

## **Pelham Memorial High School**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Who will be my child's guidance counselor?**

Mr. Terence Huvane will be the 9th grade counselor. He can be reached at extension 1102 and his email is THuvane@pelhamschools.org.

#### **Who do I contact with other questions or concerns?**

A good place to start is [pmhs.pelhamschools.org](http://pmhs.pelhamschools.org), the PMHS homepage. Here, you will find links to daily announcements, messages from Principal Mark Berkowitz, school calendars, etc.

Click on the directory at the top of the page to find email addresses and telephone extensions for all school personnel.

Our goal is to have students learn to resolve most matters themselves over the next four years, but some teens are more comfortable than others with confronting issues.

If your child cannot address a matter of concern, parents should feel comfortable talking to school personnel. Here are some general guidelines on whom to contact:

- **School Counselors** are available to discuss concerns related to short- term counseling, academic planning and post-secondary planning.
- **Teachers** can best respond to issues related to classes, i.e., to request progress updates or discuss concerns about homework or grades. Teachers are available to offer extra help during the Academy Period.
- **Directors** of English, Math, Science Health and Social Studies, and **Coordinators/Supervisors** of Art, Music, World Languages, Special Education and Physical Education will address departmental matters.
- The **Assistant Principal** can help with matters related to school rules or policies, discipline and attendance.
- A **Substance Abuse Counselor** is available to confidentially discuss concerns related to drug and/or alcohol use.
- **Psychologists** are available to confidentially discuss and help with any social, emotional issues concerning your child
- The **School Principal** will discuss overall school programs and climate. If you have additional questions, the high school staff also is available.

The **Dignity for All Students Act (DASA)** coordinator is Dr. Jeanean Hergenrother, one of our school psychologists. She is the first line of defense for your child with any type of bullying, harassment, discrimination or discrimination.

**Do teachers at PMHS post homework assignments and grades on the portal? Can parents access that information?**

Teachers post homework, test dates and other class resources on the portal system. Each student is given a portal logon, and parents can sign up for their own free accounts. See the sign-up form on our homepage under "Parent Information." Students can access their grades on the portal. If your child does not permit you to access his/her portal account, please email your request to portal help@pelhamschools.org.

**What are the sports seasons in the high school?**

There are three sports seasons: Fall, Winter and Spring. Please note that the Fall season begins BEFORE school opens in September. Summer practice dates are listed on the PMHS website. If there are any questions about game or practice requirements, students should check with their coaches. Depending on the sport, there will be daily practice until 6 p.m. Some games may last longer. Again, check with the coach to verify.

**Are medical exams required to enter the 9th grade, or for sports?**

New York State law requires that all entrants to the K, 2nd, 4th, 7th and 10th grades, and all students entering the district for the first time, have a physical examination. The Pelham School District's examination form is available at [pelhamschools.org](http://pelhamschools.org).

Sports physicals are required each year and must be reported on the student athlete forms (separate "green" forms are required for each season). Those forms are available on the PMHS website under "Parent Information" and "Forms." Kelly Henry, RN, is the PMHS school nurse and can be reached at x 1128.

**Are student absence and late notes required?**

Yes. A parent or guardian should call the school's attendance office at 914-738-8110 at extension 1124 on the morning of an absence or lateness. When a student returns to school, a written note from the parent or guardian is required to explain the absence or lateness.

For more details on excused absences and required attendance, and how both may affect a student's participation in extracurricular activities as well as credit for courses, please refer to the PMHS website under "School Information."

Please note that attendance is taken each period. If the office is not notified of a child's absence, you will receive a computer-generated call that evening.

**Are freshmen placed in separate classes?**

Not always. Many classes in the high school, including electives, lunch, chorus and physical education are composed of students from different grade levels. Others, such as 9th grade English and Social Studies, are exclusively for students in those specific grades.

**When are the student lunch periods? Can students bring their own lunches?**

There are five supervised lunch periods, beginning at Period 3 (10:21 a.m.) and ending with Period 7 (1:32 p.m.). Your child may be assigned to lunch during any of those periods. Students may bring their own lunches or purchase food from the cafeteria. Snack machines and water/juice machines are also available.

Information about the lunch program and Free and Reduced Lunch and Breakfast program will be included in the Back to School mailing sent in August. Parents may use an online prepayment service, called Nutrikids, to deposit money into their child's school meal account. See the link on the PMHS homepage for more details on Nutrikids.

**Are freshmen allowed to leave school during the day for lunch?**

No. Freshmen are not permitted to leave school grounds at any time during the school day.

**Is the library open before and after school? Is the language lab available for extra work?**

Yes. The high school library is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. The language lab is open throughout the day until 3:30 pm. Students must contact their language teachers for passes to use the language lab.

**During their “free periods,” what can students do?**

Students may go to the library, cafeteria, student lounges or they may receive extra help from teachers in the faculty resource centers.

**When are freshmen assigned lockers?**

Freshmen will receive their locker numbers and combinations during Freshmen Orientation held during the last week of summer before school begins. For safety and security reasons, students must use only the lockers assigned to them.

**Are students also assigned gym lockers?**

Since students must change clothes and wear sneakers for Physical Education classes, all students are assigned individual lockers in the locker rooms.

**How do students learn about school clubs?**

A full list of clubs and service activities is provided on the PMHS homepage. Postings of all meetings are projected on the digital video screens throughout the building and are also posted in the daily announcements on the PMHS website. Additionally, daily announcements are emailed to students at their google accounts. Another good source of information about these programs is the activity advisor. The school office can give you the name of this person. You may also want to talk with your child's counselor about involvement in activities or with representatives from our Student Government Association.

**How will I know how my child is doing in school?**

Check the portal throughout the year. Report cards are mailed, two weeks after the end of each quarter. See the district calendar on the PMHS homepage for those dates. Additionally, parents may contact the teacher or counselor to check on progress or access their child's portal account.

**How does my child earn recognition?**

Academic honor rolls are published after each quarter. Generally, students with grades averaging between 85 to 89 percent (with no grade below 75) will be listed on the Honor Roll. The High Honor Roll includes students with an average of 90 percent or better (with no grade below 75).

Membership in the National Honor Society (NHS) is open to any junior or senior with an 89 average or better over two years who demonstrates qualities of leadership, service and character. Ten hours of community service are required for NHS entry.

Details on other honor societies, such as the World Languages Honor Society, the Mathematics Honor Society, the Science Honor Society, the English Honor Society, the Rho Kappa Honor Society ( Social Studies Honor Society) and the Tri-M Music Honor Society are available in the Student Handbook and via links on the PMHS homepage.

**To whom should I speak about questions regarding college and SAT tests?**

The counselor is the primary resource about college and career planning and can provide expert assistance in this area. Questions about SAT II Subject Tests can be directed to subject teachers. This is particularly useful in deciding when the student is properly prepared for these tests.

**Can my child be placed in Honors or Advanced Placement Classes?**

PMHS provides open access to all honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses for all students. Any student who seeks the additional challenge of an honors or AP class will have the opportunity to do so. Students will, however, still be required to have taken prerequisite courses when applicable. Since Honors and AP courses are rigorous, with increased expectations regarding the level of student work, conversations should take place between the student, parents, current teacher, and school counselor to determine if placement in one or more of these courses is in the best interest of the students. Please note that this practice does NOT apply to dual enrollment courses taken for college credit from SUNY, SUPA or Adelphi University.

**What programs are available if my child is interested in college alternatives?**

Occupational training in areas such as automotive technology, culinary arts and TV/Video production are only a few of the 13 courses available through the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

Juniors and seniors may elect to attend BOCES courses at the Valhalla Technical Center for a half-day session and spend the rest of the day at PMHS for their academic courses. Talk to your child's counselor for details on the BOCES offerings as well as check the PMHS course catalog.

### **How can I stay involved with what's going on in the high school?**

Bookmark the PMHS homepage and check it daily for announcements. You'll find details that sometimes your child may forget to mention. Also, links to important information are listed on the homepage. Especially note the helpful sites under "Parent Information" that include "Q/As on Supporting your Child," and "Helping 9th Graders Survive Academically" as well as the bimonthly "Principally Speaking" Newsletter.

There are many ways other parents can stay connected with the high school. The PMHS PTA publishes a handy student directory and meets regularly to pursue projects for enhancing the school. Through the PTA you can also volunteer as a parent representative on the PMHS Site-Based Committee; a group of parents, faculty and staff who advise the principal on school-related issues.

Also, parents are a key component of Pelham Together, Pelham's consortium of parents, educators and community leaders, that addresses health and safety issues facing our teenagers. You'll find links to the PTA and Pelham Together on the Pelham District homepage.

### **When are Midterm, Final and Regents Exams?**

Weeks of exams are posted on the district calendar. Specific dates for January and June exams will be posted on the PMHS website 3 weeks prior to the exams. A mailing will also be sent home. Students are not required to attend school unless they have an exam. Classes are suspended during exams. The library remains open from 7:30 am – 4:30 pm during the exam period.