



*2022-23*  
*Parent/Student*  
*Handbook*

2121 Mercer Road New Brighton PA 15066 •724-891-7222

# WELCOME!

*You are a valued member of our team. We are honored that you have trusted us with the education of your child. Our goal is to fulfill for your family the McGuire Motto:*

*Inspiring Hope/Fostering Growth*

## **School Philosophy**

*We believe* that all students are valuable gifts, deserving of dignity and respect

*We believe* that each child is an individual and must be treated as such in all aspects of their lives.

*We believe* that each child can learn, that learning must follow a logical, but individualized path, that learning should be fun, age-appropriate and accommodating to each learner's needs.

*We believe* that children should be taught to make choices, express emotions, and offered pathways to communication.

*We believe* that families are an integral part of education whose concerns, dreams and insight must be honored and respected.

*We believe* that teachers and therapists are talented professionals whose efforts, dedication and skills must be honored and respected.

*We believe* that schools must be safe zones where children, families, and staff feel free to share ideas, grow as individuals, are respected, cherished, physically and emotionally protected and challenged to become the person they were meant to be.

## **School Vision Statement**

Children learn

Teachers teach

Therapists remediate

Parents contribute

All are valued

## **School Mission Statement**

The Mission of The School at McGuire Memorial is to build individual programs of education, support and remediation around children with disabilities.

## **School Contact Information**

Chief School Administrator:

Dr. Kim Lieb  
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[klieb@mcguirememorial.org](mailto:klieb@mcguirememorial.org)

Director of Behavior Services:

Mr. Isaiah Foust  
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Director of Education

Mrs. Ana Gonzalez  
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School Nurse

Mrs. Terri Herge  
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School Receptionist

Mrs. Michelle Pollio  
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[Mpollio@mcguirememorial.org](mailto:Mpollio@mcguirememorial.org)

School Secretary

Mrs. Debbie Gearhart  
724-891-7222  
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Transition Coordinator

Mrs. Bethany Huff  
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[bhuff@mcguirememorial.org](mailto:bhuff@mcguirememorial.org)

## **ADMISSION**

The School at McGuire Memorial is a special education facility serving children 3 – 21 years of age with complex and significant educational needs including the following diagnoses:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Neurologic Impairment/brain damage
- Intellectual disabilities
- Learning Disabilities
- Physically Handicapped
- Speech/Language Impaired
- Multiple Disabilities

All students are placed at The School by their home school district which has fiduciary responsibility. Therefore, all placements must be approved by the district before an acceptance letter is issued. The School offers a rolling admissions process accepting applications and

enrolling students approved for placement by their district throughout the school year. Students must be at least 3 years of age to enroll in the preschool program and at least 5 years of age, but not more than 20 years of age to enroll in the school.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Compulsory school age refers to the period of a child's life from the time the child enters school as a beginner which may be no later than at the age of 6 until the age of 18. Compulsory attendance laws in Pennsylvania require that children attend school on a regular basis unless absent for an approved reason and it holds the parents of the child responsible for the child's school attendance. Absences disrupt the continuity and effectiveness of instruction. Therefore, it is expected that each student enrolled in The School at McGuire Memorial will attend school on a daily basis. Pennsylvania school law does recognize that there may be "mental, physical or other urgent reasons" for nonattendance. However, the law does not permit irregular attendance.

Absences from school are defined as "**EXCUSED**" or "**UNEXCUSED**" as outlined below. Parents/guardians must submit a written excuse within three calendar days of the absence for it to be considered excused. If the written excuse is not provided within three days, the absence is permanently counted as unexcused and is therefore unlawful. A maximum of 10 days of cumulative excused absences (verified by written parent notice and there considered lawful) are permitted for the entire school year. All absences beyond 10 days require an excuse from a physician. Unexcused absences beyond 3 days will be reported to the home school district and are subject to the attendance policies of that district up to an including submission to the magistrate. To facilitate written excuses, a "Student Absence Form" has been developed.

**EXCUSED** absences require a written excuse within three calendar days of the absence and include the following reasons:

1. Student illness  
Absences due to surgery, hospitalization, illness beyond three consecutive days or contagious disease require a return to school note from a physician
2. Religious holiday
3. Court appearance
4. School district closing due to weather (does not require a written excuse)
5. Death in the family
6. Educational family trip  
Requires prior notification and written permission from director
7. Doctor or dentist appointment  
Appointments should be made after school or during school breaks whenever possible
8. Failure of the bus to pick the student up for transport  
Please notify your school district immediately if the bus fails to pick up your child

**Procedure for student absences:** Parents should call the school or send an email by 9:00 a.m. each day the student is absent from school. When the student returns to school, he/she must bring a written excuse signed by the parent/guardian outlining the reason the child was absent. If the email indicates the reason for the absence, a separate written excuse is not needed. If documentation of the absences (email or written excuse) is not received within three days of the students return to school, the absence will be deemed "**UNEXCUSED**".

**UNEXCUSED** absences are defined as an absence which occurs for reasons other than those listed above (i.e. illness or for other urgent reason). If a parent fails to provide an excuse within

three days, the absence is permanently considered unexcused regardless of the reason. Students of compulsory attendance age with more than three unexcused absences will be reported to their district's attendance officer and can be referred to the magisterial district judge according to district policy.

### **Late Arrivals, Early Dismissals**

Children will be considered tardy if they arrive after 9:00 a.m. Tardiness may count as truancy since the School Code requires that student who have been absent without a lawful excuse for three days "or their equivalent" be reported to the district attendance office. Therefore, students arriving after 9:00 due to a valid reason must present a written note upon their return signed by the parent/guardian which outlines the reason for the late arrival. If the student arrives after their regularly scheduled lunch, families must ensure that the child eats prior to return as there are no provisions for missed lunch periods.

Release from school prior to dismissal time (early dismissals) will be granted for valid reasons. Families may arrange for early dismissals by sending a note to the child's teacher indicating the day, time of pick up, and reason for early dismissal. This note should be sent to the school office for approval on or before the day of the early dismissal. The child will be released from school only to the parents (or other persons authorized by the parents). An authorized adult is to come into the school and sign the student out at the front desk. Picture identification will be requested if the designated adult is not familiar to the secretary.

**NOTE:** there are no provisions for indiscriminate comings and goings.

### **BEHAVIOR**

Many of the students enrolled in The School at McGuire Memorial are children who have inappropriate or ineffective strategies for dealing with the stress caused by their diagnosis. Those students may exhibit a varied pattern of behavioral or emotional discontrol which can include inattention, high distractibility, self-injurious behaviors, emotional reactions inappropriate to the situation, physical aggression (hitting, biting, spitting, kicking, etc), verbal aggression (inappropriate language or content), elopement, eating disorders, sensory issues, self-stimulatory behaviors, etc. Behavior is viewed as a communication attempt or an indication of need. The School employs a behavior team comprised of a behavior analyst and behavior technicians with a wide range of experience in the field. The School is a "restraint-free" facility and employs only positive behavior support strategies. All staff have been trained in appropriate restraint-free positive behavior support techniques. Collaboration with parents and outside agencies is key to developing appropriate strategies and ensuring continuity of care. Students are never sent home for behavioral episodes. Rather, the behavior analyst and staff help the student work through the episode, update parents and continue on with the regular school program. If a child is exhibiting unusual or intense discontrol that lasts for a significant length of time or that is of danger to the child or other, the school crisis team will make a determination of the need for assistance from Beaver County Emergency/Crisis Intervention Center.

### **Behavior Support**

The School at McGuire Memorial offers Behavior Support through the Functional Behavior Assessment and positive behavior support plan process. The Behavior Analyst is available to write plans and assist classroom staff in implementation. The overarching goal of the behavior support program is to increase the student's repertoire of socially significant behaviors.

### **Behavior Department Protocol for Consultations In School Behavior Staff**

The Behavior Department of The School at McGuire Memorial is responsible for conducting FBAs (Functional Behavior Assessments), developing Positive Behavior Support Plans, writing goals for the IEP, training staff, observing students, updating parents and consulting with school districts, wrap-around agencies, and other outside agencies. To ensure quality programming, the behavior department of The School at McGuire Memorial establishes a consultative relationship with experts in the field. The School behavior staff updates their skills and stays abreast of changes in the field through on-going training from a variety of sources including inservices, courses and workshops.

### **Home-based Service Personnel**

Many of the students enrolled in The School at McGuire Memorial receive mental health agency supports in the home. To ensure continuity of services, behavior staff employed by these agencies often wish to confer by phone with The School's behavior analyst. With parent permission, the School behavior analyst will be happy to confer with the home-based behavior staff. The School does not permit outside agency support staff to provide services within the school.

### **CALENDAR/SCHOOL HOURS**

The School calendar is determined annually. Every effort is made to publish the calendar before the end of the preceding school year.

### **School Hours**

The school office is open during the school year from 7:00 – 3:30. School faculty are in the building from 7:30 – 3:30.

### **Student Hours:**

School age:	8:45 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Preschool Full Day:	8:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
Early Dismissal Day:	8:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Communication between home and school is an important part of the educational process. Communication folders with pockets are provided for every student. One side of the folder is marked RETURN TO SCHOOL and the other side is marked KEEP HOME. As a general rule teachers communicate daily with parents either via email or a printed copy of the daily details sheet. Parents are encouraged respond to emails or use the reverse side on the daily detail sheets to share relevant information, news of family or student activities, share comments, ask questions or document concerns. School notices, memos from the director and various other communication pieces will be sent home in the folder throughout the school year. Parents are asked to check the communication folders daily for notices and school information. Conversely, parents are encouraged to send notes, etc. in communication folder RETURN TO SCHOOL pockets. School staff will check the folder daily and distribute notes to the identified staff.

### **Court Orders**

It is up to families to provide The School with copies of existing court orders that limit or deny noncustodial parents access to the child, his/her records or information. In the absence of such court orders, it will be assumed that parents have joint custody and equal access to the child and information. Copies of invitations, reports, IEPs, newsletters, etc., with therefore be sent to both parents unless otherwise specified by court order. Likewise, barring a court order, students must be released to a non-custodial parent when requested.

### Notes to The Office

If you are sending any information for school administration (excuses, return slips, forms, etc.) to school with your child, it should be placed in an envelope marked "SCHOOL OFFICE" and placed in the RETURN TO SCHOOL pocket of the communication folder.

### Telephone Calls

Teachers/therapists are available to receive phone calls between 7:30 – 8:15 a.m. and between 3:15-3:30 p.m. Faculty cannot receive calls while class is in session. If you must call during the school day, leave a message for your child's teacher. He/she will return the call as soon as they are able.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

### Weather emergencies

In the event of inclement weather, students are to follow their district schedule in regard to delays and closures. If your district is delayed or closed, your child should not come to school as his/her transportation will be cancelled. Parents will be notified of The School at McGuire Memorial closings/delays via the One Call System. It is important to note that because of the wide geographic area served by our school, we could be closed/delayed while your district is operating normally. Therefore, please be sure to check your phone/email for the One Call message before sending your child on a weather alert day. *Please note that calls from One Call will be displayed as 1-877-698-3261.*

Closings/delays will also be announced on KDKA, WTAE and WPXI (TV and internet for all three channels). Most of the television stations list us as "THE SCHOOL AT MCGUIRE MEMORIAL". However, the posting on WTAE is under "SCHOOL AT MCGUIRE MEMORIAL".

Early dismissals due to weather emergencies during the school day will be determined by individual districts. Every attempt will be made to contact families if districts deem an early dismissal is warranted. However, if a district issues an early dismissal, the students will be released when the bus arrives.

### Emergency Drills

Full-evacuation fire drills are held every month. Drills occur on different days and at different times each month. Students are evacuated to the nature trail for every fire drill. Weather emergency drills are conducted every other month and include removing students to safe zones throughout the school building. Intruder drills are also held every other month (on a schedule opposite weather drills). Intruder drills consist of an all-school notification of an intruder on the premises which alerts staff to move children to the designated hiding location.

## GRADUATION

Students are eligible for special education services in Pennsylvania to the age of 21. To maintain eligibility, students must not have reached their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday before the start of the next school year (generally the last week of August). Students who have reached their 21<sup>st</sup> year will participate in the graduation ceremony at the end of the year. As with any traditional graduation ceremony, students wear caps and gowns and receive a diploma during the ceremony. Families of graduates are sent invitations to the event in the weeks prior to graduation.



## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **School Lunch Program**

The School at McGuire Memorial participates in the National School Lunch Program. Free and reduced price lunches are available daily for qualifying students. The School contracts with New Brighton Area School District to provide prepared meals for its students. Cost for meals and drinks are published annually. Students who bring their lunch to school may purchase milk, juice or a-la-carte items. There is no provision for refrigerating lunches brought from home. Packed lunches should therefore contain a cold-pack or other appropriate methods of keeping food at safe temperatures. The School at McGuire Memorial is able to accommodate allergies, gluten-free meals and altered consistencies. If students are unable to eat whole food, the food is served according to the prescription provided by the child's physician (soft, ground, or pureed). Lunch menus are sent home one month in advance. In addition to the featured food, alternates are available daily. Students are also provided with time for a snack/hydration break however parents must supply snack foods and drinks.

### **Cell Phones**

Students are prohibited from having or using cell phones on the grounds of The School at McGuire Memorial. Phones found in student possession will be turned into the office and can be claimed in person by parents. Any emergency calls for students can be directed to the School Secretary.

### **Dress Code**

All students should come to school dressed appropriately for the weather and for their own comfort. Clothing should be safe, comfortable and not restrictive. A dress code has been established to promote a safe, positive learning environment. Please call the school office if you have any questions about the dress code. For your convenience, the following guidelines are included:

<b>Clothing Item</b>	<b>Allowed</b>	<b>Not Allowed</b>
Heelies		√
Flip flops		√
Open toe shoes and sandals		√
Tennis shoes	√	
Crocs	√	
Heavy work boots, hiking boots, construction boots		√
Short shorts		√
Low slung pants		√
Docker style pants	√	
Jeans	√	
Torn or ripped pants		√
Skirts/dresses of appropriate length; leggings underneath may be required for girls who lack modesty skills	√	
Capri pants	√	
Tops with strings around neck		√
Hoodies without strings	√	
Gang-related clothing		√
Clothing with pictures,		√

words, signs the promote sexual activity, violence, use of drugs or alcohol, demeaning or degrading sayings, etc.		
Dangling necklaces, heavy chains		√
Halter tops, low cut blouses		√
Hats, bandanas, hoods in school (this restriction is waived if head covering is required for medical reason)		√

**Personal Care Items**

Parents are responsible for supplying all personal care items for students. Items may include but are not limited to: diapers, diaper wipes, sanitary napkins, change of clothing, adapted meal equipment, thickener for liquids, orthotics, wheelchairs, glasses, tube feedings and supplies, ostomy care supplies, ventilator supplies, toothettes, Kleenex, etc.

**Tuition**

Because students are publicly placed in our school by sending school districts, there is no tuition cost for parents.

**Birthdays and parties**

Birthdays are special events in the lives of children. If a child would like to celebrate their individual birthday with his/her classmates, families may make arrangements by contacting your child's teacher. Please note that many of our children have allergies or food restrictions. It may be wiser to consider non-edible ways of celebrating (i.e. videotape for the class to view, CD to listen to, games to play, etc.). We would also encourage you to keep in mind your child's age when considering a school party or celebration. All treats must be store-wrapped and follow school allergy guidelines (no tree nuts).

**Recess**

Students of preschool, elementary and middle school-age participate in 30 minutes of recess each day. If the weather permits, the children may go outside. In inclement weather, the students will have recess in their homerooms. Older students (high school and post secondary age) will participate in a social skills or leisure skill activity after lunch. Indoor and outdoor recreational activities are geared towards increasing student ability to utilize non-structured time in an effective and acceptable manner.

**Student Records**

As required by law, a policy is in place to collect, maintain and ensure the privacy of student records. The policy also gives families the right to review their child's records. Parents may submit a written request for copy of student records. Parents may also make an appointment to view records by calling the Chief School Administrator. After graduation or withdrawal from The School, all records (except for demographic information) are returned to the sending school district.

## **OBSERVATIONS AND VISITORS**

### **Observation Rooms**

School time is structured and planned carefully by the teachers. Many students are disturbed by disruptions to their schedule and unscheduled visitors in the classroom. Therefore, observation rooms and windows have been built to allow families and other approved visitors the opportunity of monitoring a student's school performance without disrupting the educational setting. Maintaining confidentiality for our students is a priority with us. All visitors are required to sign a confidentiality statement prior to observations.

To insure the availability of observation rooms and to allow for cleaning between visitors, all observations must be scheduled through Isaiah Foust or Bethany Huff. To schedule an observation, please dial the main school number (724-891-7222) and speak to either Mr. Foust or Mrs. Huff.

### **Visitors**

There may also be scheduled opportunities throughout the year for visits to the school for parties, classroom activities and events. All visitors must report at the main entrance of The School, sign in using the Raptor Visitor Management system, receive a visitor's badge and wait to be escorted to their destination. At the end of the visit, guests must return their badge to sign out. All visitors to our programs are admitted with the understanding that any information they see or hear regarding students is strictly confidential and may not be shared.

The safety of our students and staff is a priority for The School at McGuire Memorial. The School has implemented the following security measures that apply to all visitors:

- access to the building can be gained only through the main entrance. All other doors are locked from the outside.
- The outer foyer doors will open automatically to admit visitors to the vestibule. The inner doors are locked and can only be opened by the school receptionist.
- A Raptor Visitor Management system has been installed in the vestibule. All visitors must be screened through this system using a driver's license.
- Visitors will also use the free-standing kiosk to scan for temperature.
- After a clean screen is received from the Raptor system, visitors will be admitted to the school by the receptionist. Upon entering the building, visitors will go directly to the office window to pick up their identification badge which must be worn at all times when in the building. When leaving the building, visitors are to return their name badge to the receptionist who will sign them out of the Raptor system.

To control the spread of germs in the building by limiting the number of outside people in the building on any given day, visitors are reminded that all visits must be scheduled in advance.

## **HEALTH PROGRAM**

### **Health Requirements**

According to state law, students must have physical examinations in grades K, 3, 6 and 11. This equates to ages 5/6, 8/9, 11/12, 16/17. Dental examinations are required for original entry into school and in grades 3 and 7. Forms will be sent home at the end of the preceding school year. Completed physical and/or forms should be returned by the start of the year. A test for tuberculosis is required for all students upon original entry into school and in grade 9. Scoliosis screening is conducted by the School Nurse in Grade 6.

### **Immunization Requirements**

#### **Grades K-12**

4 doses of tetanus (1 dose after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday); 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age, 4 doses of diphtheria (1 dose after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday; 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age.

3 doses of polio

2 doses of measles

2 doses of mumps

1 dose of rubella

3 doses of hepatitis B

2 doses of VARICELLA or written statement from physician indicating proof of immunity from or month and year of disease

#### **Grades 7-12**

In addition to the above, the following are required:

1 dose of tetanus/diphtheriapertussis (Tdap)

1 dose of meningitis vaccine

Yearly documentation from a physician is required for a student who has a medical exemption. The documentation must be signed by the physician and indicate that the vaccines would be detrimental to the students.

### **Communicable Disease**

Students with communicable diseases shall be excluded from school according to the Department of Health Regulations for the identified disease:

COVID – 5 to 10 days depending on the student’s ability to wear a mask

Chicken pox (VARICELLA) – seven to 10 days from the onset of the rash

Pink Eye (acute contagious conjunctivitis) – 24 hours after beginning the prescribed medication

Strep Throat – 24 hours after beginning the prescribed antibiotic

The School Nurse will report communicable diseases as required by the Department of Health.

### **School Nursing Services**

School nursing services are available to each student. Included in those services are:

- maintenance of student health records
- annual vision screenings
- annual hearing screenings
- annual height and weight measurements
- a scoliosis screening in grades 6 and 7

The school nurse is also responsible for medication distribution, assessing illnesses, triaging and/or treating illnesses, notifying parents and documenting any such events

### **Medication Distribution**

Medication must be sent to school in the original labeled container with required paperwork on file in the nurse’s office. Medication will be dispensed exactly as labeled. PRN medications must be accompanied by a physician’s prescription authorizing use and dosage. Medication can only be distributed by the School Nurse. Families are provided with a locked medication bag for transporting medication to/from school on busses and vans. The first medication bag is provided free of charge. Families are charged the full cost of the item to replace lost or broken bags.

### **Illnesses at school**

To limit exposure of illnesses to students and staff, children should not come to school when they have a fever, have experienced vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours, have a rash, are lethargic, etc. Students who exhibit symptoms of illness (fever, rash, diarrhea, vomiting, lethargy, etc.) or students who display symptoms of communicable disease (COVID, strep throat, head lice, impetigo, etc) will be sent home.

### **Injuries and accidents**

Students who are injured at school are immediately assessed by the school nurse. Treatment is offered at the appropriate level and parents are contacted.

### **Serious illnesses and injuries**

For serious illnesses and injuries requiring medical evaluation beyond the scope of the school nurse's responsibility, 911 is called for paramedic transport to a local hospital. Parents are notified using the emergency information on file. It is vital that contact information be kept current and that alternate numbers are provided so that parents/guardians are accessible in emergency situations.

### **Individual Nurses for Students**

It is the policy of The School at McGuire Memorial that students with tracheostomies and ventilator dependent students must be supported by an individual nurse during school hours. The need for an individual nurse is documented in the IEP as a related service and paid for by the home school district or by student insurance. Individual nursing services for students with other life threatening health needs that impact daily life may be approved. Requests for individual nurses for students with other life threatening health needs must be made annually on the approved form. If the request is approved, the service will be documented in the IEP and listed as a related service.

### **INTERNET SAFETY**

The School at McGuire Memorial recognizes the value of Internet technology for both teachers and students. The School also recognizes that such technology is a privilege, not a right. The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires recipients of federal technology funds to comply with certain Internet filtering and policy requirements. Schools and libraries receiving funds for Internet access and/or internet connection services must also meet the Internet safety policies of the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act (NCIPA) that addresses the broader issues of online activities. The Protecting Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act adds an additional Internet Safety Policy requirement covering the education of minors about appropriate online behavior.

### **Internet Safety Policy**

The School at McGuire Memorial will ensure that appropriate Internet filtering systems are in place on all computers with Internet access. It is the responsibility of the Director of Information Technology at McGuire Main to ensure compliance. It is the responsibility of the school technology consultant to instruct all staff on the policy and oversee its implementation. It is the responsibility of teachers and staff to supervise student usage of computers and/or Internet access and to educate students about appropriate online behavior. The School at McGuire Memorial will make every effort to block inappropriate material but cannot guarantee all inappropriate material will be excluded from view. These policies apply to all users – both students and adults. Student users of the internet at The School at McGuire Memorial will:

- have on file a Student Internet User Form completed by the student and his/her parent/guardian

- Exhibit appropriate emotional/behavior control while using the computers
- Refrain from property destruction of computers components, CDs and related equipment
- Not use social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc) or electronic communication (email, chat rooms, instant messaging, etc)
- Not disclose any personal information belonging to themselves or others while using the Internet
- Use computers only under the direction and supervision of the classroom teacher
- Not “surf the web” or access inappropriate material which may be harmful to minors (pornography, obscenity, etc)
- Not engage in any unauthorized use of computers
- Not engage in unlawful activities

Violations of any of the policies and guidelines may result in the loss of Internet privileges while in The School at McGuire Memorial. Disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion and notification of law enforcement agencies may be implemented for violations of the Internet Safety Policy by students or staff.

### **WEAPONS**

The possession of weapons in school or on school property is a violation of law covered by several statutes. Act 26 of 1995, Section 1217.2 of the School Code relates to discipline from possession of weapons by students on school property and at school sponsored events. The Safe Schools Act 24PS Subsection 1301-A concerns reporting weapons policy violations in the school. It is the policy of The School at McGuire Memorial to comply with these regulations.

#### **Weapons Policy**

The possession or storage of weapons on school property by students, staff or visitors is strictly prohibited and will be dealt with to the full extent of the law. Possession by students will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and notification of law enforcement agents. Possession by adults will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for staff members and notification of law enforcement agents for all adults.

#### **Definition of terms**

The term “weapon” includes but is not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, firearm, rifle, shotgun, or any other device with the potential of inflicting serious bodily harm. If there is a suspicion that a student has a weapon on school property, parents will be notified and the Chief School Administrator or designee along with a witness may search the student and his/her personal possessions. If the student or parent resists such a search, law enforcement agents will immediately be notified. If there is a suspicion that a staff member or visitor has a weapon on school property, law enforcement agents will immediately be summoned for assistance.

### **POSSESSION AND ILLEGAL USE OF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

The possession, illegal use, distribution or intent for distribution of any and all drugs, drug paraphernalia and/or alcohol by students, staff or visitors on the campus of The School at McGuire Memorial is strictly prohibited and will be dealt with to the full extent of the law. Drugs include but are not limited to alcohol, amphetamines, barbiturates, cocaine in any form, hallucinogens, designer drugs, marijuana and narcotics rolling papers, roach clips, pipes, parts of pipes, and other homemade devices).

### **SMOKING/INCENDIARY DEVICES/FIREWORKS**

Smoking is not permitted on any school property. Students are not permitted to possess and/or use tobacco or tobacco products including smokeless tobacco. Incendiary devices (i.e. matches, lighters) are also banned, as are firecrackers, fireworks, caps, smoke bombs, “stink” bombs, celebration “poppers”. Possession and/or use of such will result in disciplinary procedures.

### **THREATS**

In an attempt to maintain a safe environment, threats (verbal, written or gesture) to students, staff and /or any other person which threaten force or violence, or which are abusive or insulting are not tolerated. When students threaten to commit a crime of violence with the purpose to terrorize another or to cause evacuation of a building, a place of assembly, a mode of transportation or otherwise cause serious public inconvenience this is considered a *terroristic threat*. Terroristic threats are taken very seriously and can result in police involvement.

### **SUSPENSION, EXPULSION and RESTRAINTS**

The School at McGuire Memorial does not routinely use suspension as a disciplinary tactic. However, suspension may be implemented according to manifestation determination policies for serious offenses such as possession of weapons, drugs, alcohol, smoking, incendiary devices, fireworks and threats.

The School is a “restraint-free” facility and employs only positive behavior support strategies. All staff have been trained in appropriate restraint-free positive behavior support techniques.

### **SAFE2SAY SOMETHING**

According to the Safe2SaySomething website (<https://www.safe2saypa.org>)

“The Safe2Say Something program was established within the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General through Act 44 of 2018. Safe2Say Something is a system for anonymously reporting unsafe, potentially harmful, dangerous, violent or criminal activities in any school in Pennsylvania. The program teaches youth and adults how to recognize warning signs and signals, especially within social media, from individuals who may be a threat to themselves or others and to “say something” BEFORE it is too late. With Safe2Say Something, it’s easy and confidential to report safety concerns to help prevent violence and tragedies”

Anonymous reports can be made by calling 1-844-SAF2SAY or 1-844-723-2729.

### **SCHOOL PROGRAM**

#### **Curriculum, Educational Programs, Services, Therapies, etc.**

The School at McGuire Memorial uses a functional curriculum individualized to meet the unique needs of each student. The curriculum is based on PA State Standards and grounded in the general education curriculum whenever possible. Students also receive instruction in music, Health and adapted physical education. Children may be eligible for occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy based on assessment by the therapists and as determined by the IEP. It is important to note that physical therapy services require an annual prescription from the child’s doctor before services can be initiated. Individual behavior support staff (1:1) can be provided for students whose IEPs indicate the need for one on one support to ensure safety, minimize behavioral discontrol or facilitate learning. Individual support staff must be approved through the child’s school district as an additional cost is incurred for this service.

### **Assessments**

Assessment drives the instructional process at The School at McGuire Memorial. Students are assessed both formally and informally using a variety of assessment tools. Some of the tools available for use include:

- ABLIS
- Essentials for Living
- Eden
- AFLS
- School Function Assessment
- Transition to Adult Checklist
- SIS
- Battelle
- Functional Skills Independence Handbook (FISH)
- Sensory Profile
- DASH
- SPH
- Brigance
- EOW-PVT
- ROS-PCT
- Arizona 3
- FCP
- TACSP
- VB-MAPP
- TSA
- Berry VMI

### **Standardized Testing**

Students are required to participate in testing as outlined by the PA Department of Education. Testing is required for students in grades 3-8 and 11. Appropriate testing format is identified each year for eligible students as part of the annual IEP meeting

### **IEP**

The basis for each child's education is the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). IEPs are developed annually by a team of people including parents, school district representatives, The School at McGuire Memorial administrator, teacher, therapists, student (if over age 14) and any other persons identified by parents on form sent annually. IEP meetings can be convened at any time to review, revamp or add goals. Parents may request an IEP meeting by calling the school secretary.

### **Progress Monitoring**

Data on IEP goals is collected on a regular basis and progress is documented quarterly on the IEP form. Progress reports are mailed to families and school districts at the end of each 9 weeks. In addition to the progress report section of the IEP, students may also receive a report card identifying progress on non-IEP skills.

School wide parent meetings to review progress with teachers and therapists are held in the spring. Individual parents are encouraged to make an appointment at any time during the year to meet with teachers and/or therapists to review your student's progress.

### **Transition Planning**

Transition services are defined as a coordinated set of activities designed to facilitate the student's movement from school to adult living. Beginning the year they turn 14, students are required to



have a transition plan as part of the IEP. The transition plan must have measurable and appropriate goals – updated annually- for when the child leaves school. The goals must be based on age-appropriate assessments in the areas of training, education, employment and independent living.

### **Extended School Year**

Students may be qualified for extended school year services as part of the IEP process. Please see the attached pamphlet regarding ESY services in Pennsylvania.

### **School Pictures**

Formal school pictures are taken each year. Families will be notified prior to the picture taking and arrangements can be made to purchase pictures. Occasionally, we also take photos/videos for publicity purposes. We will check our photo releases prior to including your child in those cases. If you have not returned the release for the current year, the prior year's release is considered to still be in effect.

### **Community Based Instruction**

Community based instruction is an important part of the educational offerings for all students. Community based instruction is coordinated with classroom instruction and is individualized to meet the needs of the student. Students are transported to activities in the community via a school vehicle. Permission forms are sent home annually for community based instruction activities that will occur throughout each school year.

### **Prom**

Students 15 and older are invited to attend the prom. Prom is generally held in May and is a dressy affair. Specific information will be sent to families of eligible students each spring.

### **Transportation**

Bus transportation is provided by the student's district of residence. Arrivals and dismissals are supervised by school staff assigned to bus duty. School staff supervise students to the point of the bus doors. It is the responsibility of the district's school bus aide or driver to assist the students on and off the busses. Bus students are dismissed from designated doors based on the student's classroom assignment. Any questions or problems with transportation should be addressed to the transportation director in your home school district.

### **Car Riders**

If a child is transported by their family, the same rules for loading and unloading are to be followed. Family vehicles are to wait in line with the busses. To ensure the safety of students and staff, vehicles should never pull out of line. School staff will escort students to the family car door. Car riders are dismissed from designated doors based on the student's classroom assignment.

### **Walkers**

Students who walk home will be dismissed from the rear ramp entrance.

## **STUDENT AND FAMILY RIGHTS**

### **Civil Rights Policy**

Admission to the school, the provision of services and referrals of students shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age or sex. Program services shall be made accessible to eligible individuals with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not

limited to equipment redesign, the provision of aids, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods. Any individual (and/or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against may file a complaint with any of the following:

***Bureau of Equal Opportunity  
Department of Public Welfare  
Room 521 Health & Welfare Building  
P.O. Box 2675  
Harrisburg, PA 17105***

***Office of Civil Rights  
Dept. of Health & Human Services  
Office for Civil Rights Region III  
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.  
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111***

***Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission  
11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Pittsburgh State Office Bldg.  
300 Liberty Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222***

***Bureau of Equal Opportunity  
Department of Public Welfare  
Western Field Office  
Room 702 State Office Bldg.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222***

**Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) AFFORDS PARENTS AND STUDENTS OVER 18 YEARS OF AGE (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Director a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Director will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records

without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

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

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

**Appendix 1**

<b>The School at McGuire Memorial Absence Excuse Form</b>	
<b>Student Name</b>	
<b>Teacher's Name</b>	
<b>Date(s) of Absence</b>	
<b>Reason for absence:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student illness or injury	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctor Appointment
<input type="checkbox"/> Dentist Appointment	<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Appointment
<input type="checkbox"/> Death in Family	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious holiday
<input type="checkbox"/> School district closing	<input type="checkbox"/> School bus didn't not come
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Reason:	
_____	
<b>Parent/Guardian Signature</b>	
<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOL SECRETARY:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Excused	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexcused
<b>Date Received</b> _____ <b>(Must be received within 3 calendar days of absence to be considered excused)</b>	

**The School at McGuire Memorial  
Absence Excuse Form**

**Student Name**

**Teacher's Name**

**Date(s) of Absence**

**Reason for absence:**

**Student illness or injury**

**Dentist Appointment**

**Death in Family**

**School district closing**

**Other Reason:**

**Doctor Appointment**

**Legal Appointment**

**Religious holiday**

**School bus didn't not come**

**Parent/Guardian Signature**

**TO BE COMPLETED BY SCHOOL SECRETARY:**

**Excused**

**Unexcused**

**Date Received** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Must be received within 3 calendar days of absence to be considered excused)**