



LUZERNE INTERMEDIATE UNIT

Personalized Academy of Learning

Student Handbook 2023 – 2024

**33 West Carey Street
Plains, Pa 18705
570-408-8100**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>PROGRAM INTRODUCTION</u>		<u>PAGE #</u>
LIU MISSION & VISION STATEMENT		3
CONTACT INFORMATION		4
LOCATION		4
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION		4
ADMISSION		4
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS		5
BUILDING STAFF		6
<u>BUILDING OPERATIONS & POLICIES</u>		<u>PAGE #</u>
POLICY OF NONDISCRIMINATION		7
INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES		7
LUZERNE INTERMEDIATE UNIT CONTACT INFORMATION		7
LUZERNE INTERMEDIATE UNIT BOARD MEMBERS		8
<u>SAFETY AND SECURITY</u>		<u>PAGE #</u>
POLICY ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT		8
THERMAL SCANNER		8
HAND HELD METAL DETECTOR PROCEDURES		9
SEARCHES OF STUDENTS		9
SMOKING/ DRUG / ALCOHOL POLICY		11
WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY		11
DOCUMENTED INCIDENT		12
FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES		12
HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROCEDURES		12
<u>STUDENTS</u>		<u>PAGE #</u>
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES		13
DRESS CODE POLICY		13
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES		16
STUDENT ATTENDANCE		17
GRADING SYSTEM		22
ANTI-BULLY POLICY		23

PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

Luzerne Intermediate Unit Mission Statement

The Luzerne Intermediate Unit strives to increase each student's individual potential in the most appropriate environment by implementing a model of collaboration and resource allocation that responds to the needs of the community.



Luzerne Intermediate Unit Vision Statement

The Luzerne Intermediate Unit endeavors to focus our internal and external leadership, guidance and support resources to ensure the provision of meaningful and purposeful education-related programs and services to our educational clients, community stakeholders and business partners.

Contact Information

Program Director	Ronald Musto	rmusto@liu18.org	570-408-8103
Administrative Secretary	Crescila Dobson	cdobson@liu18.org	570-408-8100

Building Location

33 West Carey Street Plains, Pa. 18705

Program Description

The Luzerne Intermediate Unit (LIU) established the Personalized Academy of Learning (PAL) for children in grades 9th through 12th. The PAL program focuses on the implementation and success of competency based learning experiences to ensure that our youth have the opportunity to be successful and productive citizens.

Our academy will offer all required standard aligned CORE subjects along with Financial Literacy, Career Prep Literacy, a Student Mentorship Program, Real World Literacy and Progression Mapping to prepare them for post-secondary transition.

A blended environment of instruction that is, online courses and in-person teaching. The students will have access to a traditional learning environment while using technology as required.

Admission

The student's family and school district will complete the initialized form for enrollment into the Personalized Academy of Learning. The completed admission form and required documentation will be forwarded to the PAL administration for review. The Academy will contact the family within 48 hours to schedule a meeting. At the conclusion of the meeting, the PAL administrator will notify the LEA of the students start date. It is the responsibility of the LEA to arrange transportation for the student and to notify the family of the drop off and pick up times.

Program Highlights

The Personalized Academy of Learning is designed to prepare the students for a successful post-secondary transition to their future endeavors.

Academic Growth

Standards aligned CORE curriculum

Finance Literacy

The ability to use knowledge and skills to manage financial resources effectively for a lifetime of financial well-being.

PSSA & Keystone Exams

Administered electronically as per PDE guidelines and schedule.

Breakfast & Lunch Program

All students enrolled in the program are entitled to a free breakfast and lunch.

Student Mentor Program

Every student will be assigned a Mentor Teacher, & they will check-in a minimum of once a week with each other. The teacher is required to make a guardian communication twice a month. The goal is to promote growth and development of the student in the areas of while providing them guidance on everyday conflicts and planning their vision for their post-secondary goals.

- Self-Awareness,
- Academics Achievement,
- Social Skill Development

Career Prep Literacy

Program aimed at “Providing students with the capacity to make informed decisions about choosing a career. We will also assist in deciding the best course of action to reach their goals.

Progression Mapping

Understanding and developing the student’s educational plan to ensure they will earn their requirements to graduate. Progression Maps can give educators the tools they need to close the gaps in learning, while continuing to provide essential grade level instruction.

Real World Literacy

The ability to understand, use and reflect on written texts in order to achieve one's goals. The content will assist to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate effectively in society.

EDMENTUM Exact Path (Assessment Tool)

This assessment tool will be used for Reading, Math & English Language Arts. It will generate an on-grade learning path for each student that provides a standards-based instruction.

(SCANS) The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills

A program utilized to develop the skills the students will need to succeed in their transition to the community after graduation.

ALMA Automated Phone System

Used for emergency announcements

**PAL Staff**

- Program Director
- Special Education Supervisor
- Special Education Teacher
- Special Education Para Educator
- Regular Education Teachers
- School Resource Officer
- Nurse
- Administrative Secretary
- Custodian

BUILDING OPERATIONS & POLICIES

Policy of Nondiscrimination

The Luzerne Intermediate Unit, an equal opportunity employer, will not discriminate in employment, educational programs or activities based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, ancestry, physical handicap or union affiliation. This policy of nondiscrimination extends to all other legally protected classifications. Publication of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Inquiries should be directed to, Dave Simonovich, Compliance/Affirmative Action Officer and Section 504 Officer, 368 Tioga Avenue, Kingston PA 18704. (570) 287-9681 Ext. 1048.

Inclement Weather

The PAL Building will follow the Wilkes-Barre Area School District schedule regarding closings, delays, or early dismissal and will post the information on WNEP & utilize our One Call Now telephone communication system.

LUZERNE INTERMEDIATE UNIT #18 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Dr. Anthony Grieco

Luzerne Intermediate Unit #18 Executive Director

570-287-9681

368 Tioga Avenue Kingston, Pa. 18704

www.liu18.org

Elizabeth Krokos

Assistant to the Executive
Director for Student Services

Ty Yost

Assistant to the Executive
Director for District Services

John J. Gordon

Business Manager

Jennifer Runquist

Behavioral Health

Joseph DeLuca

Operational Services

Luzerne Intermediate Unit #18 School Board Directors

Lorraine Farrell	President	Lake Lehman
Peter Lanza	Vice President	Northwest Area
Dave Usavage	Secretary	Wyoming Valley West
John Adonizio	Treasurer	Pittston Area
Joe Caffrey		Wilkes-Barre Area
Phil Campenni		Wyoming Area
Marla Campbell		Crestwood Area
Len Olzinski		Greater Nanticoke Area
Lori Bennett		Tunkhannock Area
Edward Shemansky		Hazleton Area
Richard Stevens		Hanover Area
Denise Thomas		Wilkes-Barre Area
Larry Schuler		Dallas Area

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Policy on Corporal Punishment

Please be advised of the following change to the District's Corporal Punishment Policy. Due to the recent revision of the Pennsylvania School Code, Chapter 12, Sec. 5, the use of Corporal Punishment is prohibited as a form of student discipline.

However, teachers and school authorities may still use reasonable force under the following circumstances:

- To quell a disturbance
- To obtain possession of weapons or dangerous objects
- For self-defense
- For the protection of people or property

Thermal Scanner

Students, staff and visitors will be required to proceed through a Thermal Scanner immediately upon entry into the school.

Hand Held Metal Detector Procedures

The purpose of using a metal detector is to increase security in our school and to aid in protecting students and staff. Unless otherwise instructed by the PAL administrator, metal detectors will only be used at the following times:

- 1 Each morning to inspect students entering the school,
- 2 To search a student when “reasonable suspicion” has been determined that the student may be carrying contraband,
- 3 On random checks when authorized by the PAL administrator.

Searches of Students

The PAL Program is committed to the protection of the health & safety of all students. Students will be required daily to participate in search of “Mild inconvenience” upon arrival at school:

- Trained staff members will conduct the search utilizing security wands
- No expectation of privacy should be realized while on school grounds or using school facilities.
- At the conclusion of the search, other than an open beverage, all contraband items will be placed in the student locker and locked by staff.
- Open beverages are not allowed to be brought into the school at any time. A student in possession of an open beverage will be required to give it to staff immediately upon entry. The beverage will not be returned to the student.
- Students that leave school property & return to school are not permitted to bring food or beverages into the school.
- With reasonable suspicion, searches will be conducted of any item or items, on or about any person including, but not limited to, personal effects such as purses, handbags, backpacks, gym bags, and anything, that could be used to conceal illegal drugs, weapons, explosives, alcohol, drug paraphernalia, cigarettes, E-cigarettes, Vape devices, incendiary devices or anything which could endanger the health, safety, and welfare of an individual.
- The search will be conducted by an adult of the same sex as the student in the presence of a second adult witness.

- The program director shall notify the guardian that a personal search of the student was conducted as soon as possible after the search has occurred.
- In extreme emergency situations, or where a more intrusive search of the student's person may be required, such a search may only be conducted in private by a school official of the same sex, and with a second adult witness of the same sex present, and only upon prior approval of the Program Director or the assistant principal, and with approval of the student's guardian. This procedure will be followed unless the health, safety, and welfare of the student population could be endangered by the delay.
- Any illegal, unauthorized articles, or other prohibited articles found as a result of searches of the student's person may be seized and used as evidence against the student in disciplinary proceedings.
- All evidence will be turned over to the School Resource Office (SRO). The PAL SRO and the Plains Police Department have a Memorandum of Understanding which is required to be followed in the event of a criminal act. The magistrate and police shall make all decisions regarding legality of specific serious behavior in which illegal activity is suspected.
- In the event of a school official conducts any search of the student's person, an incident report shall be prepared as soon as practicable after the search occurs, outlining the reasonable suspicion for conducting the search, and describing the manner in which the search occurred, including witnesses, date, time, location, duration, and the results of the search. Guardians will be contacted.
- Where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the student has materials, which pose a threat to the health, welfare, and safety of students in the school, students can be searched at any time without prior warning.
- The student may be asked to voluntarily reveal the contents of pockets, pocket books, handbags, book bags, shoes or other personal articles.
- A search of a student's person or possessions conducted at the request of the law enforcement officials shall be permitted only when there is a clear and immediate threat to the health, safety or welfare of other students or school employees, or upon a properly executed search warrant presented to school officials.
- Reasonable suspicion has been defined by the United States Supreme Court as "the sort of common-sense conclusion about human behavior upon which practical people . . . are entitled to rely." Further, it has defined reasonable suspicion as requiring only something more than an "unarticulated hunch." It requires facts or circumstances that give rise to more than a bare, imaginary, or purely conjectural suspicion.

Smoking / Tobacco / Drugs Policy

The possession/use of tobacco products, including cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, and tobacco snuff, chewing tobacco and alcoholic beverages on school property is strictly prohibited. Any student who violates this regulation will be subject to administrative disciplinary action. Furthermore, any student who is in possession of contraband is subject to a fine, according to the borough ordinance (magistrate fines) and *Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code (Act 145 of 1996)*.

Weapons on School Property

It is unlawful for a student to possess lethal weapons in school buildings on school property, or at a school event. Pennsylvania Crimes Code 18 PA C.S. 912 states that it's a misdemeanor of the first degree to possess a weapon in the buildings of, or on grounds of, or in any conveyance providing transportation to or from the publicly funded educational institution. No person shall possess, handle or transmit any cane, machete, pistol, gun, rifle shotgun (or any thereof), pellet gun, metal knuckles, or other object that can reasonably be considered to be a weapon or dangerous instrument in any school bus, on or off the school grounds, at any school activity, event or function.

It is against the School's Policy for any person to possess a weapon in the building, on the grounds, or in any conveyance providing transportation to or from the Alternative Learning Center. A weapon is defined to include but not be limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, non-chuck, stick, firearm, shotgun, rifle and any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

This rule also applies to the following:

A firearm which is not loaded or lacks a clip or other components to render it immediately operable and components which can readily be assembled into a weapon. "Look a-likes" of any items listed above will be treated as real piece of contraband and handled in the same manner of a real item which violates our safety code. The possession of spray mace and / or other noxious chemicals is a violation of the policy. Students must secure prior permission from school administration to bring defensive chemicals to school.

Documented Incident

A documented incident shall be defined as any event in which a teacher deems it necessary to submit a written document to the administration in regards to an incident involving a child. A parental contact will be made to discuss the incident. This is a non-disciplinary placement.

Fire Drill Procedures

In compliance with *Section 1517*, School Laws of Pennsylvania, evacuation instructions are posted on the front wall of every classroom. The following procedure is to be followed during fire drills:

1. Students shall walk quietly and rapidly to the nearest designated fire exit.
2. All classroom windows and doors are to be closed and lights turned off.
DO NOT LOCK DOORS
3. Teachers must follow their class outside. Once outside, the class shall move to a safe distance from the school.
4. The teacher will then take roll to account for every student under his/her supervision.

Health and Medical Services

The health program in our school is formulated and implemented in compliance with the guidelines and practices of the Pennsylvania Department of Education; Division of School Health. It is a vital part of the education program in that its purpose is the attainment of optimum health for all students, which will assist in their learning process and aid in attaining their educational goals.

STUDENTS

Special Education Services

All of the public schools of Luzerne Intermediate Unit 18 provide special education and related services to resident children with disabilities who are ages three through twenty-one. The purpose of this is to describe (1) the types of disabilities that might qualify the child for such programs and services, (2) the special education programs and related services that are available, (3) the process by which the public schools screen and evaluate such students to determine eligibility, and (4) the special rights that pertain to such children and their parents or legal guardians. The notice of Special Education Services is prepared annually by the Director of Special Education at the Luzerne Intermediate Unit and is reported each year on behalf of the member school districts. It is meant to inform the public as to the purpose and rights of special needs children and families. For more information about Special Education Services and the Annual Public Notice, please visit www.liu18.org.

Student Dress Code

All students who attend the PAL Program are required to adhere to the dress code.

Guidelines:

Pants

Must be casual/dress/denim pants of a solid color: khaki (beige/tan), blue, black, brown, gray, olive or dark green. Corduroy fabric is allowed.

1. Pants must be sized to fit the student (i.e. +/- 1 size to the student's measurement.)

Thus the length of the pants allowed is any garment from knee to shoe.

2. Pants must be secured at the waist.

3. Pants are to have no more than two (2) pockets in the front and no more than two (2) pockets in the back. No cargo pockets are permitted.

4. Pants must cover all skin

5. The following types of pants are not permitted:

1. Cargo Pants-Large pockets on legs or back
2. Baggy/Skateboard pants
3. Extra wide/extra full pants
4. Military fatigues (no camouflage)
5. Excessively tight pants
6. Exercise pants/Yoga Pants/Spandex Pants

Skirts/Dresses

Must be of a solid color: khaki (beige/tan), blue, black, brown, gray, olive or dark green. Skirts should be appropriate length. If length appears to be inappropriate, fingertip length will be used as a guide.

1. No cargo pockets will be allowed.
2. No spaghetti straps will be allowed.

Shirts

Must be of a solid color or stripes.

1. T-Shirts cannot contain graphics unless school spirit related.
2. All button down shirts must be buttoned just below the neck.
3. Manufacturer's logo no larger than three (3) inches by three (3) inches will be permitted.
4. Shirt length may not extend beyond the middle of a student's front pants pocket, or else the shirt must be tucked in.
5. Striped shirts are permitted with both vertical and horizontal stripes being allowed.
6. The following types of shirts are not permitted:
 - a. Tank tops
 - b. Excessively tight shirts
 - c. Graphic T-Shirts (unless school spirit related)

Sweatshirt/Sweater/Turtlenecks

1. Crewneck, Cardigan, and Vest sweaters/sweatshirts of an approved solid color/stripes may be worn with an approved shirt underneath.
2. Sweatshirts may not be ripped or torn and must be sized to fit.
3. Must not extend past the middle of the pants pocket.
4. Hooded sweatshirts (Hoodies) are not to be worn with the hood up.
5. A solid turtleneck will be permitted in an approved color under an approved shirt. An approved sweater/sweatshirt maybe also be work on top.
6. Solid color V-neck sweaters are permitted as long as there is an approved shirt underneath.

Shorts

1. Students will be permitted to wear solid color (khaki (beige/tan), blue, black, brown, gray, olive or dark green) shorts that are sized to fit. No plain white shorts are permitted.
2. Shorts should be appropriate length. If length appears to be inappropriate, fingertip length will be used as a guide.
3. Pleated or plain shorts with no more than two (2) pockets in the front and no more than two (2) pockets in the back are permitted. No cargo pockets are permitted.

Belts

1. Must be solid color – no color preference.
2. No emblem or logos will be permitted.
3. Belt buckles larger than 2”x2” are not permitted.
4. The following types of belts are not permitted:
 - a. Chain-link belts
 - b. Rope-like belts

Shoes

1. Some style of shoe/sneaker MUST be worn at all times. All shoes MUST be fastened around the foot and secured.
2. The following types of shoes are not permitted:
 - a. Flip-flops
 - b. Any heel or wedge higher than (2-1/2”) are prohibited.

Articles of Noncompliance

1. Hats, caps, bandanas, and scarves.
2. Displaying of any undergarments.
3. Chains, dog collars, or spiked bracelets/necklaces
4. Clothing or articles deemed offensive. This includes sexually suggestive, condoning violence, drug/alcohol/tobacco abuse, suicide or vulgar language.
5. Hairstyles that are considered a safety hazard.
6. Full zip jackets, fleece, or sweatshirts.
7. Fishnet stockings

Exemptions

Parents/Guardians who object to the policy based on religious or medical grounds must complete and present to the building principal a copy of the Wilkes-Barre Area Dress Code Exemption Form signed by their religious leader or physician, identifying the reason(s) for the objection. The form must be filed within 14 days of registration. The parent/guardian and the building principal will meet to discuss the exception.

Board Discretion

The dress code may be amended at any time at the discretion of the Luzerne Intermediate Unit #18 School Board.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Within the school's environment, discipline is one of the most important characteristics of the school program. Students share with the administration & staff a responsibility to develop a climate within the student's right to an education & the teacher's right to teach without any unwarranted interferences by a student. A basis for attaining this goal, is outlined as follows:

- Discipline will be maintained at all times. No student has the right to interfere with the educational process.
- Teachers must be treated as highly trained professionals at all times.
- The school has the responsibility of protecting its students from dangerous, harmful and corruptible influences. High moral standards, respect, and courtesy will be emphasized at all levels.
- Parents are legally and financially responsible for their children's actions. This includes deliberate destruction and defacement of school property as well as injuries inflicted on students and staff.
- A record will be kept of each student's inappropriate actions and will be referred to for disciplinary reasons. This is a non-disciplinary placement.
- It is the responsibility of the students to be aware of all school rules.
- All persons between the ages of 6 and 21 years have the right to a free and full education. No student may be denied this right based on race, religion, gender, and national origin.
- Students have the right to express themselves in any manner unless such expression directly interferes with the educational process, threatens immediate harm to the welfare of the school or community, encourages unlawful activity, is obscene, or interferes with another's individual rights.

- No student should bring large amounts of money, jewelry or valuables to school. The PAL is not responsible for lost or stolen valuables.
- It is the responsibility of each student to attend school daily, conscientious effort in the classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations.

Student Attendance

Student attendance is reported to the student's district bi-monthly

The success of our schools in achieving the mandated standards and performance levels of education set forth by the PA Department of Education and the Wilkes-Barre Area School District is predicated on daily attendance by the students, continuity of instruction, and classroom participation.

It is the school's responsibility to develop, within the students, a sense of responsibility, discipline, and good work habits. These goals can be reached by maintaining close communication between the home and school and by encouraging, sustaining, and enforcing regular school attendance. Daily school attendance, including arriving to school on time, is necessary for the student's academic and social success.

It is expected that all parents will assist the school in ensuring that their child attends school on a daily basis. Frequent absences result in poor schoolwork and may contribute to the eventuality of a school dropout. Many times, the attendance patterns that a child develops in the elementary grades are carried over into the secondary level, and in some instances, become the foundation of his/her job absentee rate.

PENNSYLVANIA COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW

Compulsory school age begins when a parent/legal guardian enrolls a child in school, but no later than the age of eight (8). Compulsory school attendance is required until the age of seventeen (17), or unless legitimately excused from attending as outlined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and existing school laws.

Once a student is enrolled in kindergarten, attendance is **mandatory**, and the school attendance laws apply to that student.

Students who are seventeen (17) years of age or older, and have not graduated, may not be asked to leave school merely because they have reached their seventeenth birthday, provided they are fulfilling their responsibilities as students.

Students who are sixteen (16) years of age or older and are employed full-time (35-40 hours a week) during school hours and hold a lawfully issued employment certificate may be excused from the requirements of attendance.

Pennsylvania Compulsory Attendance Law mandates that school districts are responsible for a student's attendance. Consequently, school administrators will determine the validity of a student's absence.

Not every case can be covered in this policy. Administrators will interpret the policy with common sense and exercise good judgment in unusual cases. With this in mind, the following rules are provided as a guide in dealing with student absenteeism and tardiness:

Absences

Absence from school is defined as the non-attendance by a student on a day when school is scheduled.

A student who is absent from school must present a note written and signed by his/her parent/legal guardian explaining why the student was absent. Absences shall be treated as unexcused until the written excuse is submitted to the homeroom teacher upon entering school. If a student fails to produce such a note within three school days, the day(s) missed will remain "illegal/unexcused".

Excused/legal absences: The following is a list of, but not all inclusive, of excused/legal absences:

1. Illness/Medical
2. Death in the student's immediate family
 - a. Parent/Legal Guardian
 - b. Sibling
 - c. Grandparent
 - d. Aunt/Uncle
3. Legal and exceptionally urgent reasons that may affect the child
 - a. Unsafe and hazardous road conditions
 - b. Quarantine of the home
 - c. Death in the family other than an immediate family member such as a close friend or relative
 - d. Suspension from school
4. Educational trips (see below requirements)

Request for excused absence for educational trips: The Wilkes-Barre Area School District recognizes that, from time to time, students may have the opportunity to participate in a pre-planned, educational trip during the regular school year. In order for your child to be legally excused and attend the educational trip, the following steps need to be taken and prerequisites met:

1. Parent/legal guardian must get the approval of the administrator by submitting, to the administrator, an official educational trip request form at least two weeks prior to the departure date of the trip. The administrator will evaluate the child's academic standing, discipline history, attendance record, and the educational value of the trip. The form can be obtained in the main office.
2. If the educational trip is during the first semester of the school year, the child cannot miss five days or more of school. If the child's absences exceed the five days, the request will be denied.
3. If the educational trip is during the second semester of the school year, the child cannot miss ten days or more of school. If the child's absences exceed the ten days, the request will be denied.
4. The parent and student shall agree that all class work that is missed during the period of absence will be made up within a time frame established by the administrator.
5. No more than five excused absences for educational trips will be granted per school year.

Unexcused/illegal absences: The following is a list of, but not all inclusive, of unexcused/illegal absences:

1. Failure to wake up for school
2. Missing a scheduled school bus or not having a ride to school
3. Absence without a parent/legal guardian's knowledge
4. Caring for a sibling in a non-emergency situation/babysitting
5. Running errands and/or shopping
6. Pursuing a talent or skill without the administrator's prior approval
7. Temporary employment during school hours
8. Going on a vacation without the administrator's prior approval
9. Failure to provide a medical practitioner's excuse when requested or required
10. Failure to attend school either before or after a scheduled medical appointment.
(For example: a dentist appointment, medicine check, court appearance, etc.)
11. School refusal
12. Failure to remedy head lice within three days

PROCEDURES FOR EXCUSED/LEGAL ABSENCES

Absences shall be treated as unexcused until a written excuse is submitted to the homeroom teacher upon entering school. The excuse must be written and signed by the parent/legal guardian, explain why the student was absent, and submitted within three days of the absence. Failure to comply will result in the absence remaining as an illegal or unexcused absence.

Three or more consecutive days: If a student is absent three or more consecutive days, the absence must be justified by a written excuse from a medical practitioner. The medical practitioner must have seen the student or the parent/legal guardian must have had communication with the medical practitioner in regards of medical advice or medication. If the student does not present a medical note, all consecutive absences will remain illegal/unexcused.

Ten cumulative days: If a student is absent ten cumulative days, a written notification will be issued to the parent/legal guardian stating the amount of total absences and that a medical practitioner's excuse will be required for each subsequent absence. Each absence will remain illegal/unexcused if there is failure to comply.

PENALTIES FOR UNEXCUSED/ILLEGAL ABSENCES

Three unexcused/illegal absences: The student is considered truant and a "Notice of Truancy" will be issued to the parent/legal guardian by the Home and School Visitor.

Six unexcused/illegal absences: The student is considered habitually truant. The parent/legal guardian and the student will be invited to participate in a School Attendance Improvement Plan meeting (SAIP) with Administration, Home and School Visitor, and a representative from The BRIDGE in attendance. Failure to attend this meeting will result in a plan being made without any parental input.

If there is no cooperation and/or the student continues to be absent without an excuse following the SAIP, a Summary Citation will be filed with the local magistrate's office where the proposed SAIP will become court ordered. Failure to comply with this court order may result in a maximum fine, approximately \$300.00 plus court costs, community service, and/or loss of driver's license. The case will also be sent to Luzerne County Truancy Court.

Please note: if the student has six or more unexcused/illegal absences, he/she will lose the privilege to participate in any and all events and extra-curricular activities such as performances, clubs, field trips, participation on any athletic team sponsored by their school, sixth grade trip, fun day, field day, class trips, the semi-formal, the prom, class day, senior tea, etc.

Ten unexcused/illegal absences: If a student has ten or more unexcused/illegal absences and is a senior student, he/she will not graduate on stage.

If it is determined that the student, 17 years old or older, has been absent for ten or more consecutive days without justification which includes, but not limited to: unable to locate family, unoccupied residence, student is beyond compulsory age of attendance, the student will be dropped from school roll.

Grading System

Report cards are issued four times throughout the year. Each report is based on a forty-five day duration. A copy will be mailed home and sent to the district. If the parents aren't satisfied with any of the grades earned by their child, they must contact the school. Teachers are required to provide phone or mail updates monthly.

A	90-100	4.0
B	80-89	3.0
C	79-70	2.0
D	60-69	1.0
F	Below 60	0.0

Personalized Academy of Learning

Anti-Bullying Policy

Purpose: The Personalized Academy of Learning (PAL) is committed to providing all staff and students the opportunity to interact socially and educationally in a non-threatening learning atmosphere. The PAL Staff are aware of the negative effects of bullying in the educational environment and recognizes that it interferes with the everyday learning process of a student. Bullying of a student, by another student, while on school property, including transportation, is strictly prohibited.

Definition: Bullying shall mean unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student (s) that has the deliberate intent to hurt, embarrass, or humiliate the other person.

- Physically harming a student (kicking, hitting, spiting, pushing, and invading one's personal space in an aggressive manner)
- Having a student feel that they are in reasonable fear of physical harm.
- Psychological harm by spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, and engaging in social exclusion or intimidation.
- Cyber-bullying, through the utilization of the internet through email, instant messaging, or personal profile websites.

The PAL Staff expects anyone, including students, educators, family members or any other community member, who witnesses or has other knowledge of an incident of bullying, will report the incident to a staff member immediately and with the promise of confidentiality, if desired. Upon awareness of the bullying, school administration will investigate the incident(s), devise a plan to remedy the incident, and then follow through with the appropriate consequences. The disciplinary action may include student enrichment on bullying, counseling referral, a parent conference, out of school suspension, or other consequences as provided in the PAL 2023-2024 Student Handbook.

Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying or extortion or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or hearing may be subject to disciplinary action.

An ANONYMOUS Tip Box is located in the downstairs and main hallways.