

Pittsburgh Colfax K-8



Student Handbook 2024-2025

Pittsburgh Colfax k-8
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www.pghschools.org/colfax



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SUPERINTENDENT'S WELCOME

Welcome to the 2024-25 school year! As we embark on this new academic journey together, I am filled with enthusiasm and optimism for what lies ahead. Whether you are returning to our schools or joining us for the first time, I am delighted to welcome you to the Pittsburgh Public Schools family.

Our district provides a high-quality education that empowers you to achieve your full potential. This year, we are committed to fostering an inclusive, supportive, and engaging learning environment where every student can thrive. We believe in the power of education to transform lives and communities, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

Throughout this school year, you will have countless opportunities to learn, grow, and excel. From rigorous academic programs to a wide range of extracurricular activities, we aim to nurture your talents, interests, and aspirations. Our dedicated teachers, staff, and administrators are here to guide and inspire you, helping you to develop the skills and knowledge necessary for success in an ever-changing world.

This school handbook is an essential resource for all stakeholders in our district. It provides important information about our policies, procedures, and expectations. By familiarizing yourself with its contents, you will be better equipped to navigate the school year successfully and make the most of the opportunities available to you. We encourage students, parents, and staff to refer to the handbook regularly to stay informed and engaged.

As you navigate your educational journey, I encourage you to embrace challenges, explore new ideas, and build meaningful relationships with your peers and teachers. Remember, your hard work, determination, and resilience will pave the way for a bright and promising future.

I am excited to witness your achievements and celebrate your successes throughout the year. Together, we will make this school year a memorable and impactful one.

Welcome back, and let's make the 2024-25 school year the best one yet!

Warm regards,

Dr. Wayne N. Walters

Superintendent

Pittsburgh Public Schools

PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Greetings Pittsburgh Colfax Families,

Welcome to our Colfax community! As we embark on a new school year, I am filled with excitement and anticipation for the journey ahead. Whether you are returning to our school or joining us for the first time, we are thrilled to have you as a part of our diverse family.

Our mission at Colfax is to foster and nurturing and challenging educational environment where each student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We are committed to providing a high-quality education that prepares our students for the future, while encouraging them to be responsible global citizens.

This student handbook is a valuable resource that contains information about our school's policies, procedures, and expectations. It is designed to help you navigate the school year successfully and ensure that you have a clear understanding of what is required to maintain a positive, safe, and productive environment.

At Colfax, we believe in the power of collaboration, and communication. We encourage you to take an active role in your education, to ask questions, and to seek support whenever needed. Our team is here to guide and assist you every step of the way. Together, we can create a school community where everyone feels respected, valued, and inspired to achieve their best.

I urge you read through this handbook carefully and keep it as a reference throughout the year. Familiarize yourself with the school's expectations, procedures, and resources. If you or your family have any questions or need clarity, please do not hesitate to reach out to our school office.

Thank you for being a part of Colfax. Let us make this school year a memorable and successful one. I look forward to seeing each of you grow in the months ahead.

Warm regards,
Dr. Sanders-Woods
Principal, Colfax k-8

SCHOOL VISION AND MISSION

Our Mission

Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 will be one of Pittsburgh's premier schools by being consistently student-focused,

culturally responsive, and data driven. We will hold ourselves accountable for preparing all children to achieve academic excellence, experience personal growth, and foster a sense of community and civic engagement.

Our Vision

At Pittsburgh Colfax, we believe that ALL students can demonstrate growth. Our mission is to help them to be consistently aware of their individual data and set specific goals. We aim to increase achievement levels and promote positive behaviors in all students while eliminating racial disparity.

Our Motto

At Pittsburgh Colfax K-8, we believe that all students will experience academic, social, and personal growth.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Teachers have a daily responsibility to the children in their classrooms. Parents/guardians desiring to speak to a teacher are asked to leave a message with the main office at 412.529.3525. Please do not ask to be connected directly to any classroom during instructional time. All Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 employees have email accounts. All accounts are formatted as follows: First letter of first name followed by the complete last name followed by the number 1 followed by @pghschools.org. For example: John Doe would be jdoe1@pghschools.org

Parent Communication:

Our primary means of communication is via Talking Points and/or Robo Calls. Talking Points can be received via email or by downloading the app which allow you to receive text message straight to your cellular device. You can access additional information regarding Colfax at these links: www.pghschools.org, Pittsburgh Colfax Facebook Page (PPS Colfax), and on twitter @ppscolfax. There is also a link on the 17 Colfaxpto.org page that allows you to sign up for weekly emails. Please keep a record of your child's school username and password to access class instructional materials on Schoology.

General Communication:

Please allow our staff to respond to any calls or emails within 24-48 hours. If it is an emergency and you need to talk to someone sooner, call the school directly at 412.529.3525

Classroom Communication:

All teachers send weekly and/or timely content newsletters home for classroom updates via Talking Points.

Parent Meetings:

You can request an individual scheduled meeting with a teacher via email, phone call to the school, and/or Talking Points.

STAFF ROSTER

Kindergarten	1 st Grade	2 nd Grade
K-1 Kaela Filipek-106	1-1 Brea Grady-110	2-1 Randi Grujich-211
K-2 Amber Garrett-105	1-2 Melissa Morgano-112	2-2 Paula Phillips-212
K-3 Crissy Hills-104	1-3 Katherine Bartels -111	2-3 Nina Smith -210
		2-4 Julie Montgomery-113
3 rd Grade	4 th Grade	5 th Grade
3-1 Liz Campione-209	4-1 Alexandra Lucci -205 ELA	5-1 Stephanie Coles-14 Mathematics
3-2 Gina Lasek-202 Mathematics	4-2 Amy Mlay-206 Mathematics	5-2 Nicole Murray-15 Science 3-5
3-3 Pullie -201	4-3 Christina Theiss-204 ELA	5-3 Rasheeda Rice-16 ELA
ITL-Ms. April Franklin-06 Social Studies 3-5 ITL 3-5	4-4 Matthew Binger-203 Mathematics	5-4 Amy Wooler-18 ELA
6 th Grade	7 th Grade	8 th Grade
6-1 Raffaella Greco-227 ELA	7-1 Emily Duque-213 Mathematics	8-1 Celia Werner-123 ELA
6-2 Madison Madin-214 Mathematics	7-2 Caranina Koloshinsky-219 Science 7-8	8-2 Lorena Mitchell -126 Mathematics
6-3 Sarah Simko-Zeminski-226 Social Studies 6-7	7-3 Meredith Adams-223 ELA	8-3 Mark Cohen-127 Mathematics
	Venneasha Davis-222 Science 6-7 ITL 6-8	Ryan Schmiedlin-129 Social Studies
Related Arts	ELL	Special Education
Jason Burrell-108- Library	April Bickerstaff -230 ITL K-2	Jacqueline Bingman-208
Alyce Edwards-102 - Music	Becky Bachman-228	Brittany Shoup-17
Elizabeth Hazlett-301- Music	Speech	Meghan Popp-231 ITL-PSE
Erika Lavelle- PE	Emily Byrne - 009	Stephanie Isbell-128
Daniel Gigler- PE		
Gwyneth Miller-103-Art	Student Supports	Paraprofessionals
Adam Katz- Instrumental	Kaylee Keefe-109 (K-4)	Jacqueline Holeman
Main Office	Marshall Medrano -229 (5-8)	Linda Strothers PSE
Tracy Clark (Secretary)		Shamarra White PSE
Anthony Peluso (SDSS)	Principal	Yvonne Harris PSE
Security	Dr. Tamara Sanders-Woods	Sisi Liang- ELL
School Security-Langston Keeney	Assistant Principals	
Nurse	Mr. Anthony Pipkin 208 (K-4)	
Nurse Cherry	Ms. Joan Murphy 232 (5-8)	

BELL SCHEDULES

**Pittsburgh Colfax K-8
Bell-Schedule
2024-2025**

	Begin Time	End Time
Breakfast	8:15 AM	8:25AM
Homeroom	8:20AM	8:30AM
Intervention	8:30 PM	9:00 PM
Period 1	9:00AM	9:45AM
Period 2	9:45AM	10:30AM
Period 3 K-1 Lunch	10:30AM	11:15AM
Period 4 2-3 Lunch	11:15AM	12:00PM
Period 5 4-5 Lunch	12:00PM	12:45PM
Period 6 6-8 lunch	12:45 PM	1:30PM
Period 7	1:30PM	2:15PM
Period 8	2:15PM	3:05PM
DISMISSAL	3:06PM	3:20PM

**Pittsburgh Colfax K-8
Half Day Bell Schedule 24-25**

Dates: September 20, October 25, November 15, December 13,
February 7, February 21, March 7, March 21

	Start Time	End Time
Homeroom	8:20 AM	8:30 AM
Period 1	8:30 AM	9:00 AM
Period 2	9:00 AM	9:30 AM
Period 4	9:30 AM	10:00AM
Period 5	10:00AM	10:30AM
Period 6	10:30M	11:00AM
Period 8	11:00AM	11:35AM
Dismissal	11:35PM	11:40 PM

**Pittsburgh Colfax K-8
2-Hour Delay Bell-Schedule
2024-2025**

	Begin Time	End Time
Homeroom	10:15 AM	10:30AM
Period 1	10:30AM	10:54AM
Period 2	10:54AM	11:18AM
Period 3 K-1 Lunch	11:18AM	12:03 AM
Period 4 2-3 Lunch	12:03AM	12:48PM
Period 5 4-5 Lunch	12:48PM	1:33PM
Period 6 6-8 lunch	1:33PM	2:18PM
Period 7	2:18PM	2:42PM
Period 8	2:42PM	3:06PM
DISMISSAL	3:06PM	3:20PM

**Pittsburgh Colfax K-8
Bell-Schedule
Remote**

	Begin Time	End Time
Homeroom	8:30AM	9:00 AM
Period 1	9:00AM	9:45AM
Period 2	9:45AM	10:30AM
Period 3 K-1 Lunch	10:30AM	11:15AM
Period 4 2-3 Lunch	11:15AM	12:00PM
Period 5 4-5 Lunch	12:00PM	12:45PM
Period 6 6-8 lunch	12:45 PM	1:30PM
Period 7	1:30PM	2:15PM
Period 8	2:15PM	3:05PM
DISMISSAL	3:05PM	

SCHOOL AND PPS CALENDARS

PPS Calendar Link

[PPS District Calendar FINAL 2024-2025.pdf](#)

PSCC Meeting Dates

[Colfax PSSC Meeting Dates 24-25.docx](#)

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

[PPS Policy 204](#)

Students are expected to be in attendance daily except due to illness or family emergency. Please keep sick children at home. In the event a student is absent:

Non-Medical Absences

A written note must be received from parent/guardian within 3 days of the student's return. Without a note, the absence will remain unexcused.

- o After 3 unexcused absences a Student Attendance Conference will be scheduled with the Social Worker/Counselor.
- o After 5 unexcused absences a citation for truancy will be issued.

Medical Absences

a medical excuse must be received from a doctor providing reason for absence, within 3 days of the student's return. Without a medical excuse the absence will then be categorized as a non-medical absence. In this case, steps for non-medical excuses must be followed.

Students are expected to be in attendance daily except due to illness or family emergency.

Tardies

Tardiness affects a student's attendance, as well as interrupting instructional time. All students who arrive at school late must receive a late note from the main office. Students who arrive to school late due to their school bus/van arriving late or coming with a medical excuse from a doctor/dental appointment, will be marked as an excused tardy. Withdrawing a student in the event of students moving and being enrolled in another school, a records request must be received by Colfax from the new school. This request serves as confirmation that the student has been enrolled elsewhere, permitting the student to be removed from Colfax's roster. Until such a request is received, the student will continue to accumulate unexcused absences. Also, if you are moving to a new district, student computers/iPad's must be turned into the school before any records can be released to the enrolling school.

ACADEMICS

Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 utilizes the district curriculum Open Court all ELA classes, Math curriculum (aligned with PA core standards) through Imagine Learning's Illustrative Mathematics(IM), and Wayfinder for our Social Emotional Learning (SEL) instruction. Elementary students will receive a *minimum* of 20 SEL lessons and Middle Level receives a *minimum* of 26 lessons throughout the year.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

[PPS POLICY 226](#)

DRESS CODE

[PPS POLICY 221](#)

Students are expected to always wear school appropriate clothing. These expectations shall be in effect during regular school hours and at any school sponsored event whether on or off school premises. Any student whose attire does not meet the dress code will be sent to the office for a parent to bring a change of clothing. Students will not return to class until a change is provided.

Please refer to the dress code policy as follows:

- Undergarments should not be exposed at any time.
- Shirts baring midriff are not permitted.
- Any clothing that promotes sexual activity, violence, use of alcohol/drugs, demeans or degrades another because of race, sex, or religious persuasion and/or national origin, handicap or disability is prohibited.
- Slippers are not permitted.
- Hats, headbands, scarves are not permitted unless worn for religious purposes, specified school spirit days, or due to circumstances approved by principal.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

[PPS POLICY 216](#)

Students in grades 5-8 will have their cell phones collected upon arrival at the glass doors. Students in grades K-4 must not have their cellphones visible during the school day.

Smart watches are permitted but are expected to be used appropriately. Students will not be permitted to wear smart watches if they are texting, making calls, or causing a classroom/school disruption.

Cellphones found during the day will be confiscated and turned into the main office for parent pick-up. Repeated violations will result in further disciplinary action and students may not be permitted to carry their electronic device during the school day.

EXTRA CURRICULAR OFFERINGS

[PPS Policy 119](#)

Colfax offers the following extracurricular activities:

- Elementary Track (5th grade)
- Middle Level Track and Cross Country
- Middle Level Basketball
- Middle Level Wrestling
- Middle Level Flag Football
- Middle Level Soccer
- Middle Level Swimming
- Math Kangaroo
- Chess
- Middle Level Musical
- Girls on the Run
- Strong Women Strong Girls

GRADING

[PPS Policy 209](#)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS/HS ONLY

[PPS Policy 211](#)

HOMEWORK PROCEDURES

[PPS Policy 115](#)

At Pittsburgh Colfax K-8, home learning is an essential foundation for a solid education. Regular homework is important since it gives students the opportunity to practice skills and apply the information learned in class. It also helps students to become competent and independent in their learning which will support good study habits throughout the lifetime and develop their independent cognitive skills. Homework should be carefully planned and have direct meaning to students. However, homework should not extend beyond the recommended time per grade level or cause unnecessary frustration for any child. Prior to reaching an inappropriate level of frustration, please just email or simply write directly on the homework assignment so that the teacher can assist with reteaching the lesson.

Most times homework will be assigned Monday through Thursday each week.

Please refer to the specific grade level time targets below and teacher communication regarding homework expectations.

Kindergarten - Grade 2: up to 20 minutes

Grade 3 - Grade 5: up to 35 minutes

Grade 6 - Grade 8: up to 60 minutes

HEALTH SERVICES

Medication

Over the counter and/or doctor prescribed medications, must be brought to the school by an adult. Students should not bring medications of any kind to school for self-administration. All prescribed medication must be accompanied by a doctor's order and in the original bottle, for it to be accepted by the school nurse.

Illness/Injury

Any student injured/ill in school will be treated by the school nurse who will in turn notify the parent/guardian of the injury/illness. In the event the school staff are unable to reach a parent/guardian, all attempts will be made to contact the emergency numbers listed on the student's

Emergency Contact Forms

Students who are seriously ill, have a fever, or infected with disease MUST be picked up from the school by an approved adult immediately. It is important that the school can reach a parent/guardian in cases of emergency as well as safely releasing a child to an adult (other than their parent/guardian).

Parents/guardians are required to inform the school of any changes to their contact information. This includes changes to all names listed in the student information as an approved adult for pick-up. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform any persons listed as an emergency contact of the pick-up procedures (including proof of ID), for a student to be released to them.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

[PPS POLICY 813.1](#)

Each student has access to individually assigned a laptop or iPad which are the property of PPS and are to be used for the completing of school assignments only. All devices are subject to inspection. In the event a teacher or administrator suspects misuse of the device, parents are responsible for the replacement fee of \$200.00 for any device damaged or lost while in the care of their child. There is a \$25.00 fee for all Dell chargers and \$35.00 for iPad chargers that are lost. Students are responsible for bringing their charged devices to school daily with the charger.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

- K-4 GRADE LEVEL SOCIAL WORKER
- 5-8 GRADE LEVEL COUNSELOR
- ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL) TEACHERS (2)
- ELL PARAPROFESSIONAL (1)
- CLASSROOM PARAPROFESSIONALS (3)
- SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS (4)

Student Expectations/Procedures

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

Restorative Practices

As a focus on Restorative Practices with regards to promoting positive character traits, Pittsburgh Colfax operates within a school-wide management system called HISS, which is a Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) initiative. HISS stands for Helpful, Involved, Safe, and Scholarly. All students engage in formal and informal processes of Restorative Practices.

Positive Behavior Incentive System

Classroom-based and school-wide monthly incentives are planned to celebrate our students achieving positive behavior goals. We manage our rewards program through PBIS Rewards.

VISITOR POLICY

[PPS Policy 1104](#)

Visitors to the building must Colfax building and district protocol. All visitors must report to the front of the building and ring the bell to the left of the stairs. Once your appointment or purpose for visit is confirmed by our clerical staff, our school security guard (Officer Kenney) will check you into the building. All visitors must proceed through the metal detectors, keep your visitors badge visible, and wait in the foyer to be escorted to the area of your meeting/visiting location.

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

Our school day begins at 8:25am and ends at 3:10pm.

Virtual Learning Days

When engage in learning from 8:25am – 3:10pm. Attendance is taken by subject and/or period during Virtual Learning Days.

Arrival Walkers

Students are greeted into the building no earlier than 8:10am. Any student arriving after 8:30am will be considered late and receive a late note from the main office. All walkers in grades k-4 should enter through the main entrance on Beechwood Blvd., go through bag/metal detector check-in, and either report to the cafeteria for breakfast or remain in the main hallway until homeroom begins.

Bus students and students in grades 5-8

Students will enter through the glass doors, go through bag/metal detector check in, and either go to the Café to eat breakfast or the gym/playground depending on the weather. The school opens at 8:10 for walking students. Once a student finishes their breakfast, they are dismissed to the gymnasium (K-2) or playground (3-8) to wait for the HR bell at 8:15AM. Students who do not eat breakfast should report immediately to the gymnasium (K-2) or playground (3- 8)

To encourage a sense of early independence and a building of self-esteem, we ask parents to permit their children to enter the building on their own. To maintain a safe school environment, parents are not permitted to walk students beyond the entrance. If a student demonstrates the need for additional support walking to

class, a staff member will be assigned to escort them to their classroom. If you are parked on the opposite side of the street, please walk your child to the crossing guard and/or cross at corners only.

Dismissal

During dismissal, parents/guardians are not permitted to park in the bus lane in front of the school. Cars blocking the bus lane delay our dismissal and the dismissal of schools who share our buses/drivers. All parents who are picking up students should wait at the lower steps to decrease congestion, allow visibility, and ensure a safe orderly dismissal of our students. We ask that once you receive your child that you exit to the right and left to allow others to connect with their children who have not been dismissed. Any changes to your child's dismissal plan should be communicated to the main office staff, your child's teacher, and any other caretaker who normally receives your child after school

Blue Slide Store

Tardies will not be excused for students going to Blue Slide Market prior to the start of our school day. Additionally, students who are dismissed to busses are not permitted to go to Blue Slide Park. If you miss the bus as a result, a parent will be expected to provide you with an alternative ride home.

Valuables Toys/Money

Students are to leave all valuables, large sums of money and toys at home. In the event these items are found on students upon arrival to school, they will be taken and returned only to a parent/guardian. Items that are not retrieved from the lost and found will be discarded at the year's end. Students are responsible for the personal property that they bring to school. Although we will assist in attempting to locate any reported lost or

stolen item, Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 will not be responsible for replacing any lost or stolen items.