

Big Spring Elementary Schools



Student/Parent Handbook 2025-2026

Vision

Shaping the Future, One Student at a Time

Mission

The Mission of the Big Spring School District is to provide challenging curricular and extracurricular opportunities, within a safe environment, that meet the unique needs of every individual by expanding interests, enhancing abilities, and equipping every student with knowledge, skills, and character essential to become a responsible citizen of our community, our nation, and the world.

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**** Big Spring is an Equal Opportunity Education Institution ****

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

I hereby acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the Big Spring Elementary handbook and its contents including:

- Internet Access and Usage
- Google Apps Information
- Student Day
- Attendance
- Student Absences
- School Tardiness
- Early Dismissals
- Transportation
- Cameras on Buses
- Emergency Delays and Closings
- Impassable Roads
- Educational Trips
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- Medication Policy
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- Contacting Teachers
- Custody Situations
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- Visitor Policy
- Party Invitations
- Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII)
- Services
- Special Education Information
- Summer Success Programs

By signing this receipt, I am also indicating that I have read, explained, and/or conveyed the contents of this handbook with my child. Furthermore, my signature on this page indicates that my child will abide by the internet usage policy and only use this resource in the manner outlined in the internet usage policy (see reverse side for an excerpt of the policy).

Name of Child

Grade/Teacher Name

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Big Spring School District

Elementary Internet Access and Usage

The Big Spring School District will provide access to the Internet for students, with their parents' or guardians' consent, teacher aides, teachers, administrative staff, and/or other District employees to locate resources to meet their school-related needs. District staff will work together to help students develop the critical thinking skills necessary to discriminate among information sources, to identify information appropriate to their age and developmental levels, and to evaluate and use information to meet educational goals that are consistent with the District's Strategic Plan. Access to the Internet through District resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked for anyone who uses the resources inappropriately as determined by District authorities.

Because of the nature of the Internet as a global network connecting thousands of computers around the world, inappropriate materials, including pornography and obscenity, can be accessed through the Internet. The District attempts to block inappropriate web sites through the use of an Internet filter. However, due to the evolving nature of the technology that allows the Internet to operate, there is a chance that some inappropriate web sites may be accessible at times. Accessing these and similar types of sources or transmitting such sources will result in suspension and/or other disciplinary measures in accordance with District policies. Through a program of education, the District will educate students, teacher aides, teachers, and administrative staff about their individual responsibility to refrain from engaging in unacceptable uses of the network and about the consequences of their actions if they violate the policy.

The above is an excerpt from the Big Spring School District's Internet Access and Usage Policy. To view this policy in its entirety, please click on this link [Policy 815 - Acceptable Use of Internet, Computers and Network Resources](#) or visit any school or district office. A signature on the front of this form indicates you have read, understood and explained the district's Internet Access and Usage Policy to your child. In addition, your signature signifies your agreement with the terms of the Internet Access and Usage Policy for your elementary-age child.

Google Apps Information

Google Apps For Education (GAFE) is a suite of free Google cloud-based services that allow teachers and students to collaborate on school projects in a secured environment that is completely separate from public Google offerings and is free from advertising and third-party data mining. Examples of Google services that Big Spring School District has enabled via GAFE include Google Docs, Google Drive, limited Google Email, and Google Classroom. Some teachers will be distributing and collecting assignments through GAFE and the Google Classroom service. Students will be learning digital citizenship skills and cyber safety and information security/privacy through use of GAFE and potentially Google Email in certain grades. To enable Google Apps for Education, the district will be creating district managed Google Apps For Education accounts for each student. Parents are able to opt out of having their students enrolled and using GAFE but this may significantly impact their ability to participate in class learning activities, digital citizenship curriculum, on-line class discussions, and so forth. Opt out forms can be obtained from the Technology Office.

Big Spring Elementary Schools

The staff and administration associated with the school believe that every child can learn and is entitled to the best possible education. Our schools will continue an educational program that reflects the needs of the community. We will utilize the best available talents, practices, and resources available to enhance student learning. Big Spring Elementary Schools will provide opportunities for the students to: acquire basic skills; achieve competencies that will increase their quality of life; and learn qualities to function as a responsible citizen in today's society.

Student Day

9:00 – 9:15 Student arrival (***NO STUDENT MAY BE DROPPED OFF AT THE SCHOOL PRIOR TO 9AM***).
9:20 Any student arriving after 9:20 will be marked 'Tardy'
3:50 Student Dismissal

Attendance

Excellent school attendance is critical to our students' success. While we want our students to be here every day, we understand that there may be times when an absence, tardy, or early release is unavoidable. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the Big Spring Elementary Schools' policies regarding attendance.

Student Absences

If your child will be absent from school, it is always recommended (not required) that you call the school to inform us of your child's absence that day. After your child is absent, your child has **3 school days to return an excuse** to be considered for an excused absence. If an excuse is NOT returned within 3 school days, the absence will be marked illegal/unexcused. 'Unexcused' absences may also include, but are not limited to, reasons such as "Mary overslept." or "Bobby missed the bus." Parents may be subject to a citation if their child accumulates more than 3 illegal/unexcused absences. Parents of students missing 10 days will receive a Concern Letter in the mail. Medical Requirement Letters will be sent once a student reaches 13 absences.

School Tardiness

A pupil is tardy if she/he is not present when the tardy bell rings (9:20 for elementary schools). Pupils who enter the school anytime after the tardy bell must report to the school office with their parent or legal guardian. A tardy excuse will be completed in the office and signed by **the parent or legal guardian**. Tardiness will be classified as 'excused' only if:

1. The student is returning from a medical appointment and presents acceptable written verification of the time the appointment ended; **OR**
2. The parent or legal guardian of the student provides an acceptable reason for the tardiness in writing. Tardiness to school for any other circumstances will be classified as 'unexcused/unlawful.' When a student misses school as a result of tardiness, the time missed will be accumulated, and when one-half day of time is accumulated, it will be recorded as such on the student's attendance record.

Early Dismissals

When it is necessary for students to leave school for important appointments that cannot be arranged outside school hours, students should submit a request from their parents or legal guardians indicating the reason for the early dismissal and the time they are to be excused. This request should be presented to the teacher or school office on the day of the appointment (or earlier when possible).

Any student who has an early dismissal will be signed out by their parent/guardian in the school office. The parent/guardian will then complete an 'early dismissal form' in the office for their child. Early dismissals will be classified as 'excused' only if:

1. The student is leaving for a medical appointment (The 'early dismissal form' will be signed by an authorized person at the appointment and the form will be returned to the school office upon the student's return to school.) **OR**

2. The parent or legal guardian of the student provides an acceptable reason for the early dismissal in writing.

Early dismissals from school for any other circumstances will be classified as 'unexcused/unlawful.' When a student misses school as a result of early dismissal, the time missed will be accumulated, and when one-half day of time is accumulated, it will be recorded as such on the student's attendance record.

Educational Trips

Students may be granted an excused absence to participate in an educational trip, tour, or activity. The request must be submitted **prior to the absence** and approved by the building principal. These absences should be limited to 5 days or less and will be approved by principal's discretion. These trips are valuable, but like other absences need to be limited.

Transportation

All students will be expected to be transported from school in their usual manner unless it is communicated otherwise to the office by the parent or guardian. **To plan accordingly, all communications to the school office requesting a change in transportation for that day must be done by 1:30 P.M.** We understand that there may be emergencies, and exceptions to this deadline will only be granted on an 'emergency' basis.

- Riding the bus is a privilege that can be removed at any time for negative behavior.
- Permanent bus changes must be submitted 3-5 days before any change can occur. Forms can be found on the Big Spring Website.
- Babysitting & daycare providers must be within the boundaries of the school in which the student is enrolled.
- Bus passes will only be issued in emergency situations and must be sent, in writing/email, to the transportation department.

Bus Rules

1. Students are expected to obey all rules established by their bus driver.
2. Each pupil shall be given an assigned seat. That seat should be used every day.
3. Only assigned students shall ride on any bus.
4. Pupils shall be permitted to leave the bus only at their established stop.
5. Pupils riding school buses should be at their bus stop ready to board the bus at least five minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time. Habitual lateness could result in loss of riding privileges.
6. Generally, a student being excluded from a bus on a first offense will not be permitted to ride the bus for a period of three (3) days. He/she will be required to furnish his/her own transportation for this three-day period.
7. If a student is excluded a second time, it will be for an indefinite period. The student, the student's parents, a school administrator, and the bus driver will confer before a decision is made regarding restoration of bus privileges.
8. All school rules apply at the bus stop and on the bus.

Cameras on Buses

In the Big Spring School District, we continually strive to ensure the safety and security of our students. For that reason, the District does have surveillance cameras installed on many of our buses. If your child rides a district bus (to/from school, activity buses, field trips, etc.), he/she may be subject to video recording. The ultimate purpose of the recordings is to assist our administration and staff in ensuring the safety of our students. For additional information, please see [District Policy 713](#).

Emergency Delays and Closings

Please follow the guidance that is given via our Blackboard Connect System either the night before or the morning of a delay or closing. This information will also go out via: The District web page at www.bigspringsd.org or local radio and television stations.

Impassable Roads

The Big Spring School District encompasses almost 200 square miles; therefore, it is not unusual to have various geographic areas of the District affected differently by the weather. For this reason, when roads are impassable, as verified by the District's bus drivers, parents are permitted to have their children remain at home. Such absences will be designated as excused provided parents submit an excuse for absence for impassable roads (submitted within 3 school days as with other excuses).

Code of Conduct

Appropriate student conduct is an important part of an effective school program. A safe school environment permits students to reach their full potential. The Big Spring Elementary Schools' code of conduct includes rules that govern student behavior and consequences for infractions.

General Rules:

Be ready and responsible.

Be respectful.

Be safe.

Classroom Rules:

- Voice Level 0-2 (silent, whisper, speaking)
- Have materials ready
- Participate actively
- Follow directions
- Speak nicely to teachers and peers
- Work cooperatively
- Care for all property
- Maintain personal space
- Always walk
- Use materials appropriately

Hallway Rules:

- Voice Level 0 (silent)
- Eyes forward
- Go straight to and from your destination
- Walk on the right side of the hall and face forward
- Wait your turn
- Maintain personal space
- Get a drink quickly
- Always walk in single file line
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Use one step at a time on the stairs

Bathroom Rules:

- Voice Level 0 (silent)
- Use the bathroom in a timely manner
- Tell an adult if there is a problem
- Wash hands when finished
- Take care of the bathroom
- Maintain personal space
- Respect others' privacy
- Always walk
- Keep hands and feet to yourself

Bus Rules:

- Voice Level 2 (speaking voice)
- Keep all belongings with you
- Follow bus driver's directions
- Maintain personal space
- Use kind words
- Sit bottom to bottom, back to back in the seat
- Stay in your assigned seat
- Keep aisle clear
- Walk to and from bus

Cafeteria Rules:

- Voice Level 1-2 (whisper or speaking)
- Use a pass when leaving the cafeteria
- Tell an adult if there is a problem
- Take the food you ordered
- Get all lunch supplies when going through line
- Take care of the cafeteria
- Wait for an adult to give permission to empty your tray
- Eat your own food
- Maintain personal space
- Use kind words
- Always walk
- Keep hands to self
- Sit correctly in seat

Play Ground Rules:

- Voice Level 3 (outside voice)
- Line up quickly and quietly at signal
- Tell an adult if there is a problem
- Bring in what you brought out
- Play fairly
- Use kind words and actions
- Use equipment safely
- Stay within the playground boundaries
- Use hands and feet appropriately

Dress Code:

1) No 'high' heels 2) Sneakers only for P.E. 3) No short shorts 4) No midriff or revealing shirts 5) No suggestive logos or tobacco/alcohol advertisements 6) No hats 7) No strapless dresses

Students will be expected to obey District policies that include, but are not limited to:

- Terrorist threats
- Tobacco
- Drug & Alcohol
- Harassment
- Weapons

Consequences: (Depending on Infraction)

- Time out
- Loss of recess
- Time out at the school office
- Lunch detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Loss of bus privileges

Contacting Teachers

Parents who wish to speak with a teacher should make that request known at the school office rather than going directly to the classroom. The secretary will contact the teacher to determine their availability. (This applies before, during and after school hours.) Telephone messages for teachers will be given to them as soon as possible, and return calls will be made when the teacher has available time. Teachers may be contacted via email. It is recommended, however, that parents TELEPHONE the office to relay IMPORTANT messages to a teacher rather than relying on email.

Custody Situations

If there is a custody situation that dictates or restricts student access with regards to school in ANY way, please furnish a copy of that updated stipulation to the school. The school can and will only act in accordance with the most up-to-date paperwork that you have provided for the student's file.

Lunch/Breakfast Program

The Big Spring School District participates in the National School Lunch/Breakfast Program. Families that receive food stamps will be eligible for free meals. These families will be notified of their child's eligibility and do not need to complete an application. During the first week of school, free and reduced meal applications will be sent home to each family. However, free and reduced applications can be completed at any time during the school year. Students whose family income meets the federal requirements may qualify for either free meals or reduced-price meals. These applications are audited for accuracy, and misinformation given to the district could result in legal action if anyone provides misinformation intentionally. Families who received free or reduced meals last school year must renew the application each school year by October 1st, otherwise student meal accounts return to PAID status.

Point of Sale

The District uses Mosaic Point of Sale (POS) system to account for meal purchases. This system allows students to put money on their account which allows for quicker service during the daily lunch period. This account is used for both breakfast and lunch orders. To provide a better experience for all, we urge you to:

1. Make the deposit online using www.mySchoolBucks.com **OR**
2. Use a check that covers a month or several weeks, bring it in an envelope and give it to the classroom teacher. All checks should be made payable to the Big Spring School District. It is acceptable to send in cash for lunch purchases.
3. When a student forgets or loses their lunch money, prompt repayment is expected.

With mySchoolBucks, parents are able to register for an account and view information for free. Parents are able to see account balances and recent cafeteria purchases, add money to their student's account, and set up low balance alerts. It may take a few days for your account to be updated so deposits might not register immediately.

Refunds from the Point of Sale System will only be made if a child withdraws from school. Year end balances, including negative ones, will be transferred to the next school year. Once money has been deposited to a student's account it can only be used for cafeteria sales. All students withdrawing from the Big Spring School District are required to contact the Administration Office at (717) 776-2408 for settlement of his/her account.

The district is not responsible for controlling student lunch and breakfast purchases. The point of sales system can offer you a means to limit your student's daily purchases. We encourage you to discuss with your student his/her purchase limits. If this fails, contact us and we will assist you as best as we can.

CAFÉ Information

To view school menus, a la carte pricing, and other general café information, please visit www.bigspringsd.org. Click the Departments tab and go to Food Services. The menu is also posted on the elementary school web site. **If you would like your child to purchase à la carte items, parental approval is required. Please visit your school's webpage to obtain the À La Carte Approval Form.**

Parent Involvement

We believe our parents make the difference between a good year and a GREAT year for our students!

Parents are encouraged to be involved by:

1. encouraging your child to read every day (model it too!)
2. checking your child's backpack for important information from school
3. monitoring your child's homework
4. contacting your child's teacher when concerns arise
5. joining our PTO
6. volunteering in your child's classroom
7. participating in PTO activities
8. joining your child for lunch
9. attending Parent/Teacher Conferences

Visitor Policy

Please realize that parents are always welcome at our school. When coming to the school, it is important to bring your driver's license for clearance in our Raptor System. Should you need to drop something off for a child, you will need to communicate with the secretaries through the intercom system and leave their items in the vestibule. If you are simply picking up or dropping off your student, please inform a secretary of your intent. If you are picking up your child, the secretary will call the classroom and inform your child's teacher of your arrival. For security reasons, parents are not permitted to pick up their child at their classroom.

If you are coming to have lunch with your student, please call the office prior to arriving to make sure the class is eating in the cafeteria that day.

Party Invitations

To avoid hurting students' feelings, party invitations may NOT be issued at school. Please arrange to have invitations issued outside of school.

Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII)

Our elementary schools are committed to meeting the needs of all students. The Response to Instruction and Intervention (RtII) literacy framework is a tiered approach which allows all students to receive high quality instruction. The framework also provides researched based intervention programs for some students based on their specific needs.

	Focus of Instruction	Instruction Provided By	Grouping	Time	Assessment
Tier 1	All students receive instruction in the PA Core Standards using researched based strategies.	Classroom Teacher	Whole group and flexible small groups	90 minutes daily	Universal Benchmark Assessments -iReady -AIMSweb
Tier 2	Students at academic risk and who have not responded well to Tier 1 instruction. Researched based intervention programs are used for instruction.	Reading Interventionist and classroom teacher	Small groups of students with similar abilities and needs	30 minutes daily in addition to Tier 1	Monitor student progress on target skill twice a month
Tier 3	Students performing significantly below grade level and who have not responded well to Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction. Researched based intervention programs and/or researched based strategies are used for instruction.	Reading Interventionists	Individual or very small groups of students with similar abilities and needs	15-30 minutes, three to five days per week, in addition to Tier 1 and Tier 2 *Time is determined using data and needs of student.	Monitor student progress on target skill week

Services

Big Spring elementary schools provide a wide range of services to meet the needs of our students.

1. Parent Volunteers
2. Reading Support Volunteer Program
3. Classroom Aides
4. RTII-Instructional Coach
5. Title I Reading
6. Special and Gifted Education
7. Pupil Personnel Services
 - a. Guidance Counselor
 - b. Home and School Visitor
 - c. School Psychologist
8. Health
 - a. Certified School Nurse
 - b. Health Room Aide (Associate R.N. or L.P.N.)

Special Student Services

The Big Spring School District is committed to supporting students' health and well-being while they are members of our school community. As a result, we offer various services to support our students. This section identifies and describes each of the services, identifies who to contact should you have any questions, and also provides links to our district website which offers additional information.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

The Big Spring School District employees are committed to providing students with maximum learning experiences. We recognize that students cannot reach their potential if they are experiencing difficulties. The SAP team is committed to identifying issues that pose potential barriers to a student's success. The issues could be related to mental health concerns, attendance, discipline records, changes in academic performance or substance use. If you have a concern about a student, please contact a team member or complete a referral form. We encourage students to refer a friend if there are concerns. The heart of the program is the SAP Team composed of school personnel specifically trained to work with these students. This [link](#) will take you to the website where you can find additional information regarding the SAP. You can also find a list of the team members and how to contact them, if you have questions.

School Counseling Services

School counselors are professional educators who have been specially trained to help students with both personal and academic problems. Our school counselors are experienced in working cooperatively with students, parents, and teachers to create the best plan for success for each student according to his/her developmental needs. Counselors use brief individual counseling and small group counseling to maximize student growth. In meeting with students, counselors work to maintain an atmosphere of respect, privacy, and understanding of the unique needs and values of each student. Please reference our [website](#) to learn more about our counselors and who services which building.

Health Services

The Big Spring School District supports students' health and well-being. Each building is staffed with at least one certified nurse who is available to assist students with medical needs. Students have access to the building nurses throughout the school day as needed. When a child needs to be sent home due to illness, the parent will be called to get the child. In the event that a parent cannot be reached, the individual whose name appears on the emergency card will be notified. Therefore, it is important to provide the school with up-to-date information regarding emergency contacts.

Parents/Caregivers may also contact our school nurses with questions or concerns about medication, treatment, or any medical conditions.

The following screenings are mandated by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. Screenings are not to be substituted for regular exams by your healthcare provider. The screenings are performed by the school nurse and health room nurses unless otherwise specified.

Height and Weight (BMI): 28 PA Code, Chapter 23.7 states "Height and weight measurement shall be conducted at least once annually and preferably twice annually."

Vision: 8 PA Code, Chapter 23.4 states "Vision screening tests shall be conducted annually by a nurse, teacher or medical technician. If a student does not pass the visual screening a referral notice will be sent home. If you have a concern or suspect a visual problem, a comprehensive eye exam by an eye care professional is highly recommended."

Hearing: 28 PA Code, Chapter 23.5(d) states "Each year, pupils in kindergarten, special ungraded classes and grades one, two, three, seven and 11 shall be given a hearing screening test. If a student does not pass the hearing screening a referral notice will be sent home. If you have a concern, suspect a hearing problem, or your child has an existing hearing condition, contact with your health care provider is recommended."

If you have any questions, please reach out to your child's building nurse. Their contact information can be found [here](#), on our website.

Immunization Requirements for all School Children

Under present regulations, all new students entering kindergarten or first grade in Pennsylvania schools are required to have the following immunizations:

- 4 doses of Tetanus* (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of Diphtheria* (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 3 doses of Polio (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 2 doses of Measles**
- 2 doses of Mumps**
- 2 doses of Rubella (German Measles)**
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 doses of Varicella (Chickenpox) vaccine or history of disease

* Usually given as DTP, DTap, DT, or Tdap

** Usually given as MMR

7th grade ADDITIONAL (required for entry)

- 1 dose of Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)
- 1 dose of Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis, (Tdap) if 5 years have elapsed since last tetanus immunization

12th grade ADDITIONAL (required for entry)

- 2 doses meningococcal vaccine, unless first dose was on or after 16th birthday

These immunization requirements allow for exemption from immunization for medical reasons and religious beliefs. A physician or parent must sign the back of the card for an exemption to be honored. Without the required immunizations or documentation, a student may not be allowed to begin school in August or may be admitted on a 5-day provisional basis. PA Department of Health regulations allow only 5 days from the start of school before you risk exclusion from school for not being immunized.

Student Medication Procedures

1. No prescription or non-prescription medication shall be administered to any student by any employee of the Big Spring School District except as provided for in [Board Policy #210](#) and administrative procedures.
2. Parents who bring prescription and/or non-prescription medications onto school property must deposit the medications in the nurse's office with the nurse, in the building office (with the principal or principal's designee), or the approved designated area (with the nurse, principal, or the principal's designee). Students at the elementary level must bring medication directly to the nurse, principal, or the principal's designee.
3. Prescription medication may be taken during school hours under the following conditions:
 - a) The physician and the parent need to provide a written request to administer the medication during school hours as well as the duration of the medication. If the parent arrives at school with a student's daily medication in the original prescription container but without a physician's order, the school nurse may administer it for up to 3 days until the parent can obtain a doctor's written order and provide it to the school nurse.
 - b) The parent's written request relieves the Big Spring School District and its employees of any liability for the administering of medication.
 - c) The written request for the administering of medication must include the purpose of the medication, the dosage, the time at which the medication is to be taken, the length of time for which the medication is prescribed, and the possible side effects of the medication. When it is time for the student to take an approved medication, the student must report to the nurse's office, building office, or designated area and take the medication in the nurse's presence.
 - d) All medication sent to school for student use must be securely stored and kept in the original, labeled container. If parents wish to keep a medication container at home, the parent should request a separate medication container for school use at the time the prescription is filled.
 - e) The nurse shall maintain a record of the names of all students to whom medication may be administered, the name of the prescribing physician, the dosage and timing of the medication, and a notation of each instance of the administration of the medication.
 - f) The nurse may administer a drug ordered for a student in the dosage and manner prescribed by the physician, licensed PA, or Nurse Practitioner. School nurses may refuse to give any medication, which within the parameter of their knowledge, could create an unsafe situation for a student while attending school (e.g., narcotics). School nurses may give emergency medication which, when failure to provide

that medication, could result in the death of a student (e.g., insulin shock, asthma attack, and reactions to bees or other severe allergic reactions).

- g) Parents should not send more than a 30-day supply of medication at any one time.
4. Parents may send to school non-prescription medication that is on our approved medical orders provided that the parent or elementary school child delivers the medication to the nurse's office or building office with a note from the parent requesting that the medication be given and specifying the time of administration and the dosage. If the parent's instructions do not match the package instructions, the nurse may refuse to give the medication. The parent or student must deliver the medication in its original container or package. School personnel will not permit students to self-administer medication that is brought to school unlabeled. Students will not be provided with medication at school unless parents follow the procedures outlined above. Asthmatics, with proper documentation, and with the knowledge of school nurse, may carry inhalers and may self-administer medication.
 5. Medication for off-site activities – Prescriptions normally taken during school hours may be taken on a field trip or skipped if one of the following conditions is met:
 - a. The student's guardian, family member, or designee of a guardian accompanies the student on the field trip and administers the medication. Proper clearances must be obtained by adults before they will be permitted to accompany a student on a field trip.
 - b. A licensed nurse attends the field trip.
 - c. The prescribing Doctor/PA/CRNP indicates on the medication form that dose may be skipped or a parent may withhold the day's medication during field trip activities. The only exception is the use of an Epi-Pen which may be given in an emergency by an individual trained in Epi-Pen administration. State law addresses medical Good Samaritan civil immunity (42 Pa. C.S. & 8331) to protect anyone administering this emergency medication.
 6. No over-the-counter medications will be provided or administered during off-site activities unless carried and given by the student's family member or pre-arrangements are made.
 7. Students may not carry medication with them or keep it in their lockers. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medications. All medication must be stored in the Nurse's Office. An exception is given with a written physician request for rescue, emergency, and life-sustaining medications only (e.g., EpiPens, insulin, inhalers, etc.).

GUIDELINES FROM OUR SCHOOL PHYSICIAN REGARDING ILLNESS

When do I keep my child home from school?

- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher · Vomiting the night prior or morning of school
- Diarrhea: in addition to not feeling well
- Persistent cough
- Severe sore throat; check the inside of the throat as white pustules may require a doctor visit for a strep test
- Other cold or flu symptoms that can spread to students/staff
- If your child appears unusually tired, irritable, pale, or has an unusual lack of appetite
- Any undiagnosed rash, skin lesion, swollen glands, eyes that are red or pink with discharge

Children who are experiencing any of the above symptoms are not ready for a rigorous day at school. Most children need at least 24 hours to recover.

When should my child return to school?

- Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication
- Symptom free from vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours and has been able to keep down at least two meals
- Rashes have been diagnosed as not contagious and a doctor has cleared for return to school.

****Please remember, if your child was too sick to attend school in the morning, please do not bring them in later because they are feeling better. When in doubt, leave them out.**

The district is dedicated to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students. Our HIV/AIDS policy, in accordance with Board Policies [203.1](#) and [314.1](#), ensures the well-being of students and staff while protecting individual rights. Based on current evidence, HIV is not normally transmissible within the school setting. Infected students have the same rights as others and will not face discrimination regarding school attendance or activities. Routine HIV screening is

not required for attendance. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to discuss this policy further with the building principal. For more information or concerns, please contact the principal's office.

Special Education Services

Big Spring School District, along with other public agencies in the Commonwealth, must establish and implement procedures to identify, locate and evaluate all children who need special education programs. BSSD is responsible for providing every child in the district a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Additional information about special education services can be found on our district [website](#).

If you have questions regarding special education services please contact the Supervisor of Special Education, Jennifer Chamberlin (jchamberlin@bigspring.k12.pa.us).

Gifted Education Services

Gifted services are specialized educational programs designed to meet the needs of students who demonstrate high levels of aptitude or achievement in one or more areas. These services aim to provide enrichment, acceleration, or differentiated instruction to support students' intellectual and creative development. Students who show a need for these services go through an evaluation process to determine if they qualify for such services. Additional information can be found on our district [website](#).

If you have questions regarding gifted education services please contact the Director of Student Services, Trisha Reed (treed@bigspring.k12.pa.us).

Homelessness (Policy 251)

Big Spring School District recognizes its obligation to ensure that homeless students have access to the same educational programs and services provided to other district students. The District's Homeless Liaison along with school staff shall identify homeless children within the district, encourage their enrollment, and eliminate existing barriers to their attendance and education, in compliance with federal and state law and regulations.

Policies, procedures and administrative regulations that create barriers for enrollment, attendance, transportation and success in school for homeless students, may be waived.

Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular and nighttime residence, which include the following conditions: living in hotels, motels, campgrounds; living in emergency shelters either transitional or domestic violence; unaccompanied youth and run away children; families temporarily doubled up due to loss of housing (fire, eviction, etc.); living in cars, parks, public spaces.

Resident families are encouraged to contact our school social worker, Jessica Winesickle (jwinesickle@bigspring.k12.pa.us) or their school counselor or their building principal to discuss their situation. Families new to the district should speak with the Central Registration staff during their registration appointment.

The district shall provide transportation for homeless students to the school that is determined to be in their best interest. If the school of origin is outside district boundaries or students experiencing homelessness live in another district but will attend their school of origin in this district, the districts shall agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of the transportation.

More information about the entitlements of homeless youth can be found here on our [website](#).

ANNUAL NOTICES

The Big Spring School District is required by federal law to provide students, parents, and the public with notices. These notices can also be found on our webpage using the links below.

Family Education Rights & Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is Federal law that gives parents and students over the age of 18 (“eligible students”) certain rights concerning the student’s educational records. Under FERPA, parents and eligible students have the following rights:

- To inspect and review the student’s education records maintained by the school within 45 days of the school’s receipt of a written request. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record they wish to inspect. A school official will decide on access and notify the parent or eligible student of the place and time the record(s) may be available for review. The school is not required to provide copies of records and may charge a fee if copies are requested.
- To request an amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. The request must be in writing and clearly specify: (a) the part of the record requesting to be changed, and (b) why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the school official will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for an amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- To consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s record 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 personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist); or parent or student serving as an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official; and/or an official of another school district in which a student seeks to enroll. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill a professional responsibility.
- To file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with the requirements of FERPA at the following address:

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

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Annual Notice for Disclosure of School Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that requires the school district, with certain exceptions, to obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child’s educational records. However, the school district may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent unless you have advised the district to the contrary in accordance with district procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the district to include this type of information in certain school publications. Examples of school publications are:

- A playbill or program, showing your child’s role in a drama or music production; • The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists published at school or in newspapers; • Graduation program;
- Sports statistics listed in programs, such as football or wrestling which may include height and weight of team members.

- Directory information can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. Outside organizations include but are not limited to:
- Other schools the student is seeking to attend;
- Class ring manufacturers or yearbook publishers;
- State or federal authorities auditing, evaluating programs, or enforcing state/federal laws;
- A court by order of a subpoena.

The school district has designated the following as directory information and may disclose it without written consent:

- Student name, address, telephone number, email, photograph;
- Most recent educational agency or institution attended, grade level degrees, honors, awards, major course of study;
- Participation in school sponsored activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, date and place of birth.

If you do not want the district to disclose directory information about your child without your prior written consent, you must notify the district in writing by **October 1st**.

Parent/Student Procedural Safeguards Notice

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Federal law concerning the education of students with disabilities, requires the Local Education Agency (LEA) to provide parents of a child with a disability with this notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards available under the IDEA and the U.S. Department of Education regulations. This document can be found in its entirety on our district website. Utilize this [link](#) to access the document.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Big Spring School District (“District”), as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 and its corresponding regulations (“Title IX”), does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities.

All questions regarding Title IX may be referred to the District’s Title IX Coordinator or to the United States Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (“OCR”).

The District’s Title IX Coordinator is Dr. Nadine Sanders, the District’s Assistant Superintendent.

45 Mt. Rock Road
Newville, PA 17241
717-776-2000 ext. 2409
nsanders@bigspring.k12.pa.us

Student Accident Insurance

Student accident insurance is available to those students who wish to purchase it. Parents shall be responsible for filing student accident claims with the insurance company for all accidents. Complete 24-hour coverage is available. The insurance is administered by A-G Specialty Insurance LLC, which can be reached at (610) 933-0800. Co-op work experience students must subscribe to the insurance or show proof of other adequate coverage. Payments should be made by check or money order to A-G Specialty Insurance LLC. During the 2025-26 school year, the cost for 24-hour coverage is \$90.00 per student, and coverage during school hours is \$22.50 per student. Information can be found at www.bigspring.k12.pa.us under the Parent section.

Global Connect Calls

If your child is not present by 11am you will receive an automated call to let you know your child is absent from school.

Thank you for your support!

Thank you for your support and interest in the education of your child. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you throughout this school year.