and paraprofessionals were highly qualified at Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School.

**Title I LEA Parent Involvement Plan  
Ridgway Area School District  
2024-2025 School Year**

The Ridgway Area School District recognizes that parents/families are their children's first and most influential teachers and that continued parental involvement in the education of children/youth contributes greatly to student achievement and a positive school environment. A child's education is shared by the school and family during the entire period the child spends in school. To support the goal of the Ridgway Area School District to educate all students effectively, staff and parents must work as knowledgeable partners. This school district, in collaboration with parents, shall establish programs and practices that enhance parent involvement.

The district encourages parental involvement by providing information about standards and assessments and providing materials for parents to help their children. The district supports professional development opportunities for staff members to enhance their understanding of effective parent involvement strategies and recognizes the importance of administrative leadership in setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental participation. Engaging parents is essential to improved student achievement.

This district shall foster and support active parent involvement as outlined below:

1. This jointly developed and agreed upon written parent involvement plan is reviewed annually and distributed to parents.
2. Informational meetings will be held for all parents in the fall at our annual open house. Additional meetings with flexible times shall be held throughout the year.
3. Parents are assisted in understanding the state standards and assessments through the annual meetings and parent-teacher conferences.
4. Parents receive an explanation of the school's performance profile, forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the expected proficiency levels in the annual progress report distributed to all parents in the spring of the year, through individual reports given to parents at conference time and through report cards.
5. Parents are informed about the curriculum, instructional objectives, and methods used in the program. This information is delivered through newsletters, conferences, and annual meetings.
6. Parent recommendations are encouraged and responded to promptly. Verbal or written responses will be given for all recommendations.
7. Parents will be involved with the planning, review, and improvement of the programs.
8. A jointly developed school/parent compact outlines how parents, teachers, administration, and students all share responsibility for improved student achievement. It is distributed to parents and is reviewed at an annual meeting.
9. Communication between home and school is ongoing, two-way, and meaningful.
10. Parents are welcome and needed in the school, and their support and assistance are sought.
11. Parents may request and the district will provide information on the professional qualifications of the student's teachers and whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.
12. To the extent feasible and appropriate, the elementary school will collaborate with the parent involvement programs associated with Head Start, Early Intervention, Parents as Teachers Program, and other public and private preschool programs to facilitate the student's school transition process.

**Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School**  
**Title I Parent Involvement Plan 2024-2025**

Parents are encouraged to assist in the planning, design, and implementation of the Title I program. Informed and active parent participation is an essential component of student success.

Ongoing efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the Title I program will be made utilizing the following activities:

1. Initially, the eligible Title I school shall develop a plan to ensure that parents are involved in all phases of the Title I program. This shall occur after consultation with and review by parents and updated each year at an annual meeting.
2. Annually, parents will be invited to a meeting to update the parent involvement policy and to further explain and clarify the Title I program.
3. Parents will be asked to complete an annual survey as a way to assess their needs and to focus on parent involvement in Title I.
4. Parents will be provided with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet. Grade-level goals are aligned to the State’s Academic Content Standards.
5. Parent-teacher conferences are held twice yearly (Fall & Spring). These conferences are conducted in the morning, afternoon, and evening times.
6. A school-parent compact is jointly developed and reviewed annually with parents. The compact outlines how parents, teachers, and students will share in the responsibility for improving student academic achievement.
7. As the need arises in the school, various types of meetings may be initiated by parents or teachers to meet the needs of the parents.
8. Title I funds may be used to pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with parent involvement activities.
9. Parents will receive materials and training, as needed, to work with their child to improve academic achievement and foster parent involvement.

**Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School**  
**SCHOOL-PARENT COMPACT 2024-2025 School Year**

**Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:**

- We, as parents, will support our children’s learning in the following ways:
- Ensuring that my child is punctual and attends school regularly.
- Monitoring student homework completion.
- Promoting positive use of my child’s extracurricular time.
- Staying informed about my child’s education and communicating with the school.
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain proper discipline.
- Promote reading in the home environment.
- Volunteering and participating in my child’s classroom if I am available and needed.

**Student Responsibilities:**

I will be responsible for my education by:

- Doing my homework every day and asking for help, if needed.
- Making time to read every day outside of school time.
- Giving to my parents/guardian all notices and information sent home from the school.
- Coming to school ready to learn.

**School Responsibilities:**

The administration and teachers at Francis S. Grandinetti Elementary School will:

- Ensure that all instructional staff are highly qualified.
- Provide a high-quality curriculum and instruct students in a supportive and effective learning environment.
- Hold parent-teacher conferences twice each school year (Fall & Spring)
- Provide parents with frequent reports on their children's progress.
- Provide parents with reasonable access to staff.
- Provide parents opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and to observe classroom activities.

# U

**UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS NOTIFICATION**

Parents/Guardians of children who are experiencing difficulty in an academic area will be contacted by the classroom teacher approximately three weeks before issuing report cards. The classroom teacher will notify the parent/guardian concerning their child's lack of progress in a particular academic subject. The classroom teacher will make recommendations for home support, identify interventions that will take place in school, and/or recommend a parent conference with all staff members involved with the student.

# V

## **VALUABLES**

The use of personal cell phones and electronic devices is prohibited during the school day at the elementary level. Our schools cannot be responsible for any electronic devices, handheld games, music players, smart watches, cell phones, and the like; therefore, we discourage all students from bringing them to school. If these items are brought to school, they should be off and kept in the student's backpack/locker at all times. Book Nooks or Kindles are permitted in school with approval by the school office and a parent-signed Requesting Permission Form. Student cell phone use on grade-level field trips will be determined on a case-by-case basis, dependent upon the grade level and destination.

## **VIDEO SURVEILLANCE**

Video monitors are utilized throughout the school building and outside areas to monitor student and visitor actions. The principal can view and review all images throughout the building at any given time.

## **VISITORS, VISITOR SIGN-IN, VISITOR BADGES**

Parents/guardians and visitors are always welcome in the elementary school, however, to maximize the safety of our students and staff the following procedures must be followed by all visitors.

All visitors enter the building, during school hours, through the front office door. You will be asked to state your name and business here at the school. Visitors may be asked to sign in and receive a "Visitor Badge" if they wish to enter the building's hallways or classrooms. Visitors must visibly display a "Visitor Badge" while walking our halls, visiting our classroom, and/or helping with classroom projects. You will return to the school office, sign out that you are leaving the building, and turn in your Visitor's Badge.

# W

## **WEAPONS**

Weapons and replicas or look-alikes of weapons are forbidden on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or on any school-provided transportation to school or a school-sponsored activity. Weapons shall include but are not limited to, firearms, knives, metal knuckles, razor blades, straight razors, matches, lighters, explosives, noxious, irritating, or poisonous gases including mace and pepper spray, poisons, or any other object designed for protection or designed to harm others, or any object intended by the student to do bodily injury or threat of bodily injury to another or other items fashioned with the intent to harm, threaten, or harass students, staff members, parents, and patrons.



Any weapon possessed on or about a person while on district property is subject to seizure and forfeiture.

Students are prohibited from possessing, bringing onto, or using weapons on school property, school-sponsored activity, or on any school-provided transportation to school or a school-sponsored activity. Any violation of this policy will be reported to the student's parents and the police. An immediate suspension followed by a recommendation for expulsion and/or legal action will be taken against students who violate this policy and students who assist in the violation of this policy in any way. An expulsion period of one (1) year minimum for any student who brings a weapon onto school property, school-sponsored activity, or on any school-provided transportation to school or a school-sponsored activity will be imposed. The Superintendent may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirements for a student on a case-by-case basis. Students may be required to participate in S.A.P./R.E.A.C.H. upon their return to school.

The Superintendent shall in the case of an exceptional student, take all steps necessary to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq., and Pennsylvania law regarding exceptional students.

Weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel are permitted. The Superintendent may authorize other persons to possess weapons in school buildings consistent with the requirements of 24 P.S. §13.1317.2 and any other relevant Pennsylvania law. The Superintendent may prescribe special conditions or procedures to be followed before giving such authorization.

### **WITHDRAW FROM SCHOOL**

No one but a child's parents or an authorized adult may withdraw a child from his classroom to leave the building while school is in session. Parents/guardians who must take their children out of school should contact the office before attempting to withdraw them.

**THE RIDGWAY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF ETHNICITY, RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, MARITAL STATUS, NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEXUALITY, AGE OR HANDICAP, OR DISABILITY IN ITS PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, ADMISSION, OR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES, AS REQUIRED BY TITLE VI, TITLE IX, SECTION 504 AND TITLE II OF ADA. THE DISTRICT HAS AS A MATTER OF POLICY A GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR THE PROMPT AND EQUITABLE SOLUTION OF STUDENT AND EMPLOYEE COMPLAINTS OF ALLEGED DISCRIMINATION, SAID POLICY AND COMPLAINTS MAY BE ASSESSED OR DIRECTED TO THE DISTRICT'S AFFIRMATIVE ACTION OFFICER:**

**Office of the Superintendent  
Ridgway, PA 15853 (814) 773-3146**

**The Ridgway Area School District complies with its obligations under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"). For more information or questions, contact the district's privacy officer at 814-776-4255.**

**2024-2025 Dates to keep in mind...**

**SEPTEMBER**

2<sup>nd</sup> – NO SCHOOL Holiday

**OCTOBER**

4<sup>th</sup> Vacation Day

25<sup>th</sup> In-Service Day

**NOVEMBER**

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Parent Conferences

11<sup>th</sup>- NO SCHOOL Holiday

November 27<sup>th</sup> – November 29<sup>th</sup> - NO SCHOOL Holiday

**DECEMBER**

2<sup>nd</sup>- NO SCHOOL

22<sup>nd</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> NO SCHOOL Holiday

**JANUARY**

1<sup>st</sup> – NO SCHOOL Holiday

20<sup>th</sup>- Teacher In-Service Day

**FEBRUARY**

14<sup>th</sup>- NO SCHOOL Vacation Day

17<sup>th</sup>- Teacher In-Service Day

28<sup>th</sup>- NO SCHOOL Vacation Day

**MARCH**

14<sup>th</sup>- NO SCHOOL Vacation Day

17<sup>th</sup> - NO SCHOOL – Teacher In-Service

**APRIL**

18<sup>th</sup>- NO SCHOOL Holiday

21<sup>st</sup> - NO SCHOOL Holiday

**MAY**

26<sup>TH</sup> NO SCHOOL Holiday

30<sup>th</sup> Last Day of School