



2026-27
Parent/Student
Handbook

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

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The School at McGuire Memorial! You are a vital part of the education offered to our students and a valued member of our team. This handbook contains a wealth of information, policies and procedures aimed at helping you and your child navigate the school. We are honored that you have trusted us with the education of your child.

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 Vision Statement

The School at McGuire Memorial is a fully funded Approved Private School filled to capacity with children who despite having complex educational or behavioral needs are challenged and encouraged by competent, caring staff using evidence-based practices to help students reach unexpected levels of independence. With support for and from families, the interdisciplinary team of professionals is guided by data to lead all students in acquiring functional skills and increasing meaningful participation in educational, work and community activities with an emphasis on individual preferences, needs and diversity.

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, and 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 faculty 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.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

School Governance

The School at McGuire Memorial provides educational services to students with disabilities and is licensed as a Private Academic School and funded as an Approved Private School by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The School is governed by an advisory school board that provides guidance, leadership and direction. Under the leadership of the CEO/President, Mr. Christopher Shay and the school advisory board, the School is a department of McGuire Memorial. While The School is an autonomous organization in terms of regulations, budget and income, it receives support from McGuire Memorial for Accounting Services, Human Resource Services, Payroll Services and supervisory guidance.

The Chief School Administrator of the School, Mrs. Bethany Huff, has the duty of carrying out the policies and directives of the school board and serves as the decision making authority for the School. Her primary directive is to provide direction and leadership in the achievement of The School's philosophy, mission, vision, strategic plan, goals and objectives. Mrs. Huff is responsible for overall program direction, implementation, and supervision (including collaboration with sending school districts), curriculum development, staff supervision, budget monitoring, regulatory compliance, implementation of union contract, programmatic development, student enrollment, parent and district relationships and budget monitoring. Mrs. Huff works collaboratively with the administrative team to fulfill these tasks.

Administrative Team

In addition to Mrs. Huff, Chief School Administrator, the administrative team includes:

- Mrs. Ana Gonzalez - Supervisor of Special Education
- Mrs. Morgan Redrup - Assistant Supervisor of Special Education
- Mrs. Heather Cook - Director of Behavioral Services

The members of the administrative team meet regularly with faculty from their respective departments. In turn, the administrative team meets to plan, review, update and strategize. Contact information and job responsibilities are as follows:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Phone Exten sion</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Mrs. Bethany Huff, M. S.	Chief School Administrator	1201	bhuff@mcguirememorial.org	Provides direction and leadership in the achievement of school philosophy, mission and vision by working with the School Advisory Board to develop and implement the strategic plan.
Mrs. Ana Gonzalez, M.Ed.	Supervisor of Special Education	1202	agonzalez@mcguirememorial.org	Responsible for overall programmatic implementation and ensures effective use of evidence-based techniques and best practices through staff supervision and training. Chairs IEP meetings and provides leadership and guidance for IEP development, assessments, goal-writing and progress reports; ensures appropriate implementation of IEP goals in classrooms and therapies. Serves as Education Director for the Private Academic School License.
Mrs. Morgan Redrup, M.Ed.	Assistant Supervisor of Special Education	1204	mredrup@mcguirememorial.org	Coordinates day to day school operations, ensures safety of student by providing direct supervision during arrivals and dismissals, recess and community activities. Oversees student enrichment activities, provides weekly news updates and assists in the professional growth of teachers.
Mrs. Heather Cook, BCBA	Director of Behavioral Services	1219	hcook@mcguirememorial.org	Responsible for the behavior department including ABA Coaches and Behavior Technicians. Ensures that all positive behavior support programs are compliant and follow best practices. Provides on-going training in ABA principles to all staff.

Structure with Pennsylvania

The School at McGuire Memorial is licensed by the state of Pennsylvania as a private academic school and is funded as an Approved Private School (APS). Students who are identified with complex educational, medical and/or behavioral support needs are placed in The School at McGuire Memorial by their home school district. Through the APS

process, students assigned to our school are awarded “4010” slots which are publicly funded placements. The funding covers the tuition through a 40/60 cost split between the home district and the Bureau of Special Education. The number of 4010 slots available is determined by the annual allocation from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). If all of the available slots are awarded to students, districts may contract with The School at McGuire Memorial to provide educational services while bearing sole responsibility for tuition.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION, PROCEDURES AND IMPORTANT TOPICS (in alphabetical order)

1. 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
- Other Health Impairments
- 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 21 years of age to enroll in the school.

2. 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 and including submission to the magistrate. To facilitate written excuses, a "Student Absence Form" has been developed and can be found in Appendix A.

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) 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.

3. 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 behavior analysts, ABA coaches 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 others, 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 analysts and ABA Coaches are 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.

Consultations

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.

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 analysts or

ABA coaches. With parent permission, ABA coaches 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.

4. CALENDAR/SCHOOL HOURS

The School calendar is determined annually. Every effort is made to publish the calendar by April of the preceding year. A copy of the 2026-27 calendar is included at the end of this document.

Office Hours

The school office is open during the school year from 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

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.

NOTE: The school building opens at 8:30 a.m. Students cannot be admitted into the building prior to 8:30. The school building closes at 3:30 p.m. Students cannot stay in the building past 3:30.

5. 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 to 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.

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.

6. 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., will 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.

7. 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 has been 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.

8. GENERAL INFORMATION

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. Therefore, food/treats are not accepted. Rather, we encourage non-edible ways of celebrating (i.e. games to play, stickers, etc.). We would also encourage you to keep in mind your child’s age when considering a school party or celebration.

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. Minimum requirements are that students dress neatly and are fully clothed in clean clothes. For your convenience, the following guidelines are included:

Shoes: heellies, flip flops, heavy work boots, hiking boots and construction boots are not permitted. Open toe shoes and sandals are discouraged.

Pants: low slung pants and ripped/torn jeans are not permitted. Shorts must be of appropriate length.

Skirts/dresses: must be of appropriate length; leggings underneath may be required for girls who lack modesty skills.

Tops/hoodies with strings: not permitted

Halter tops/low cut tops: not permitted

Gang-related clothing: not permitted

Clothing with pictures, words, signs that promote sexual activity, violence, use of drugs or alcohol, demeaning or degrading sayings, etc.: not permitted

Hats, bandanas, hoods in school: not permitted. Protective helmets for medical issues are permitted.

Dangling necklace, heavy chains, large hoop earrings and any jewelry that may be pulled, twisted or cause injury: not permitted.

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.

Recess/Guided Free Choice Activities

All students participate in 30 minutes of guided free choice activities each day. If the weather permits, younger children may go outside. In inclement weather, the students will have recess in their homerooms. Indoor and outdoor recreational activities are geared towards increasing student ability to utilize non-structured time in an effective and acceptable manner. High school students (grades 9-12) do not have recess. High school students do have a daily leisure period with participation in age-appropriate social activities.

School Lunch Program

The School at McGuire Memorial does not participate in the National School Lunch Program. However, we do provide free meals for all students. Breakfast is prepared by

our dietary staff and consists of either a cold or hot option depending on the menu of the day. The School contracts with a local caterer to provide prepared lunches. Again, lunches may be a hot or a cold option depending on the menu of the day. Wow Butter sandwiches are always a daily alternative. Beverages including milk, juice or water are available at each meal. Students may also opt to bring their lunch from home. Free beverages are available for these students as well. ***Please note that there is no provision for refrigerating or heating lunches brought from home.*** Packed lunches should therefore contain a cold-pack, thermos or other appropriate methods of keeping food at safe temperatures. To make arrangements for dietary restrictions (allergies, gluten-free, dairy-free, etc.) please email Debbie Gearhart at dgearhart@mcguirememorial.org. If students are unable to eat whole food, a prescription must be provided by the child's physician indicating the required consistency (soft whole, ground, or pureed). Breakfast and lunch menus are sent home one month in advance. Students are also provided with time during the day for a snack/hydration break however parents must supply snack foods and drinks. All students are provided with a water bottle and are encouraged to remain hydrated throughout the day.

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.

9. GRADUATION

Students are eligible for special education services in Pennsylvania until the day before their 22nd birthday. Students who have reached their 21st 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. The students will then be eligible to return to school the following year until the day before their 22nd birthday which would be their last day in the program.

Preschool students also participate in a graduation ceremony during their last year of preschool eligibility. Families are invited to watch the preschool graduates wearing caps and gowns to receive a certificate of completion/diploma.

10. HEALTH PROGRAM

Health Requirements

According to state law, students must have physical examinations upon original entry, and in grades 6 and 11. 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.

Immunization Requirements

Grades K-12

4 doses of tetanus (1 dose after 4th birthday); 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age)
4 doses of diphtheria (1 dose after the 4th birthday; 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age.)
4 doses of pertussis (1 dose after the 4th birthday; 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age.)
4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given.)
2 doses of measles, mumps, 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 meningococcal conjugate (MCV) vaccine in grade 7 with a booster prior to the start of grade 12

Exemptions

These requirements allow for the following exemptions: medical reason (signed by physician), religious belief (signed by clergy), or philosophical/strong moral or ethical conviction. Even if your child is exempt from immunizations, he/she may be excluded from school during an outbreak of vaccine preventable disease.

Communicable Disease

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

- 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
- hearing screenings (completed by the Speech Department in grades K/1, 2, 3, 7 and 11).
- annual height and weight measurements

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

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 if the school nursing staff is unable to support the student. Please note that seizures, catheterizations needs, ostomy care and tube feedings can all be handled by the school nursing staff. 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, listed as a related service and paid for by the home school district or the student's insurance.

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 will be sent home. Students who are sent home due to illness cannot return to school until the second day after being sent home. For example, if the student is sent home on Monday, the soonest he/she can return to school is Wednesday. If the student is sent home on Thursday, he/she cannot return to school until the following Monday.

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.

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 (including sunscreen, lotions, creams, ointments, pain-reducing medication, cough syrup, etc.) 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.

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.

11. 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 21st 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.

The complete CIPA policy with Internet User Form can be found in Appendix B

12. PROGRESS REPORTS

IEP progress reports are distributed quarterly. Quarters are identified on the school calendar with reports distributed with a week or two of the end of the grading period. Parent conferences to discuss progress are held once a year. Parents may request additional conferences at any time by contacting the Supervisor of Special Education, Mrs. Ana Gonzalez. She can be reached via email at agonzalez@mcguirememorial.org.

13. SCHOOL PROGRAM

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.

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.

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.

Extended School Year

Students may be qualified for extended school year services as part of the IEP process. Information about ESY can be found on the PaTTAN website (www.pattan.net) or by using this link: https://www.pattan.net/getmedia/5a57549b-6161-4164-afc7-575f128a9adf/TDR_ESY_0917

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.

Photos and Opt-Out

Formal school pictures are taken each year through a professional company. Families will be notified prior to the picture taking and arrangements can be made to purchase pictures through the company. Formal school photos are also published with names in the yearbook. Throughout the school year, photographs may also be taken of our students engaged in classroom or school activities. These photos may be intentionally used for the school yearbook and/or for McGuire publications or internal/external communication efforts, including but not limited to newsletters, Facebook and website postings. Students may or may not be identified by name. All photos are the property of The School at

McGuire Memorial and may be used beyond the 2025-26 school year. ***If you do not want photographs where your child is easily identifiable to be intentionally used for McGuire media efforts as described above, you may opt-out by completing and returning the Photo Opt-Out Form.*** If the media opt-out form is not returned, permission for photo use is assumed to be given. Photos will not be used after the date the media opt-out form is received. However, permission to use photos is assumed before the form is received. Submitting the opt-out form prevents the intentional use of your child's photo by The School, which means that your child will not be in the yearbook. However, unintentional use may occur through the use of group photos of multiple children participating in an activity.

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 annually on the date indicated on the school calendar. 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.

Prom

Prom is generally held in May and is a dressy affair. Specific information will be sent to families of eligible students each spring.

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

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.

Transportation for arrival and dismissal (district, families, walkers)

Bus transportation is provided by the student's district of residence. Arrivals and dismissals are supervised by school staff assigned to bus duty. Busses are unloaded beginning at 8:30 am. School staff are not available before 8:30 to assist with issues on the bus. Busses are loaded beginning 2:55 pm. Students cannot be released earlier by driver request. School staff supervise students to the point of the bus doors. Bus drivers/aides are responsible for assisting students onto or off of the bus, securing wheelchairs, buckling seatbelts, etc. School staff are not responsible for student behavior or medical conditions during transportation. Busses cannot return students to the school

for medical concerns or when exhibiting challenging behavior on the ride home. It is the responsibility of the district's school bus aide and/or driver to follow district policies regarding challenging behaviors and medical emergencies. 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.

If a child is transported by their family, the same rules for loading and unloading are to be followed. In the morning, family vehicles are to wait in line with the busses. In the afternoon, students who are car-riders are dismissed before the busses arrive on campus. Parents are to enter the bus road and line up no earlier than 2:30. Students are dismissed at 2:45 and will be escorted to the family car door by school staff. To ensure the safety of students and staff, vehicles should never pull out of line.

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

14. SCHOOL SAFETY

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.

Safe2SaySomething

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.

Smoking/Vaping/Incendiary Devices/Fireworks

Smoking and/or vaping 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

15. 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
11th 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 A

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 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)	

Appendix B

The School at McGuire Memorial CIPA COMPLIANCE

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires schools and libraries that seek E-rate discounts for Internet access and internal connections to certify that they have in place certain Internet safety policies and technology protection measures. The School at McGuire Memorial does apply for E-rate discounts and therefore fulfills the requirements outlined by CIPA by including a technology protection measure that protects against Internet access by both adults and minors to visual depictions that are (1) obscene; (2) child pornography; or, with respect to use of the computers by minors, (3) harmful to minors. In addition, The School's Internet safety policy includes "monitoring the online activities of minors" as outlined by law.

INTERNET SAFETY/ACCEPTABLE STUDENT USAGE POLICY

The School at McGuire Memorial recognizes the Internet as a valuable resource that promotes and enhances a student's educational experience. We also recognize that the internet presents opportunity for misuse and potential harm to students. To that end, The School employs a system that blocks and filters Internet access for both minors and adults on certain content and visual depictions. In addition, we have adopted the following internet safety policy:

1. All student access to the internet will be monitored by teachers or paraeducators who have been designated by the teacher. No student will have access to the internet directly on his/her own; all internet use will be directly supervised by a teacher or designated paraeducators. All internet use will follow a teacher-directed plan or lesson. Students are not permitted to freely "surf the web". During all internet activities, the supervising adult will visually monitor the student's screen to ensure compliance with the teacher-directed plan/lesson.
2. No student will have access to or utilize email on school premises.
3. Parents/guardians and students will complete an Internet Acceptable Use Policy Agreement. We recognize that some students are unable to independently access the internet or maneuver through computer screens without adult assistance up to and including hand/hand assistance. None the less, all students will be informed of the Internet Acceptable Use Policy. Students who demonstrate understanding of the policy will be required to sign. Students who cannot demonstrate understanding of the policy will receive ongoing instruction and will not be permitted to use the internet unless a designated adult is seated beside them.
4. All staff will be informed of both the Internet Safety/Acceptable Student Usage Policy and The School at McGuire Memorial Computer Use Policy for Staff.
5. All students, including those unable to independently access the internet, will be provided instruction in the School policy, internet safety and cyber-bullying.
6. Students will not access inappropriate material on the Internet including pornography obscenity, child pornography or other materials that may be "harmful to minors".
7. Students are prohibited from using chat rooms.

8. Students are prohibited from using forms of direct electronic communication such as newsgroups and instant messaging.
9. Students are prohibited from using social media such as Facebook and Twitter.
10. Students shall not engage in unauthorized access of computer, including “hacking”.
11. Students shall not engage in unlawful activities.
12. Students shall not disclose, use or disseminate any personal identification information of themselves or others.
13. All students will receive annual training/education about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms, cyber-bullying awareness and response. Instruction will occur at a level appropriate for the individual students.

Use of the internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate, unauthorized and illegal use and/or violation of The School at McGuire Memorial Internet Safety/Acceptable Student Usage Policy will result in the loss of internet privileges. Additional disciplinary action may be implemented up to and including notification of law enforcement agencies when necessary.

**THE SCHOOL AT MCGUIRE MEMORIAL
INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AGREEMENT**

Student Section

I understand The School at McGuire Memorial's Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I have demonstrated this understanding to my teacher by successfully completing the attached test. Until I successfully complete the test, I will be unable to use the internet without an adult seated beside me.

I understand that any violation of this policy will result in the loss of my privilege to access the Internet at school. I understand that violations of the School Internet Acceptable Use Policy could also involve additional disciplinary action, legal action or law enforcement involvement.

Student

Signature_____

Student Printed

Name_____

Date_____

Parent Section

As the parent/guardian of this student, I have read The School at McGuire Memorial Internet Acceptable Usage Policy and I understand that internet access at school is solely for educational purposes. I recognize that it is impossible for The School at McGuire Memorial to restrict access to all controversial materials. I will not hold The School at McGuire Memorial responsible for materials acquired. I hereby give permission for the above named student to participate in teacher-directed Internet usage at The School at McGuire Memorial.

Parent/Guardian

Signature_____

Parent/Guardian Printed

Name_____

Date_____

STUDENT ASSESSMENT OF INTERNET USAGE POLICY UNDERSTANDING

Student Name _____ Date _____

1. I can use the internet without my teacher's permission.
True False
2. I can only use the internet when an adult is supervising me.
True False
3. I can do whatever I want when I am using the internet at school.
True False
4. I can turn the computer screen so my teacher cannot see what I am doing on the internet.
True False
5. I can check my email when I am at school.
True False
6. My parents must sign permission for me to use the internet at school.
True False
7. I can use the internet at school even if I do not know the answer to all of the question on this test.
True False
8. The adults in my classroom know about these rules and will make sure that I follow them.
True False
9. My teacher will teach me how to be safe on the internet.
True False
10. I will not go to any site unless my teacher gives me permission and I will not try to look at things that are unsafe or could hurt me in any way.
True False
11. I can use chat rooms, Facebook, Twitter, instant messaging and newsgroups on the internet at school.
True False
12. If nobody finds out, I can do things on the internet that are against the law.
True False

13. I am not allowed to tell anyone on the internet or type in my name, address, phone number, birth date or any other information that will tell someone who I am.

True

False

14. When I am on the internet, I am allowed to give the name, address, phone number, birth date of my friends.

True

False