

## *Arsenal 6-8*



# **Student Handbook 2024-2025**

### **Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8**

220 40<sup>th</sup> Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15201

Phone: 412.529.5740

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[www.pghschools.org/pittsburghArsenal6-8](http://www.pghschools.org/pittsburghArsenal6-8)



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## SUPERINTENDENT'S WELCOME

Dear Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8 Families,



As we embark on the 2024-2025 school year, I am excited to share Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8's School Handbook with you. This comprehensive guide is designed to provide essential information about our district's policies, procedures, and expectations, ensuring that we create a safe, supportive, and effective learning environment for all students. The school handbook is a valuable resource for understanding Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8's daily operations, including attendance policies, academic standards, code of conduct, and extracurricular activities. We believe that clear communication and mutual understanding between the school and families are crucial for student success, and this handbook is a key tool in fostering that partnership.

We encourage all families, parents, students, and caregivers to review the handbook thoroughly and discuss its contents with one another. Familiarizing yourselves with these guidelines will help reinforce the values and standards we uphold at Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8.

An electronic copy of the school handbook is also available on the school's website.

Your involvement and support are vital to our students' success, and we are grateful for your partnership in their education. If you have any questions or need further clarification on any aspect of the handbook, please do not hesitate to contact the main office.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation. We look forward to a fantastic school year ahead.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wayne N. Walters  
Superintendent

## **PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME**

Greetings Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8 Community:

Welcome to Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8 where we are excited to form an educational partnership with all students and their families. Each stakeholder of our school community plays an important role in ensuring our scholars are fully equipped for their middle school years and every bright dream they have for their future. We value your perspectives and your contributions to our collaborative efforts in providing an exemplary education for your child.

First and foremost, we are committed to a safe and caring environment for our children. Integrity is a core value in our district and our staff continuously teach and reinforce clear and consistent high expectations for student behavior. We work with students to understand the importance of exhibiting integrity in all our actions. The guidelines in the Arsenal 6-8 Student/Family Handbook are designed to communicate behavior expectations, school rules, safety procedures, and student rights and responsibilities. Please join us in our collective commitment to a positive learning culture where we all share responsibility for upholding the expectations for the safety of students and staff.

Our commitment to academic excellence is at the core of our daily classroom work where high expectations are established while providing enrichment and academic support. At Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8, and throughout the Pittsburgh Public School District, we have a vision to cultivate curious, creative, problem solvers prepared for tomorrow. Our curriculum is designed to challenge learners and individualize learning to equitably meet each child's needs. Throughout the handbook, links have been provided as an added means of support for our students and families. Through staff supports, we are hopeful that a foundation is created where student learning and growth can flourish.

Please have family conversations about the value of education, the importance of safety, and how our focus supports your child's goals and dreams for the future. Our staff looks forward to an outstanding school year and genuine partnership with our Arsenal 6-8 scholars and families.

All the best,

Mr. Anthony Varlotta, Principal

## **SCHOOL VISION AND MISSION**

### **Arsenal Vision:**

- Pittsburgh Arsenal 6-8 believes that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, or English language proficiency have the ability to learn and grow with appropriate supports.

### **Arsenal Mission:**

- Arsenal 6-8 is committed to growing all students socially, emotionally, and academically regardless of performance level, while also increasing the number of students who are proficient and advanced in math, reading, and science.

## **SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION**

Principal: Anthony Varlotta 412-529-5746 [avarlotta1@pghschools.org](mailto:avarlotta1@pghschools.org)  
School Social Worker: Cassandra Rosser 412-529-5730 [crosser1@pghschools.org](mailto:crosser1@pghschools.org)  
School Nurse: Cassandra Brown 412-529-5764 [cbrown6@pghschools.org](mailto:cbrown6@pghschools.org)  
Security: Officer Lowery  
Project Assistant: Amy Coyne [acoyne1@pghschools.org](mailto:acoyne1@pghschools.org)

Main Office

Secretary: Ashley Byrd 412-529-5740

SDSS: Jennifer Johnson 412-529-5740 [jjohnson6@pghschools.org](mailto:jjohnson6@pghschools.org)

Special Education

6-8 grade Math: Jessica Smersky

6-8 grade ELA: Jennifer Stolarz

LSS 6-8 Classroom Teacher: Marnie O'Connor

LSS 6-8 Classroom Paraprofessional: Tonya Baldwin

ES 6-8 Classroom Teacher: Megan McCarthy

ES 6-8 Classroom Paraprofessional: Brenda Marks

6<sup>th</sup> grade

Math: David Saylor

ELA: Shelby Outten

Science & Social Studies: Olivia Buirge

7<sup>th</sup> grade

Math: Steve James

ELA: Kathleen McGuire

Science: Vacant

Social Studies: Julian D'Angelo

8<sup>th</sup> grade

Math: Katie White

ELA: Amber Scalise

Science: Vacant

Social Studies: Julian D'Angelo

English as a Second Language

6-8 grade ESL ELA: Bethany Derbis

6-8 grade ESL Math: Roxanne Martini

6-8 grade ESL Paraprofessional/interpreter: Victor Marcelo

Specials Teachers

Gym: John Leemhuis

Music: Angela Abadilla

Library: Elizabeth Peel

Art: Katherine Shimko

## COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Arsenal strives to maintain close communication with parents. Occasionally families have a question, concern or suggestion to make. Please be assured that it is always Arsenal's intention to be of service to you and resolve any concerns you have. First, call your child's teacher. Email is also available, and email addresses can be found on the school website. The school's website can be found at [Discover PPS](#).

Should you need to contact the school or staff for any reason, please call the main office at (412) 529-5740 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Teachers can receive messages as they do spend the majority of the school day instructing students and completing their assigned duties. When available, teachers will return phone calls.

If you do not feel that your question was answered to your complete satisfaction, please call the school office to make an appointment to talk with the principal. If you are still not satisfied, using the Let's Talk app on the District website can assist you in receiving the support you need from District personnel. Please follow this chain of command so that your issues will be resolved in a timely manner.

If you have issues or concerns with your child's transportation, please contact the Parent Hotline 412-529-HELP(4357)

You can also access other Transportation contacts using the information found on the district website at [Transportation / Contact \(pghschools.org\)](#).

Students will not be called to the front office to take phone calls. Should there be information that needs to be relayed to your child, please provide the details to the available office staff and they will call the necessary teacher to provide the information to your child. Changes to student dismissal procedures need to be provided to the school in writing to ensure student safety protocols.

# STAFF ROSTER

<i>NAME</i>	<i>ROOM</i>	<i>INTERCOM</i>	<i>PHONE</i>	<i>POSITION</i>
ABADILLA, Angela	23	*023	5784	Music 6-8
	32	*032	5768	Cafeteria Manager
ARSENAL ELEMENTARY		*035	5738/7307	Elementary Main Office
BALDWIN, Tonya	112	*112	2956	Paraprofessional
BROWN, Cassandra	26	*026	5764	Nurse
BUIRGE, Olivia	313	*313	6456	SS & Science 6th
BYRD, Ashley	11	*100	5741	Main Office--Secretary
CONFERENCE ROOM	17	*017	2293	Main Office meeting room
COYNE, Amy	14	*14		office space
D'ANGELO, Julian	213	*213	2964	SS 7-8
ECHOLS, Larry	118	n/a	5769	Head Custodian
Family Room	21	*021	n/a	conference room
Game room	304	*304	n/a	
Game room	307	*307	n/a	
JAMES, Stephen	210	*210	2961	Math 7
Johnson, Jennifer	11	*100	5741	SDSS
LEEMHUIS, John	9	*712	5727	HPE 6-8
LIBRARY	123	*123	6352	Library
LOWERY, Yolanda	Foyer	*000	5793	Security
Lunch Detention	26A	*251	2293	Lunch Overflow
MARCELO, Victor			240 346-0990	Paraprofessional/Translator
MARKS, Brenda	306	*306	5732	Therapeutic 6-8
MARTINI, Roxanne	209	*209	6178	ESL 6-8
McGUIRE, Kathleen	211	*211	2295	ELA 7
Mr. Nik			727 204-1336	Translator
O'CONNOR, Marnie	112	*112	2956	Life Skills 6-8
OUTTEN, Shelby	303	*303	6164	ELA 6
PEEL, Elizabeth	123	*123	6352	Librarian 6-8
PRATKANIS, Schuyler	110	*110	5748	Speech Pathologist
RESTORATIVE CENTER - RC	201	*201		RESTORATIVE CENTER
ROSSER, Cassandra	16	*16	3097	School Social Worker 6-8
SAYLOR, David	207	*207	3096	Math 8
SCALISE, Amber	208	*208	3239	ELA 8
SHIMKO, Katherine	202	*202		Art 6-8
SMERSKY, Jessica	302	*302	2962	PSE Math 6-8
Staff Lounge	42	*042		staff only
Stroebel		*222		Stage
VARLOTTA, Anthony	15	*015	5746	PRINCIPAL
WHITE, Katie	301	*301	6453	Math 6th
Open	308	*308		Classroom



## BELL SCHEDULES

CLASS	TARDY BELL	DISMISSAL BELL
HOMEROOM	8:40	8:50
INTERVENTION	8:50	9:20
1 <sup>st</sup> PERIOD	9:22	10:06
2 <sup>ND</sup> PERIOD	10:08	10:52
3 <sup>RD</sup> PERIOD	10:54	11:38
4 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	11:40	12:24
5 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	12:26	1:10
LUNCH	1:12	1:42
6 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	1:44	2:28
7 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	2:30	3:15
STUDENT DISMISSAL	3:15	3:25

### 2hr Delay Bell School

CLASS	TARDY BELL	DISMISSAL BELL
HOMEROOM	10:20	10:47
1 <sup>st</sup> PERIOD	10:50	11:24
2 <sup>ND</sup> PERIOD	11:26	11:59
3 <sup>RD</sup> PERIOD	12:01	12:34
4 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	12:26	1:10
LUNCH	1:12	1:42
5 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	1:44	2:13
6 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	2:15	2:44
7 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	2:46	3:15
STUDENT DISMISSAL	3:15	3:25

### Half Day Bell Schedule

CLASS	TARDY BELL	DISMISSAL BELL
HOMEROOM	8:40	8:50
1 <sup>st</sup> PERIOD	8:52	9:12
2 <sup>ND</sup> PERIOD	9:14	9:34
3 <sup>RD</sup> PERIOD	9:36	9:56
4 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	9:58	10:18
5 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	10:20	10:40
6 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	10:42	11:02
7 <sup>TH</sup> PERIOD	11:04	11:24
LUNCH	11:26	11:50
STUDENT DISMISSAL	12:00	



# ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

## PPS Policy 204

### **ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS**

The District recognizes that the responsibility for school attendance rests with families and students, with the school assisting them to fulfill that responsibility. Prompt, regular attendance is not only required by law, it is the key to student success and progress in school programs. For students to learn and progress as expected, students must consistently attend school. When students miss school, learning is disrupted and learning gaps occur that can cause student's difficulty in keeping up with grade level expectations.

### **ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATION**

When a student is marked unexcused, the parent/guardian will be notified by a robocall of the unexcused absence on the day of the absence.

### **PROCEDURES**

If a student is absent for any reason, an excuse should be provided to the school within 3 days of the absence. Excuse notes are available from the school for the family to use, if needed. A student who is absent more than 10 days in one school year (excused or unexcused absences) will be required to submit verification that the absence was caused by illness, injury or hospitalization, impassable roads, a religious observance, or bereavement. If the student has more than 10 days absent within the school year, handwritten notes from home cannot be accepted.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Any absence due to illness, accident, medical, bereavement, religious observance, or other circumstance with prior approval of school administration, will be excused provided written notification is presented to the homeroom teacher within 3 days of the absence. Academic grades may suffer as a result of excessive absences whether or not they are excused.

### **UNEXCUSED ABSENCES**

An unexcused absence is an absence in which a student has not submitted a note from home, doctor, hospital, funeral home, religious organization, or courts within 3 days of the absence. A parent/guardian shall receive legal notice after each instance of Unlawful and Unexcused Absence. The legal notice shall be issued after the first unlawful absence and should include the legal penalties established by law for violation of compulsory attendance laws and the name and contact person for the school contact person. The legal notice issued after the second unlawful absence shall contain the same information. The legal notice issued after the 3rd unlawful absence should contain the same information and additionally shall provide that if the parent/guardian violates the compulsory school law again the parent will be liable without further notice. The school social worker will attempt to schedule a parent/guardian meeting after the 3rd unlawful absence to create a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP). Any subsequent unlawful absence can result in official notice being filed with the local magistrate.

### **TRUANCY**

A child is "truant" if the child is subject to compulsory school laws and has incurred three or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year. A child is "habitually truant" if the child is subject to compulsory school laws and has incurred six or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year. Habitual truancy negatively impacts a child's school performance and increases the likelihood of juvenile delinquency. As a result, an intensive and timely response to truancy is critical.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

When students are absent, it is their responsibility to talk with their teachers or obtain missed assignments. Students should get missed assignments completed and turned in to the teacher immediately. Students are allowed time equal to their period of absence to submit missing assignments, i.e., one day absent equals one day for make-up. Parents of students absent for two or more days may call the school on the third day absent and pick up assignments at school. Homework for absences less than three days in duration will be handled by the teacher and student upon the student's return. Homework requests require a 24- hour notice in order to properly prepare all necessary materials.

### **EARLY DISMISSAL**

It is the expectation that student appointments are made outside of school hours as much as possible so that the learning of students is not disrupted. In the event an early dismissal is necessary, a written notification must be submitted to the school. This allows for the proper notification of staff that a student may be leaving early. We request that all early dismissals occur prior to 3:00 p.m. so dismissal procedures are not disrupted. After that time, please wait for your child outside. This policy is necessary in order to be able to keep track of all students at dismissal time. After 3:00 p.m., it is imperative that all students follow the school- wide dismissal procedures.

### **TARDIES**

A student is considered tardy when he/she arrives late for school and/or class. The parent/student shares the responsibility to assure promptness in arriving at school and to class on time. Chronic tardy (excused or unexcused) will result in possible disciplinary action. Tardiness to school will be excused only when accompanied with written/verbal notification from the parent/guardian or doctor. All other tardy days will be classified as unexcused. Students arriving after the final morning bell must receive a late pass from the security desk.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE**

It is important for the school to be able to contact you to discuss your student's progress both academically and behaviorally. Arsenal also needs to be able to communicate with student families in the event of an emergency. Any changes to contact information should be provided to the school in a timely manner. Please call the main office at (412) 529-5740 and ask to speak to the SDSS.

# ACADEMICS

## **COURSE/PROGRAM GUIDE**

Pittsburgh Public Schools has updated the Course Catalog for grades K-12 for the 2022-2023 school year. The Middle School Course Catalog can be found at [Course Catalogs / Course Catalogs \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/CourseCatalogs). Some offerings available in the catalog are specific to certain schools within the district. Should you have specific questions regarding the course offerings at Arsenal, please call the main office and ask to speak to the principal or school social worker.

## **GRADING GUIDELINES**

All students at Arsenal receive instruction across contents. As students are practicing, mistakes may be made and feedback from the teacher is important in students growing their knowledge around a concept or skill. Students should actively and cognitively engage in the learning activities planned by the teacher. Students will then be expected to demonstrate their knowledge through the completion of class assignments and assessments deemed appropriate by the teacher. Should teachers deem it necessary to provide students with additional practice, homework will be provided through both paper and digital assignments. Scholars are expected to follow the guidelines provided by the teacher regarding submission deadlines. Should students encounter an issue, students should advocate for themselves and respectfully speak to teachers regarding the assistance needed. Students and families are able to access the Home Access Center (HAC) to view student grades. A progress report will be provided mid-way through a grading period to make families aware of a student's progress. Should you need to contact your student's teacher to discuss progress or concerns, please call the main office to leave a message for the teacher. A report card will be provided at the end of a grading period to alert families to student end of report progress. Should you require additional information related to district grading guidelines, please visit [Grading Guidelines / Grading Guidelines \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/GradingGuidelines).

## **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

English as a Second Language (ESL) is an instructional program for students whose dominant language is not English. The purpose of the program is to increase the English language proficiency of eligible students while simultaneously providing important content knowledge. Arsenal celebrates the diversity of our student population and supports the growth of all. Arsenal ESL teachers support students in their ESL classrooms and fellow staff in addressing the diverse needs of our student population. Further information can be found by visiting [English as Second Language \(ESL\) / English as a Second Language: ESL \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/EnglishasSecondLanguage).

## **SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICES**

Speech and language services are available to students who qualify following an individual screening. Therapy sessions are provided individually or in small groups.

## **LEARNING SUPPORT, THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT, & AUTISTIC SUPPORT**

Pittsburgh Public School students will be meaningful members of our school communities. All students with disabilities will receive an equitable education that addresses individual needs in order to achieve their fullest potential academically, socially, emotionally, and vocationally. Students are expected to achieve and succeed so that they can be productive, self-motivated citizens.

Students in need of specific support services can receive them at Arsenal. Individually designed programs are implemented based upon each student's specific individual education plan. Support services are assigned after interventions are implemented, academic evidence has been collected, and testing and team recommendations have occurred.

Family resources and information related to PSE contacts can be found at [PSE \(Special Education\) / PSE \(Special Education\) \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/PSE).

## **GIFTED EDUCATION**

The Gifted and Talented Education program at Pittsburgh Public Schools supports unique opportunities for students who are identified as high-achieving. The overall aim of the Gifted and Talented Education at Pittsburgh Public Schools is to provide educational opportunities and experiences to help students extend their learning, develop individual potential, enhance their self-concept and become life-long, independent learners. Pittsburgh Public Schools is committed to providing differentiated activities and opportunities through which students can discover and develop their unique and individual needs, interests, talents and abilities.

Students at Arsenal in need of enrichment and acceleration may be evaluated for Gifted Support services. The student must meet the criteria set by Pennsylvania regulations for Gifted Education, Chapter 16. Resources for families and contact information can be accessed at [Gifted and Talented / Gifted and Talented \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/Gifted-and-Talented).

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

### [PPS POLICY 226](#)

Arsenal Middle School believes that academic integrity is a critical component to our growth as learners and individuals. Therefore, it is the expectation that teachers, students, volunteers, and all other staff act with and display characteristics of honesty, fairness, responsibility, trust, and respect. A breach of these expectations (copying work from another student or source) will result in an academic misconduct conference.

**DRESS CODE**  
[PPS POLICY 221](#)

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

Pittsburgh Public Schools has an exclusionary dress code. No student shall wear any apparel or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures or any combination thereof appearing on said clothing or jewelry advocates or promotes sexual activity or violence, or the use of alcohol or drugs, or demeans or degrades another because of race, sex, religious persuasion, national origin, handicap or disability.

Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing at all times while at school. Clothing must not be of any style, length or fit that is of a provocative nature. Shorts or skirts shorter than 3 inches above the knee are not permitted. Revealing attire that permits the exposure of undergarments or private body parts is prohibited. This includes midriff tops, net shirts, halters, underwear T- shirts, spaghetti strap tank tops, oversized revealing tank tops (no skin showing – unless a sleeved shirt is underneath) or other types of revealing shirts. This prohibition shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school-sponsored event whether on or off school premises. Should a student wear clothing that is deemed questionable, an alternative will be provided which could include clothing being provided from the home.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

### [PPS POLICY 216](#)

#### **CELL PHONES**

*Student cell phones will be collected each morning and secured in the school safe. This is necessary to reduce disruptions to the learning environment. Cell phones are returned to students when they enter*



*their dismissal locations at the close of the school day. Arsenal would advise families to discuss with their students the appropriate use of social media. For additional information and resources to discuss with your child related to Cyber Safety, please visit [Cyber Safety / Cyber Safety \(pghschools.org\)](http://pghschools.org).*

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR OFFERINGS**

### *PPS Policy 119*

Cross Country, Volleyball, Swimming, Wrestling, Basketball, and Soccer will be the athletic programs held for students during the year. Various social-emotional learning programs and enrichment opportunities will also be available to students. Information for all programs will be communicated with families through school flyers, the Facebook page, and Talking Points messages.

# **GRADING**

## [PPS Policy 209](#)

### **GRADING GUIDELINES**

All students at Arsenal receive instruction across contents. As students are practicing, mistakes may be made and feedback from the teacher is important in students growing their knowledge around a concept or skill. Students should actively and cognitively engage in the learning activities planned by the teacher. Students will then be expected to demonstrate their knowledge through the completion of class assignments and assessments deemed appropriate by the teacher.

Should teachers deem it necessary to provide students with additional practice, homework will be provided through both paper and digital assignments. Scholars are expected to follow the guidelines provided by the teacher regarding submission deadlines. Should students encounter an issue, students should advocate for themselves and respectfully speak to teachers regarding the assistance needed.

Students and families are able to access the Home Access Center (HAC) to view student grades. A progress report will be provided mid-way through a grading period to make families aware of a student's progress. Should you need to contact your student's teacher to discuss progress or concerns, please call the main office to leave a message for the teacher. A report card will be provided at the end of a grading period to alert families to student end of report progress.

Should you require additional information related to district grading guidelines, please visit [Grading Guidelines / Grading Guidelines \(pghschools.org\)](#).

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS/HS ONLY**



## **HOMEWORK PROCEDURES**

[PPS Policy 115](#)

Each core academic class (ELA, Math, Science, & Social Studies) will give homework that students are expected to complete. Homework for each class is worth 10% of the grade. Each teacher will communicate their specific homework policy to families during the first week of school.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

## PPS Policy 206

### **OVERVIEW**

At PPS and Arsenal 6-8, we strive to ensure that all students have equal access to quality health services, prevention education and early intervention and support to help them achieve academic success. Students receive school health physicals, screenings, and related services that support health and wellness.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS & FAMILIES**

Please keep us informed of any telephone or address changes. Any changes to emergency contact information should be provided to the main office by calling (412) 529-5740. The school will always need a way to contact you in the event of an emergency. Nurse Brown can be reached at (412) 529-5764.

### **MEDICATIONS**

IF your student has any allergies or medical conditions that we need to be aware of or they need to have medication administered at school, please, let us know immediately. NO medication can be administered without your signature on the PPS parental consent form. Please do not send medication with your child to self-medicate within the school. This presents a safety concern for your child and others. A parent must bring the medication into the school and personally hand the medication to the school nurse. Both the emergency contact form and all medical forms can be found on the health services page. <https://www.pghschools.org/Page/647>

### **WHEN TO STAY HOME**

- Students should not come to school if they have a fever.
- Students should be fever free for 24 hours without any fever reducing medications.
- Students should stay home if they are vomiting or have diarrhea.
- If students are suffering from a bad cough and have accompanying respiratory concerns, please keep the child home and seek out advisement of the child's doctor.
- Follow your doctor's orders. If your child is told to stay home, keep him or her home.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For additional information and guidance, please visit the PPS Health Services website at [Health Services / Health Services Home \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/Health_Services/Health_Services_Home)

# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

[Pittsburgh Public Schools Office of Information Technology Acceptable Use Form](#)

## ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Every student in PPS will have access to the district computer network resources, electronic mail and the Internet. To use these resources, all students must sign and return the PPS Acceptable Use Policy. It is important that families read and complete this document carefully, review its contents with your son/daughter, and sign where appropriate. Any questions or concerns about this permission form, or any aspect of the computer network, should be referred to your school's administration.

The signature of a parent/guardian is mandatory before students will be allowed access to any PPS computer or technology-based resource. This form is required annually of all students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. This document reflects the entire agreement and understanding of all parties. The Acceptable Use Policy can be accessed at [Forms / Home \(pghschools.org\)](#).

Students and their families must follow the guidelines established for appropriate care and use of all district technologies. Misuse of PPS equipment may result in the withdrawal of this privilege at the school's discretion. Intentional or neglectful disregard for equipment resulting in damage or loss will be the responsibility of the student and their family and will be handled on a case-by-case basis where financial penalty is only applied when mutually agreed upon by the district and family. Inappropriate use may result in cancellation of permission to use district equipment which could have academic repercussions. We ask that each student and family take the use of district equipment seriously as the benefits of a contemporary learning environment have a wide range of benefits for the learner, as well as the learner's family and school community.

## DAMAGE AND REPAIRS

Should a student encounter difficulties with their device, the school tech liaison will provide the necessary advisement according to district policy which could include securing devices for repair and providing students a loaned device for use, if available.

## ACCESS TO INSTRUCTION AND PROGRAMS

Students can access district instructional programs through Clever. Students work within this management system in many of their daily classes. Should students be required to work remotely, classes and instructional programs can be accessed through Clever. Students can access Clever through [Student Resources / Student Resources \(pghschools.org\)](#). Many program links are available for students to conduct additional work and practice outside of their regular school day.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

### **MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT (MTSS)**

MTSS is a framework for providing services that meet the needs of all students using data analysis and decision making to effectively address academic and behavioral needs for instruction and intervention. Instruction and intervention are represented through multiple tiers that increase in intensity based on student need. Should you feel that your child needs assistance, please reach out to your child's teachers and the school social worker for support.

### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)**

SAP is a systemic process using techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally trained team that convenes to identify problems and to determine whether the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the family. Should the problem lie beyond the scope of the school, the SAP Team will assist the family and student in accessing services within the community. Should you feel that your child needs assistance, please reach out to your child's teachers and the school social worker for support.

### **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)**

Within PPS, it is the belief that SEL is the foundation on which academic learning takes place. As such, activities are in place to develop student self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. This is achieved through mentoring programs from PPS staff and community partners that assist in supporting students. Please access [Student Support Services / Overview \(pghschools.org\)](https://www.pghschools.org/Student-Support-Services/Overview) for additional resources

### **BULLYING/HARASSMENT**

Bullying is defined as intentional, aggressive behavior[s] that may be verbal, physical, written or electronic, aimed at another student or students, for the purpose of creating fear or intimidation by harming physically, mentally or emotionally. It may be direct or indirect, with face-to-face interactions or by spreading rumors, sharing inappropriate pictures or demeaning a student using social media.

Students and others who have been the victim of, or have information about, bullying or harassment are strongly encouraged to make a report to the school. A teacher, counselor, school social worker or school administrator will field complaints and ensure that they are properly addressed under the District's Bullying & Harassment Policy and administrative procedures. More information can be found on the PPS Website under the tab Student Supports where Quick Links for Students is located near the bottom of the page.

### **Policy 102 – Non-Discrimination in School and Classroom Practices**

Board Policy 102 states in part: The Board declares that it is the policy of the District to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and activities offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, gender (including gender identity or expression), sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or disability.

The District is committed to the maintenance of a safe, positive learning environment for all students that is free from discrimination by providing all students course offerings, counseling, assistance, services, employment, athletics and extracurricular activities without any form of discrimination, including Title IX sexual harassment. Discrimination is inconsistent with the rights of students and the educational and programmatic goals of the District and is prohibited at or, in the course of, District-sponsored programs or activities, including transportation to or from school or school-sponsored activities. Discrimination is also prohibited in any remote learning program or activity of the District. For the full text of Board Policy 102-Non-Discrimination in School and Classroom Practices, please visit: <https://www.pghschools.org/nondiscrimination-policy>

### **Title IX Procedures**

For information about our Title IX procedures, please visit: <https://www.pghschools.org/titleIX>



# Student Expectations/Procedures

## [Policy 212](#) [PPS Code of Conduct](#)

Academic behavior is the foundation for our school-wide positive reinforcement system. During weekly team meetings, teachers will review student data. We have defined academic behavior as:

**Prepared:** student has binder, homework, class materials, agenda book, appropriate gym clothes

**On time:** student is in class when late bell rings.

**Working hard:** student completes assignments, remains on task, head up, and responsible for making up missed class work and homework.

**Engaged:** academic talk, participating (written/verbal) (on task computer and group work)

**Respectful:** use appropriate language, respect classmates, teachers, and school property, display appropriate behavior in regard to classroom procedures/expectations

Similar to the live school system, students will have the opportunity to earn points for meeting POWER expectations each period of every day and to use those points for various incentives and privileges throughout the school year. Our shift to keeping this data in a student agenda allows for students to be conferenced with in the moment and for students to always be aware of their point total and areas of ome (when needed) and allow for period data to be kept for all students rather than only students with exceptionalities or wholistically for the day. Points will be awarded by teachers and staff each period for a total of 11 points a day. Weekly, homeroom teachers will input the data online and then teams will discuss the data. Grade level teams will continue to create and utilize “case management” of students for various SEL and academic groups based on the data. These groups will be fluid and could change based on the needs of students.

# **VISITOR POLICY**

[PPS Policy 1104](#)

## **VISITORS POLICY**

All visitors are required to enter through the doors on 40<sup>th</sup> Street and must be checked by school security. All visitors must travel through the metal detectors. Visitors must then check-in with the front office to sign our school visitor log. Permission to visit a classroom must be granted in advance of any visit. An escort will be provided.

## **ADDITIONAL PPS DISTRICT POLICIES**

Please click on the link below to learn more about our District's Code of Conduct

- [Code of Conduct](#)

Please click on the link below to learn more about our District's Non-Discrimination Policy

- [Non-Discrimination Policy](#)

Please click on the link below for information about Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

- [Education for Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)

Please use the link below to find out more about Special Education Services and Programs, Services for Protected Handicapped Students (504), and Services for Gifted Students: [PSE \(Special Education\) / Child Find Annual Notice \(pghschools.org\)](#)

## **ADDITIONAL SCHOOL INFORMATION**