

South Hills Middle School



Student Handbook 2024-2025

South Hills Middle School
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SUPERINTENDENT'S WELCOME MESSAGE

Dear Pittsburgh South Hills Middle School Families,



As we embark on the 2024-2025 school year, I am excited to share Pittsburgh South Hills' 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 South Hills' 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 South Hills.

An electronic copy of the school handbook is also available on South Hills' 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 MESSAGE

Bridging the gap and leading the husky pack, we are South Hills!

Dear South Hills Middle School Students and Families:

On behalf of the faculty and staff, welcome to South Hills Middle School. We are a student-centered school committed to the success of all learners through positive and rigorous educational experiences coupled with customized supports. We are also a STAR School, which means that our students, teachers, and staff achieve great results.

Our number one priority is student achievement. We are committed to educating whole students by accommodating their academic, emotional, and social needs. We are also passionate about the power of education for imparting capacity and self-worth. Our mission is to create a place where all students thrive, feel safe, and belong—a middle school that prepares students to accomplish their dreams and succeed at whatever comes next.

This handbook highlights many activities and programs offered at South Hills, alongside the rules and procedures governing our school. Anticipate a challenging, high-quality education that inspires you to *believe, achieve, and succeed*. To meet that expectation, students are required to work vigorously, maintain exemplary attendance, act professionally, abide by all classroom/school rules, and comply with the *PPS 6-12 Code of Student Conduct*.

South Hills' students come from six (6) different elementary schools in the South Hills and West End sections of Pittsburgh. We also welcome students from a vast array of countries, since South Hills is designated an English as a Second Language center. South Hills is a diverse and inclusive school; therefore, we expect our students always to uphold our school's motto, "We treat everyone with dignity and respect."

Welcome to the pack, huskies! We are excited to see where your developmental and educational adventures take you.

Yours in education,
Dr. Robert E. Frioni, Principal

INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL

OVERVIEW

Established in 1996, South Hills Middle School is a comprehensive, grades 6-8 middle school located in the Beechview neighborhood of Pittsburgh. It draws students primarily from the South Hills and portions of the West End. Its core curriculum is enhanced by electives and related arts courses, including art, music, physical education, STEAM, and world languages. South Hills is also a regional English as a Second Language program site and is home to over 100 English Language Learners. South Hills is proudly one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse schools in Pittsburgh. Above all, it is a Pittsburgh Public Schools STAR School, which means that its students, teachers, and staff achieve great results.

Since middle school is meant to bridge the gap between elementary and secondary schools, South Hills students are taught to manage their personal and scholastic endeavors responsibly in preparation for high school. Students may participate in an assortment of extracurricular activities and interscholastic sports. The school ensures that students receive wrap-around support via its Student Services department, as well as its Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports system, the Student Assistance Program, the school's Restorative Practice delivery model, and after-school programming.

Additional Educational Services:

Learning Support, Speech & Language, Itinerant Hearing and Vision, Autistic Support, Emotional Support, Occupation Therapy and Physical Therapy, Regional Life Skills Support Classroom, Regional Emotional Support Classroom, Regional Autistic Support Classroom

School Partners:

Mercy Behavioral Support Services, East End Cooperative Ministry (ECCM), Jewish Family & Community Services (JFCS), Josh Gibson Foundation, Latino Community Center, United Way, Tzu Chi Foundation, Youth Advocate Programs (YAP)

HISTORY

- Founded in 1996 and named in honor of the former South Hills High School on Mt. Washington (pictured on the next page: 1917 – 1986), South Hills Middle School occupies the former North House of John A. Brashear High School.



- The founding principal of South Hills Middle School was Mr. Bernard (B. J.) Komoroski.
- South Hill Middle School was established by decree of the Board of Public Education of the School District of Pittsburgh in April of 1996. The aforementioned decree favored neighborhood schools, which resulted in extensive redistricting of school feeder patterns, re-establishment of neighborhood schools, and creation of new neighborhood schools throughout the Pittsburgh Public Schools. Concurrent with this, the then governor signed into law a bill that both endorsed and allowed for expansion of neighborhood public schools across the Commonwealth. Subsequently, South Hills Middle School was established and opened in time for the 1996-1997 school year.
- Originally, South Hills Middle School served students in grades 6, 7, and 8 residing in the Banksville, Beechview, and Brookline neighborhoods of the South Hills of Pittsburgh.
- Over the years, South Hills's feeder pattern has expanded to include a more extensive section of the South Hills and portions of the West End.
- For well over 25 years (longer than the existence of the former Brashear High School North House), South Hills has strived to provide students with the highest quality full-service education possible in a safe and welcoming environment. Excellence defines the tradition that is South Hills Middle School.

MOTTOS

- We treat everyone with dignity and respect.
- Bridging the gap and leading the Husky Pack, we are South Hills!

COLORS

Teal, Orange, & Black

MASCOT

The Husky

SCHOOL MISSION AND VISION

MISSION: We at South Hills Middle School have come together to provide the following: world class educational opportunities where students develop high levels of academic, artistic, physical, and interpersonal skills in a safe and motivational space; to consistently use effective instructional strategies that meet needs of all learners; to use data to meet the needs of all students to ensure students are moving toward statewide standards; to teach and inspire students to reach their full potential.

VISION: South Hills Middle School will (SHMS) will maximize the number of students who are life ready and prepared for high school. SHMS will prepare its students for high school, post-secondary opportunities, and the workforce. The educational program will focus on developing whole students in a rigorous learning environment that meets their social, emotional, and intellectual needs.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

South Hills Middle School prioritizes prompt and purposeful communications for keeping stakeholders informed of events, functions, operations, and student progress. By utilizing multiple channels of communications via electronic and in-person means, the school ensures that its stakeholders—especially parents/guardians—are knowledgeable of all things South Hills. Please note the following communications methods utilized by the school:

- Telecommunications: Telephone calls, text messages relayed via Talking Points, automated phone messages via Blackboard Connect;
- District email;
- The U.S. Postal Service: regular and certified (hardcopy) mail/
- Social media: The South Hills Middle School Facebook page: [South Hills MS Facebook page](#);
- District-based communications/education platforms: Schoology and Board email;
- The school's homepage: [South Hills 6-8 \(pghschools.org\)](#);
- In-person meetings/events (i.e., Back to School Night, PSCC/Title 1 meetings, etc.);
- Triennial family newsletters disseminated via Talking Points;
- Communications disseminated by the district—school closings, school news, and district news.

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

School district:	School District of Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh Public Schools)
School building:	South Hills Middle School (South Hills 6-8)
Address:	595 Crane Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216
Telephone switchboard:	412.529.8130
Fax number:	412.572.8148
District website:	www.pghschools.org
South Hills Middle School homepage:	South Hills 6-8 (pghschools.org)
South Hills Middle School Facebook page:	South Hills MS Facebook page

General Departments

Activities and Athletics:	Ms. Lenora Whitman 412.529.8144 lwittman1@pghschools.org
Building Administration:	Dr. Robert E. Frioni 412.529.8135 rfrioni1@pghschools.org
Cafeteria:	TBD 412.529.8131 email
Library:	Mr. Terrence Monroe 412.529.2436 tmonroe1@pghschools.org
Maintenance:	Mr. Donald Rosenfeld 412.529.7369 drosenfeld1@pghschools.org
Main Office (Clerical):	Ms. S. Wesolowski 412.529.8131 swesolowski1@pghschools.org
PSE (Special Ed) Program Officer:	Ms. Kimberly Zangrilli number kzangrilli1@pghschools.org
School Nurse:	Ms. Jennifer Herrmann 412.529.8142 jherrmann1@pghschools.org
Security Guard:	Ms. Lawanda Hairston 412.571.8136 lhairston1@pghschools.org
St. Data Specialist/Registrar:	Ms. Denise Craig-Lewis 412.529.8133 dcraiglewis1@pghschools.org
Student Services Assistant:	Ms. Adriane Dudley 412.529.8137 adudley1@pghschools.org
St. Services – School Counselor:	Ms. Joanne Concannon 412.529.8147 jconcannon1@pghschools.org

Content Department & Grade-level Team Leaders

English as a Second Language	Ms. Dana Reitz dreitz1@pghschools.org
English Language Arts (Communications):	Mr. Martin Waters mwaters1@pghschools.org
Mathematics:	Ms. Jennifer Plumb jplumb1@pghschools.org
PSE (Special Education):	Mr. Richard Ricci rricci1@pghschools.org
Related Arts	Mr. Carey White cwhite1@pghschools.org
Science	Ms. Ginger Sisak gsisak1@pghschools.org
Social Studies	Mr. P. Maurice Williams pwilliams1@pghschools.org
Student Services	Ms. Joanne Concannon jconcannon1@pghschools.org
6 th & 7 th Grade Team:	Mr. Sean Mascellino smascellino1@pghschools.org
6 th & 8 th Grade Team:	Ms. Christina Scarpaci cscarpaci1@pghschools.org

Note: All staff email addresses are available at <http://discoverpps.org/southhills/staff>; course syllabi disclose teacher contact information, including Board email addresses and telephone numbers.

BELL SCHEDULES

Brashear High School | South Hills Middle School Bell Schedule: Standard

<u>Student Entry</u> *Warning bell: 7:35*	7:10 -7:35
<u>Homeroom</u> *Late bell: 7:40*	7:40-7:51
<u>Period 1</u>	7:55-8:36
<u>Period 2</u>	8:40-9:21
<u>Period 3</u>	9:25-10:06
<u>Period 4</u>	10:10-10:51
<u>Period 5</u> 1 ST LUNCH & RECESS	10:55-11:36
<u>Period 6</u> 2 ND LUNCH & RECESS	11:40-12:21
<u>Period 7</u> 3 RD LUNCH & RECESS	12:25- 1:06
<u>Period 8</u>	1:10-1:51
<u>Period 9</u> *Dismissal: 2:40*	1:55-2:40

All instructional periods are 41 minutes long, except Period 9, which is 45 minutes.

Brashear High School | South Hills Middle School
Bell Schedule: 2-Hour Delay

<u>Student Entry</u> *Warning bell: 9:35*	9:10 -9:35
<u>Homeroom</u> *Late bell: 9:40*	9:40-9:48
<u>Period 1</u>	9:52-10:20
<u>Period 2</u>	10:24-10:52
<u>Period 3</u>	10:56-11:24
<u>Period 4</u>	11:28-11:56
<u>Period 5</u> 1 ST LUNCH & RECESS	12:00-12:28
<u>Period 6</u> 2 ND LUNCH & RECESS	12:32-1:00
<u>Period 7</u> 3 RD LUNCH & RECESS	1:04-1:32
<u>Period 8</u>	1:36-2:04
<u>Period 9</u> *Dismissal: 2:40*	2:08-2:40

All instructional periods are 28 minutes long, except Period 9, which is 32 minutes.

Brashear High School | South Hills Middle School
Bell Schedule: Half Day

<u>Student Entry</u> *Warning bell: 7:35*	7:10-7:35
<u>Homeroom</u> *Late bell: 7:40*	7:40-7:48
<u>Period 1</u>	7:52-8:10
<u>Period 2</u>	8:14-8:32
<u>Period 3</u>	8:36-8:54
<u>Period 4</u>	8:58-9:16
<u>Period 5</u> 1 ST RECESS	9:20-9:38
<u>Period 6</u> 2 ND RECESS	9:42-10:00
<u>Period 7</u> 3 RD RECESS	10:04-10:22
<u>Period 8</u>	10:26-10:44
<u>Period 9</u> *Dismissal: 11:10*	10:48-11:10

All instructional periods are 18 minutes long, except Period 9, which is 22 minutes.

2024–2025 District Calendar

Commencing August 26, 2024 and concluding June 10, 2025



August 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

October 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

November 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

January 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

March 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

April 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

June 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

July 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Calendar Key (All dates may be subject to change.)

- First/Last Days of School
- Professional Development Days
- All PPS Employee Holidays
- School Only Vacation Days
- Clerical Days
- Parent-Teacher Conference Days
PreK-5, PreK-8, 6-8
Monday, October 14, 2024
6-12, High School, Special,
EHS- Friday, October 18, 2024
- School Board Meetings
- Quarter Interim Progress Report
- Report Card Distribution
- High School Graduation
- Snow Make-Up Days: TBD
- Pay Date: 12-Month Semimonthly
- Pay Date: Bi-weekly
- ▲ Pay Date: Non-Administrator Semimonthly

The Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender (including gender identity or expression), sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or disability in its programs, activities or employment and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries may be directed to the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Title IX Coordinator or the Section 504/ADA Title IX Coordinator at 341 S. Bellfield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, 412-329-3950, TitleIXCoordinator@ppschools.org or 412-329-HELP (4357).

PARENT SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL (PSCC)

South Hills Middle School is committed to helping parents and families become full partners in their children’s educational experience through a variety of opportunities created collaboratively with the parents and the school. We have an actively engaged Parent School Community Council (P.S.C.C.), that meets monthly. Meetings may be facilitated onsite at South Hills, offsite at various neighborhood venues, and virtually. The school’s Family and Community Engagement Coordinator (or FACE Coordinator) serves as the liaison between school and parents/guardians via P.S.C.C. Note: Title 1 is always a central theme at all P.S.C.C. meetings.

PSCC 2024-25 Meeting Dates & Times

Subject to Change

August/September:	Thursday, August 22, 2024: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM [Back to School Night]
October:	Monday, October 21, 2024: Starting @ 6:00 PM
November:	Monday, November 18, 2024: Starting @ 5:30 PM
December:	Monday, December 16, 2024: Starting @ 5:00 PM
January:	Monday, January 13, 2025: Starting @ 4:30 PM
February:	Monday, February 10, 2025: Starting @ 6:00 PM
March:	Monday, March 10, 2025: Starting @ 4:30 PM
April:	Monday, April 21, 2025: Starting @5:00 PM
May/June:	Thursday, May 22, 2025: 5:30 PM – 8:00 PM [International Night]

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

[PPS Policy 204](#)

Class attendance and participation are necessary for achieving curriculum objectives. However, a student should not receive a failing grade for any of the situations listed in the Code of Student Conduct, so long as they make up all the missed assignments.

Attendance-Related Procedures

- **Parents must submit excuses for absences within three days. If a note is not submitted, the absence becomes permanently unlawful.** The school district will upload a “Notice of Unlawful Absence” letter after the first and second unexcused absence in HAC. An unexcused absence would be considered an absence in which a student did not submit a note from home within three days.
- If a student has a third unexcused absence, parents receive via mail the “Notice of Unlawful Absence” letter and a warning that they may be liable in court without further notice from the school.
- A fourth unlawful/unexcused absence (a note has not been submitted within three days) will result in a citation issued by the District Magistrate in which students will have to appear in court and face a possible fine of \$300. Other consequences could occur which will be determined by the court.
- A maximum of ten (10) days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification shall be permitted during the school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days shall require an excuse from a licensed practitioner of the healing arts.

- Students planning educational trips/travel must submit a note to the principal two (2) weeks before travel. The note should include dates of travel and reasons for travel. All travel requests require approval by the school principal. Absences due to travel will be included in the ten (10) days of lawful cumulative absences for the school year.

Helpful Hints for Parents Regarding Attendance

- An unexcused absence is an absence in which a student has not submitted a note from home, doctor, hospital, funeral home, religious organization, or court within three days. The absence remains unexcused forever.
- An excused absence is an absence in which a student has submitted a note to their homeroom teacher from a parent/guardian, doctor, hospital, funeral home, religious organization, or court within three days of the absence.
- **If the student has more than 10 days absent within the school year, only doctor's notes will be allowed for any additional absences, and are required to be turned in within three days of the absence.**

Tardiness: Prompt arrival at school is expected of all students. Students should be in homeroom by 7:40 AM. Those reporting after 7:40 AM should report to the Main Office and will be given an admission slip. If students do not obtain an admission slip, they will be marked absent. A note must accompany late students. Excessive tardiness will not be tolerated and may result in the student's referral to the school counselor. Students with excessive tardies will receive a letter from the school and should the student continue, they will be referred to the magistrate for attendance violations.

ACADEMICS

South Hills is a comprehensive middle school that offers academic courses in the following core content areas: English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. It also affords students experiential electives and related arts courses, which further support the development of whole students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

[PPS POLICY 226](#)

The Board adopts a system-wide policy to promote academic integrity and will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating during examinations or on lab, homework and other assignments; plagiarism; pre-exam access to test forms; and unauthorized use of aids during examinations and assignments. A student shall not engage in, participate in, nor knowingly provide another student with the opportunity to engage in academic dishonesty related to examinations, as well as laboratory, homework and other projects and assignments, whether done during or outside of school hours. Academic dishonesty shall include, but not be limited to, all forms of cheating, plagiarism, pre-exam access to test forms, representing someone else's work as your own, and the unauthorized use of aids during examinations, projects and assignments. South Hills will work with students and families to

provide education around the internet, AI and other forms of support students may use to support their learning.

DRESS CODE

PPS POLICY 221

South Hills students are expected to abide by the school's dress code, noted below:

- No headgear (i.e., hats and hoods), excluding cultural garments and partial scarfs;
- No hoods worn over heads at any time, while in the building;
- No hip-hugger pants and skirts;
- No open-side or thin strap (less than one-inch wide) tank tops;
- No halter tops;
- No suggestive or obscene images, sayings, gang- related slogans, and violent depictions;
- No short shorts and short skirts—defined as less than within fingertip range when one's arms are fully extended to the sides;
- No spandex clothing;
- No cut-off or shredded pants/shorts that expose skin above one's fingertips when arms are fully extended to the sides;
- No belly shirts & low-cut tops;
- No strapless or spaghetti strap tops or dresses;
- No transparent or see-through clothing;
- No exposed underwear—pants must be pulled up to the waist;
- No slipper or open-back footwear (straps must be used on clogs);
- No chain wallets or spiked jewelry.

All jackets and coats are to be placed in lockers prior to the beginning of each day. School administrators retain the authority to determine acceptable dress and consequences for non-compliance in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. Parents/Guardians may be contacted to provide a change of clothes. Students will not attend class while in violation of the dress code. Note: Administration will disclose modifications to the school's dress code that occur during a school year, when such changes happen.

OTHER DRESS CODE ITEMS:

Promotion Ceremony Attire & Conduct

Proper attire: Dress shirts, dress slacks (or skirts/dresses) and dress shoes must be worn at the 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony. Prohibited attire: Shorts (any length), athletic tank tops, flip-flops, skirts/dresses more than two (2) inches above the knee, strapless sandals, and strapless clogs. Other items may be added at administrative discretion. Non-compliance may result in the loss of the privilege of participating in the promotion ceremony.

Important Note – Caps and Gowns: For years in which caps and gowns are available, students will be required to wear them, otherwise, be excluded from 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony. Caps and gowns are preferred for this ceremony. If administration elects to use caps and gowns for the ceremony, appropriate footwear (as noted above) will be strictly enforced.

Dance/Social Attire & Conduct

- All provisions of the Code of Student Conduct and local school rules are enforced.
- Attire, dress, etc. determined per established themes and protocols.
- Non-compliance, including cost for inappropriate clothing, will not be financially compensated and may result in one's dismissal from the event.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

[PPS POLICY 216](#)

CELLULAR/SMART PHONES & DEVICES

As authorized by District Policy 216, South Hills Middle School collects cell phones and other smart electronic devices from students upon them entering the building. Students are prohibited from possessing and using all types of personal electronic devices (i.e., cell phones, earbuds, headphones, MP3 players, Apple watches, etc.) during standard school hours and during other school functions that are under the school's command, including, but not limited to detention hall, after-school tutoring/programming, sports practices, etc. Violations of this rule will be addressed and may result in disciplinary action.

DEVICE COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Device collections will begin on the first day of school and conclude on the last day of school. Students shall relinquish their devices upon entering the school. The school collects all electronic devices/cell phones upon entering the school and returns them during the final class session of the day. Students who refuse to comply with this provision will incur discipline, up to and including suspension.

Students are unauthorized to possess and use cellular phones/devices, excluding district-issued devices, from 7:10 AM – 2:40 PM, during detention hall from 2:40 PM – 3:45 PM, during after-school tutoring/programming, during athletic games/practices, and during all other functions associated by the school at the discretion of administration.

EXTRACURRICULAR OFFERINGS

[PPS Policy 119](#)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

South Hills affords students school engagement opportunities beyond standard academics via an array of extracurricular activities designed to enhance educational experiences. Activities include, but are not limited to, Student Council, Student Envoys, National Junior Honor Society, Vocal Ensemble, Orchestra, the Gay Straight Alliance, and more to come.

SPORTS

South Hills facilitates a variety of sports during different seasons throughout the school year. Feel free to contact the school's athletic director for more information about South Hills' interscholastic athletic program: Ms. Lee Wittman: 412.529.8144 | lwittman1@pghschools.org. Also, feel free to contact any of our coaches, listed below, for details about any particular sports.

<u>SEASON</u>	<u>SPORT</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>HEAD COACH</u>	<u>EMAIL</u>
Fall	Cross County	Co-ed	Brian Calcagno	bcalcagno1@pghschools.org
Fall	Flag Football	Co-ed	George Mochan	gmochan1@pghschools.org
Fall	Volleyball	Boys	Sean Burke	sburke1@pghschools.org
Fall	Volleyball	Girls	Mark (Duke) McMahon	mmcmahon1@pghschools.org
Winter	Basketball	Boys	Mark Mellix	mmellix1@pghschools.org
Winter	Basketball	Girls	Brian Calcagno	bcalcagno1@pghschools.org
Winter	Swimming	Boys	George Mochan	gmochan1@pghschools.org
Winter	Swimming	Girls	Brian Mannas	bmannas1@pghschools.org
Spring	Soccer	Boys	Brian Calcagno	bcalcagno1@pghschools.org
Spring	Soccer	Girls	Zakaria El Yadari	zelyadari1@pghschools.org
Spring	Wrestling	Co-ed	George Mochan	gmochan1@pghschools.org

SPORTS ELIGIBILITY

Any student who has an interest in sports may participate in the sports program. To be eligible:

- A physician must certify that the student is able to take part in the chosen sport before the first practice;
- A parent permission slip must be signed;
- Compliance with the school district’s academic and attendance standards.

Participation in athletic/extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right, which may be restricted or withheld per administrative discretion in alignment with applicable district and/or school policies.

GRADING

[PPS Policy 209](#)

Student Services in tandem with the principal oversees the grading system of South Hills Middle School in accordance with policies established by the Board of Public Education of the School District of Pittsburgh.

Parents and students can monitor grades by accessing HAC (Home Access Center). If you need to obtain your login credentials, please contact the school to speak with our SDSS, who will provide you with the necessary information and walk you through the process if needed. Please monitor grades and communicate accordingly with your child’s teachers.

KEY TERMS:

- Interim Dates: Midpoint of each quarter marking period
- Report Card Dates: Refer to the district calendar.

Grading Guidelines:

A standard procedure for grading was established and implemented throughout the district in grades 1-5 and 6-12. The following guidelines provide a consistent method for measuring student achievement in every classroom using the same grading practices. The grades are based on performance in three categories: weekly assessments, unit assessments and assignments. Whenever students learn new

material, they go through a period of time when they will probably make mistakes during the learning process.

The purpose of practice assignments is not to evaluate where a student is in the learning process, but to diagnose any problems and to provide assistance when needed. Assignments can consist of many different types of informal assessments/practice, including quizzes, worksheets, and practice book pages. After students have initial instruction and practice on a topic, strategy, or skill, it is important to determine their mastery of the information and skills. The purpose of weekly and unit assessments is to evaluate how well a student can apply the learning of the information/skills/strategies.

Each nine-week period (quarter), parents/guardians will receive a report card that reflects nine weeks of performance in practice (assignments) and achievement (weekly and unit assessments) of the academic content.

Grading Scale

Percent Earned	Letter Grade	Grade Points
90% or above	A	4.0
80-89%	B	3.0
70-79%	C	2.0
60-69%	D	1.0
59% or below	E	0.0

GPA Conversion

Pittsburgh Public Schools converts letter grades into grade points using a Grade Point Conversion Chart.

Grade	Percent	Regular Weight	SP Weight/ IBMYP	AP/CAS/IB
A	90-100	4.0	4.5	5.0
B	80 – 89	3.0	3.5	4.0
C	70 – 79	2.0	2.5	3.0
D	60 – 69	1.0	1.5	2.0
E	59 or below	0.0	0.0	0.0

To calculate GPA, the letter grades are converted into grade points. Those grade points are multiplied by the amount of credit that each class is worth. The grade points are multiplied by the credits, the result is the number of grade points earned. Then the grade points earned are added together and divided by the number of credits that were attempted. The result is called the Grade Point Average or GPA.

Report Cards: Report cards are issued four (4) times per school year. Letter grades A, B, C, D and E are used to indicate academic progress. Citizenship marks of O for outstanding; S for satisfactory; and U for unsatisfactory are used to indicate classroom behavior. The first three (3) report cards are sent home with students. The fourth and final report card is mailed home within three weeks of the last day of school. If you suspect an error on a report card, please contact the school.

Semester (Final) Exams: Unlike PPS high schools, PPS middle schools do not administer comprehensive final exams. Exceptions to this may occur when middle-level students take high-school level courses in a high school setting.

Course Averages: Final course averages, which are indicated on transcripts, are calculated at year's end for one (1) credit courses and at semester's end for half (.5) credit courses. Course averages are the mathematical mean of the total number of marking-period grades per course: 4 quarters for one (1) credit courses and two (2) 9-week marking periods for half (.5) courses.

Citizenship Marks: An evaluation of conduct/behavior, citizenship marks are represented by the letters **O for outstanding; S for satisfactory; and U for unsatisfactory**. Citizenship marks are issued each marking period for all courses of enrollment. Citizenship final averages are not calculated.

Interim (Progress) Reports: Communication between teachers and parents is absolutely critical, and keeping parents informed of their child's performance is accomplished in many ways. One of these ways is the use of Interim Progress Reports. At the mid-point of each of the four grading periods, teachers will evaluate student progress. If a child is not working to his or her potential, a progress report is mailed home. If a student's grade is at risk of dropping two letter grades from the previous grading period, a report is also sent home to inform parents. A conference can be arranged in order to determine the best way to help a child before marks are closed for a particular grading period.

Grading:

- Students with a GPA of 3.00 to 3.49 earn Honor Roll status.
- Students with a GPA of 3.5 to 4.00 achieve High Honor Roll.
- Both Honor and High Honor Roll students will receive a certificate and be recognized.

Additionally, students who demonstrate respectful and responsible behavior can earn Citizenship Honor Roll. Pittsburgh Public Schools aims to produce outstanding citizens, and those who achieve top marks in citizenship will be recognized.

Make-up Work Procedures: Missed work can be given to students no matter the reason. Parents of students who miss school for an extended period should call their counselor to obtain assignments. Students who will be away from school for an approved reason should obtain assignments from their teachers before they leave. All assignments should be completed and turned in on the day you return to school. Responsibility for requesting and obtaining make-up work resides with the student and parents. Students who fail to request and complete make-up assignments must accept the consequence. Note: Most missed assignments are available on individual course Schoology pages.

HOMework PROCEDURES

[PPS Policy 115](#)

Homework should build on classroom work and should encourage and measure the development of self-discipline and associated good work habits in students. Pittsburgh Public Schools reaffirms the importance of assignment and completion of homework as an integral part of the school experience.

Meaningful homework assignments assigned systematically provide additional time for learning which contributes toward student academic growth. Homework should build on classroom work and should encourage and measure the development of self-discipline and associated good work habits in students. Completing homework also develops student responsibility and promotes cooperation and family relationships with the school. Students complete homework to:

- Reinforce learning through practice, application, integration and /or extension of knowledge and skills.
- Develop study skills, work habits, and a sense of personal responsibility so that the student may become an independent learner.
- Foster students' personal development in areas such as time management, responsibility, perseverance, and self-confidence.
- Stimulate imagination, originality, and creativity.
- Enhance home / school communications and provide increased curriculum understanding.
- Encourage a follow up of worthwhile school activities into permanent leisure interests.
- Involve families in the learning process of their children.

Students should anticipate their homework being assigned to them regularly, as defined by their teachers. Individual teachers establish protocols for assigning and correcting homework. Homework is an assessment bound by district policies and, therefore, must be completed in accordance with the district's Academic Integrity Policy (226). If graded, homework is subject to provisions outlined in District Policy 209: Grading and Reporting of Student Progress [\[link\]](#).

HEALTH SERVICES

[PPS Policy 206](#)

A certified registered nurse practitioner (CRNP) is available to students. The role of the CRNP is holistic and offers expanded student health services in addition to the Pennsylvania School Code of required mandates. The CRNP's office is in the Main Office on the first floor.

In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the school nurse or a member of the school staff. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted.

Remember, an emergency telephone number where parents/guardians can be reached, and the name and telephone number of the student's family doctor must be on file at the school. Please return the Emergency Care Form provided to you to the Main Office. Also, if any information changes throughout the

school year please notify the front office at 412.529.3535.

If a student must bring medication to school, the following requirements must be met:

- Must carry a prescription label with the child's name, drug identity, dosage instructions, doctor's name, and prescription date.
- The prescription must be current.
- A note dated and signed by the parent and doctor giving the child's name, dosage amounts, specific dosage times, and other instructions if necessary.
- Medication must be left in the office and given by the school nurse or authorized school personnel in the nurse's absence. The only medication students are permitted to carry in school is an asthma inhaler. However, the office must have a prescription for the inhaler on file.
- Medications such as antacids, pain relievers, cough drops, etc. are on hand and can be supplied by the school. However, only the school nurse assigned here daily can only dispense these medications. In addition, parents must indicate on the Emergency Care Form if these medications can be dispensed to their child. Therefore, if your child is susceptible to upset stomach, headache, or cramps, we suggest that you send these medications to school following the above regulations.

Field Trips, Sports, and Other Activities Away from the School Building

Administration of medication on field trips, sports activities or competitions, or other school-related activities away from the school building shall be in accordance with this policy. If the school nurse is absent or unavailable, a substitute nurse or other licensed healthcare professional shall be assigned when administration of medications is required to comply with state or federal law or regulations.

Please refer to PPS Policy 206 for more details: [PPS Policy 206](#).

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

[PPS POLICY 813.1](#)

South Hills issues laptop computers with chargers to all its students. Students must comply with all rules, regulations and policies outlined in the District's Acceptable Use Technology Policy, as well as the Code of Student Conduct pertinent to information technology. All policies in the district's Acceptable Use of Technology Policies also apply to students' laptop computer and Internet usage, regardless of whether students use school laptops or technology at home, school, or elsewhere. Noncompliance with the district's Acceptable Use of Technology Policy and subsequent rules—both district and school—associated with information technology as denoted in the Code of Student Conduct may result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspensions and device restrictions.

Information Tech Rules - District:

- Do not change the local configuration of the desktop, laptop or tablet.
- Do not deface or change the physical appearance of any district device.
- Do not use any logon and password other than your User Account
- Users are not allowed to do the following unless given permission by an administrator:

- Store and/or install files on the laptop including Freeware, shareware, public domain, or any other software;
- Install and / or play personal music, videos, or games;
- Use unauthorized programs installed on the laptop.
- Report any damage – accidental or not, immediately.
- Do not attempt to bypass PPS security or content filtering at any time.
- Do not consume food or drink near or on devices.

Additional rules – School:

- **Do not leave laptop devices at school; bring them to and from school in case of school cancellations, absences, etc.**
- Students are to use their own District-issued devices only, while in school.
- Handle school-issued computers/laptops properly and with respect, for it is the school property.
- Use computers/laptop devices appropriately in accordance with District policy.
- Never change any computer settings (desktop, screen saver, etc.).
- Remember to save work to public folders, flash drive, and/or Google drive account.
- Charging personal cell phones on district-owned computers/laptops is prohibited, unless authorized by staff.
- Use of personal hygiene items (lotions, brushes, etc.) near District-owned computers/devices is prohibited.
- Visit only approved and appropriate internet sites only – violent and pornographic sites are prohibited.
- Do not deface and vandalize District-owned computer/laptop devices.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The mission of the Student Services Department is to provide a comprehensive program that addresses the lifelong development of the social/emotional, academic and career growth of each pupil. It assures equal access and equity to all students by providing them with the skills and tools necessary to succeed in life and to become productive members of society. Pupils may access the Student Services office via staff permission and/or a valid hall pass.

STAFF AND SERVICES:

School Counselor: The school counselor helps students address their academic, emotional, personal, and social needs. Services provided include, but not limited to, general guidance, individual/group counseling, crisis counseling, home/school communications, student scheduling, student records/transcripts maintenance, career/post-secondary exploration, and restorative practice. The school counselor may also address lower-level disciplinary infractions.

School Social Worker: The school social worker helps students with their social, emotional, and personal needs, so that they can get the most from school. The social worker also helps students and families maintain good attendance, as well. Services provided include, but are not limited to, individual/group counseling, connecting at-risk youth with helpful resources, attendance improvement, and home visits. The school social worker also leads the Student Assistance Program (SAP).

Student Services Assistant: The student services assistant works with the principal, school counselor, and social worker to ensure that students receive the support they need to be successful. The student services assistant also regularly monitors student behaviors, addresses lower-level disciplinary infractions, conducts mediation/restorative practice circles, and coordinates functions with the school's PBIS and Discipline committees.

KEY STUDENT SERVICES PROGRAMS:

Student Assistance Program (SAP): The primary goal of the Student Assistance Program is to help students overcome these barriers so that they may achieve, advance, and remain in school. Services provided include in-school support groups, in-school therapy, mentoring, the peer helper program, teen parent advocate services, mental health evaluations, and drug and alcohol evaluations. Various community agencies come into the school to provide many of these services to the students. Please feel free to contact the school social worker or school counselor for more information.

Positive Behavior Interventions & Support (PBIS): The school's PBIS program provides students incentives for being the best they can be while in school. PBIS include, but are not limited to the following:

- engaging and rigorous instruction;
- mentoring;
- assemblies;
- class meetings, activities, classroom store options;
- student PBIS Rewards prizes/gifts and activities;
- a Student Services department focused on whole learners;
- a highly involved and vested SAP Core Team;
- MTSS;
- access to the PBIS Lounge.

MTSS: The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a framework that helps schools identify students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional strengths and challenges and provide differentiated support for students based on their needs. South Hills' Student Services staff reaches out to children who need help in a variety of ways to meet their needs, so that they may excel at school. The supports vary, based on their tiers of needed support.

Homelessness – Education of Children and Youth Experience Homelessness (ECYEH): The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act was established in 1987 and amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. The Act defines the term "homeless children and youths" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night time residence.

The federal mandate ensures that homeless children and youth have access to the same free and appropriate public education as other children. Children who are homeless may qualify for assistance with school lunch, school supplies, tutoring and transportation so that they can remain in their school of origin.

If you believe that your child may qualify for this service, please contact Lisa Arnett, McKinney Vento Program Assistant: (412) 529-5889.

Additional information regarding ECYEH: <https://www.pghschools.org/Page/5130>

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/PROCEDURES

[Policy 212](#) | [Code of Student Conduct](#)

South Hills Middle School upholds the Pittsburgh Public Schools' *6-12 Code of Student Conduct* in its entirety in addition to school-specific (or local) rules and regulations governing South Hills Middle School. The *6-12 Code of Student Conduct* may be accessed via the following link: [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Administration has the authority and responsibility to maintain discipline and order in the school and on school grounds. Teachers have the authority and responsibility to maintain discipline and order in classrooms and all other areas of the building. All adults in the school—the South Hills team—enforce the Code of Student Conduct with fidelity for the mutual benefit of students and educators.

School discipline policies are established and enforced. When a student is having a problem, the teacher may conference with the student, conference with the parent, use classroom disciplinary procedures, or refer the situation directly to an administrator. Instructional Team Leaders and the Student Services Department assist the principal with discipline. We will work together to ensure consistent and fair consequences for behaviors. The school and home must work together to ensure that children learn in a safe, orderly, and intellectually stimulating environment.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

South Hills is committed to using restorative practices as both a means for correcting negative behaviors and restoring positive relationships. Key components of restorative practices include the following:

- Acknowledging that relationships are central to community building
- Focusing on the harm done rather than only rule breaking
- Creating systems that address misbehavior and harm in a way that strengthens relationships
- Giving voice to the person harmed
- Engaging in collaborative problem solving
- Empowering change and growth
- Enhancing responsibility.

When feasible, South Hills administration and staff use restorative practices for addressing conduct violations.

SOUTH HILLS PAWS – SOUTH HILLS' MAIN PBIS INCENTIVE SYSTEM

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework that helps schools create a positive learning environment for students by defining, teaching, and acknowledging appropriate behaviors, while correcting inappropriate ones. PBIS is based on evidence and can be used in many educational settings, including K-12 schools. PBIS motivates students to do their best through incentives. The PAWS matrix—illustrated below—frames South Hills' PBIS system. PAWS stands for the following:

- **Polite**
- **Accountable**
- **Wise**
- **Safe**

Voice levels:

0 – Silent



1 - Whisper










2 - A normal voice



3 - An outside voice



	Arrival & Dismissal 	Classroom 	Bathroom 	Hallways 	Cafeteria 	Recess 	Bus 
P olite	Say "please", "thank you", and "excuse me". Treat and speak to others with dignity and respect. Refrain from using inappropriate language.	Say "please", "thank you", and "excuse me". Treat and speak to others with dignity and respect. Refrain from using inappropriate language.	Say "please", "thank you", and "excuse me". Respect privacy. Refrain from using inappropriate language. Refrain from vandalism.	Say "please", "thank you", and "excuse me". Treat and speak to others with dignity and respect. Refrain from using inappropriate language.	Say "please", "thank you", and "excuse me". Treat and speak to others with dignity and respect. Refrain from using inappropriate language.	Say "please", "thank you", and "excuse me". Treat and speak to others with dignity and respect. Refrain from using inappropriate language.	Say "please", "thank you", and "excuse me". Treat and speak to others with dignity and respect. Refrain from using inappropriate language.
A ccountable	Place Cell phone in the folder when entering the building. Unzip our bookbag before entering the metal detector. Report directly to and stay in the designated area before and after breakfast.	Listen while others are speaking. Follow adult directions and classroom rituals/routines. Work on the assigned task. Participate in classroom discussions.	Ask for permission to leave classroom. Flush the toilet. Wash our hands with soap and water. Keep the bathroom clean. Refrain from vandalism.	Keep the hallways clean. Follow adult directions. Go directly to our destination by taking the shortest route. Have a pass from an adult.	Keep our voice levels at 1 to 2. Follow adult directions. Wait our turn in the school lunch line. Clean up after ourselves.	Follow adult directions. Remain in our designated recess area. Properly use and return recess equipment.	Quietly enter, ride, and exit the bus. Follow the driver's directions. Enter and exit the bus in a calm and orderly fashion.
W ise	Come to school in appropriate attire. Come to class on time, prepared with all materials. Ask questions if unsure.	Come to class prepared with all materials required (including homework). Keep any personal items in our locker or at home. (Hats, gloves, scarves, jackets etc.) Follow the 10/10 rule. Ask questions if unsure.	Return to class quickly and ready to learn. Follow the 10/10 rule. Refrain from vandalism.	Only visit locker during designated times. Follow the 10/10 rule. Ask questions if unsure. Return to class quickly and ready to learn.	Remain in our seat and raise our hand if you need help. When lunch time is over, be ready to learn. Ask questions if unsure.	Help others that need assistance. When recess is over, enter the building quietly and be ready to learn. Ask questions if unsure.	Upon school arrival, be ready to learn. Ask questions if unsure.
S afe	Keep our hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves. Keep our voice levels at 0 to 2. Follow adult directions. See something, say something.	Keep our hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves. Keep our voice levels at 0 to 2. See something, say something.	Keep our hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves. Keep our voice levels at 0 or 1. Refrain from vandalism. See something, say something.	Keep our hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves. Keep our voice levels at 0 to 1. Walk and keep to the right side of the hallway and follow the up/down directions on the stairs. See something, say something.	Keep our hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves. Enter and exit the cafeteria in an orderly fashion. See something, say something.	Keep our hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves. Walk to Recess through the main entrance in an orderly fashion. See something, say something.	Keep our hands, feet and unkind words to ourselves. Keep our voice levels at a 1 or 2. Sit it and remain in our assigned seats. See something, say something.

SOUTH HILLS–SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

South Hills enforces the Code of Student Conduct. The South Hills Team established the following list of South Hills-specific expectations to emphasize proper conduct in preparation for high school and the future beyond:

BULLYING: South Hills is a no-bullying zone. We believe that students should never experience bullying. We are committed to making sure that all students treat others with dignity and respect. This means no bullying is allowed. The school encourages students to report bullying to any adult in the building and to advocate for those who may experience it. Please click on the following link for more information about the district’s antibullying initiative: [Bullying Policy](#).

DISRUPTION OF SCHOOL: South Hills takes learning seriously. We cannot allow disruptive behaviors to interfere with teaching and learning. Students are to respect their teachers and classmates by not engaging in behaviors that take away from our teachers and students. Disruptions of school include, but are not limited to, breaking classroom rules, being defiant, excessive talking, ignoring teachers, and horseplay.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Sexual harassment is not allowed at South Hills. If anyone experiences or sees it, they are to report it to an adult immediately. Please click on the following link for more information about harassment: [Bullying/Harassment Policy](#).

TARDINESS:

Students are expected to arrive at school and class on time, so that they do not miss out on learning. Please note the different types of tardies and the corrections/interventions the school may use to address it:

Tardiness to school matrix:

- 1st Tardy: Warning
- 2nd Tardy: Warning with parent/guardian contact
- 3rd and subsequent offenses: As determined to be appropriate per administration

Tardiness to class matrix:

- 1st Tardy: Warning
- 2nd Tardy: Warning with parent/guardian contact
- 3rd and subsequent offenses: As determined to be appropriate per administration, faculty, or staff

VISITOR POLICY

PPS Policy 1004

Visitors can include parents, guardians, community members and others who are not members of the school staff. **Persons wishing to visit a school shall arrange in advance with the school office in that building.**

Scheduling an appointment:

- The school staff will do their best to approve, reschedule, or find a more appropriate time for your visit. We understand that there may be times when parents/guardians wish to meet with the principal and/or teachers without having scheduled an appointment in advance.
- While we will make every effort to accommodate these requests, we ask for your understanding if the timing makes it difficult to do so.
- When visiting the school, please be sure to stop by the Main Office to register and share the purpose of your visit. We're here to help and want to ensure your visit is as productive as possible.
- All visitors are required to receive and wear a visitor's badge. Upon completion of the visit, visitors are expected to sign-out and return the badge to the Main Office.

Reporting to the Main Office:

- School visitors shall be required to register at the school's Main Office and state the purpose of their visit.
- All visitors are required to receive and wear a visitor's badge.
- Upon completion of the visit, visitors are expected to sign-out and return the badge to the Main Office.

Types of visitations/observations:

1. Meeting to discuss school/student issues.
2. Parent/Guardian classroom visit.
3. Tutoring and volunteering

Guidelines:

1. Meetings/appointments should be scheduled at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the school principal or designee in the case of an emergency.
2. Visitations related to tutoring and volunteering are to be arranged beforehand with the teachers and require Act 34 (state police) and 151 (child abuse) clearances.
3. Visitations related to classroom observations do not require clearances. A school staff member should accompany to and from the classroom these visitors.
4. Observations of teachers must have an educational purpose.
5. Parents/guardians are to refrain from correcting or reprimanding another parent's child while visiting classrooms or attending school events.

Visitors' expectation of school staff:

During a School Visit It is expected that all visitors are made to feel welcome in the schools. The office staff is to greet each visitor and provide them with a sign-in sheet and a visitor's badge. They should be escorted or directed to their destination. They should also be acknowledged while walking in the halls by school staff and assisted when necessary. If school staff encounter an unfamiliar person in the school without a visitor's badge, they need to direct or escort them to the Main Office to secure a visitor's badge and then help in guiding them to their destination.

Audio, video recording or photographs:

No visitor shall be permitted to photograph, record audio, or videotape any person or any part of the building or to tape record any conversation or non-public meeting (i.e. parent teacher conferences, IEP meetings, etc.) or event without the express consent of the school principal and each individual meeting/conversation participant. Audio or video recording of individual meetings may be permitted if such recording is required to permit a person with a disability to meaningfully participate in the meeting.

Requests for accommodations should be directed to the school principal. This prohibition shall not apply to public meetings or work sessions of the Board or in any instance that would violate the Sunshine Act. With permission of the school principal or designee, visitors may be allowed to record or videotape school activities, i.e. assemblies and Commencement, for personal use only.

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 INFORMATION: SOUTH HILLS SPECIFIC

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Daily announcements regarding student events and basic school functions will be made at the Beginning of the day during homeroom and at the end of the day during dismissal. The announcement bulletin may be published daily to the school’s Facebook page (when necessary), so parents/families can always be knowledgeable of “what’s going on” at South Hills Middle School.

ARRIVAL RULES & PROCEDURES -- AM

- All students (bus riders, private transportation riders, and walkers) will enter at the Student Entrance in the front of the building between 7:10 AM and 7:35 (or until all busses have arrived and unloaded). After 7:35 (or completed bus arrival), students are to enter at the school’s Main Entrance in the back of the building.
- Upon entering campus or departing transportation, students are to report immediately to the building; loitering and/or wandering off to unauthorized areas of the campus is prohibited – including inside Brashear High School.
- Students are to behave and cooperate with in-take staff, which includes, but is not limited to, following directives, maintaining a reasonable noise level, preparing and politely presenting bags, purses, etc. to be inspected, and proceeding through metal detectors without issue.
- Items prohibited in school will be confiscated.
- Students who attempt entering the building with full beverage bottles will be directed either to discard them or to pour the content out.
- All school/district rules are enforced at morning intake. Violation thereof may result in disciplinary action.

ASSEMBLIES/ACTIVITY PERIODS

Sometimes, the school orchestrates assemblies for many purposes, including class meetings, entertainment, and formal functions. Students are to abide by and to be mindful of the following provisions when attending assemblies:

- All district and school rules and policies governing student behavior apply to assemblies and pep rallies.
- Proceed in an orderly manner as directed to the assembly.
- Any behavior that interferes in any way with the presentation of the assembly program will result in suspension of assembly privileges for the duration to be determined by the administration or any other consequences determined to be appropriate by the administration.

BRASHEAR HIGH SCHOOL (BHS)

South Hills students are prohibited from entering Brashear High School, except when enrolled in classes that meet at Brashear. Students are to follow classroom/school rules for entering the high school, which includes waiting in designated areas and being escorted by teachers.

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria is on the first floor. Breakfast and lunch are served daily. Students are to be polite, wait their turn in line, refrain from disruptive behavior, and leave their table clean by depositing their trays and waste into the trash containers. All food must be consumed in the cafeteria area. No food should be taken out of the cafeteria.

- All District policies and rules governing student behavior apply during breakfast and lunch periods.
- Students are not permitted to leave the cafeteria with food and/or drink in their possession except for a bottled water.
- Using another person's ID number.
- Students may access the patio area of the cafeteria, weather permitting.
- Clean up after yourself by discarding of trash in appropriate receptacles and returning trays and utensils to dishwashing room, if applicable.

CANCELLATIONS, DELAYS, & EARLY DISMISSALS

Occasionally, weather conditions and other circumstances may require cancellation of classes or a delayed start time. In the event of cancellations and 2-hour delays, announcements will be made over local television stations KDKA (channel 2), WPXI (channel 11) and WTAE (channel 4); local radio station KDKA (a.m. 1020); and via the school's/district's automated call/text system(s). When South Hills Middle School is operating on a 2-hour delay, students may not enter campus until 9:10 A.M. Early dismissals may happen on days when weather conditions become too hazardous to justify keeping students the full duration of the school day. Communications indicated above for cancellations and delays will be used in such instances.

CLOSING SCHOOL IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Sometimes it is necessary to close school when non-weather-related emergencies make it impossible to stay open (i.e., power failures, gas leaks, safety issues, etc.). If this should happen, please do not call the school. Announcements about this will be relayed via the school's/district's communication systems.

COURSE SYLLABI

Students will receive syllabi for all courses at the start of semesters. Course syllabi outline pertinent facts about classes including rules, procedures, content to be covered, and general expectations. All course syllabi will disclose teachers' Board email address and telephone numbers.

DAILY SCHEDULE

South Hills Middle School's standard hours of operation are 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM

- Regular School Days: Student arrival @ 7:10 AM and dismissal @ 2:40 PM
- Half Days: Student arrival @ 7:10 AM and dismissal at 11:10 AM
- 2-hour Delay Days: Student arrival at 9:10 AM and dismissal at 2:40 PM

DANCES, SOCIALS, & SPORTS EVENTS

We are excited to celebrate our school dances, socials, and sports events with you. These events are a wonderful opportunity for students to come together, have fun, and show school spirit. As we enjoy these special occasions, it is important to remember that all local and district rules apply. We expect everyone to maintain respectful behavior so that these events remain safe and enjoyable for all. Please note that any misconduct at these events may result in disciplinary action, including potential citations or charges. Let's make every event a positive and safe experience for all.

DISMISSAL RULES & PROCEDURES -- PM

- Bus riders will exit the building at the Student Entrance in the front of the building.
- Private transportation riders will exit the building at the school's Main Entrance in the back of the building.
- Walkers will exit the building at the school's Main Entrance in the back of the building.
- Students not participating in after-school functions are to report directly to their busses, report directly to their private transportation, or walk off the campus en route home.

EARLY DISMISSALS

All early dismissal requests notes must be turned into the Main Office before first period. The request note for an early dismissal must include:

- Reason for the early dismissal
- Time of the early dismissal
- Parent/Guardian signature
- Phone number at which the parent/guardian can be reached for verification of early dismissal
- Student's grade and homeroom.

All early dismissals must be verified by the Main Office, or the student may not be permitted to leave the school grounds until the regular dismissal time. The early dismissal sign-out sheet is at the Security desk.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency drills are conducted periodically, as per federal and state codes, to ensure preparedness in the event of potentially dangerous situations including, but not limited to, breaches in homeland security, fires, manmade disasters, natural disasters, and terrorism. In preparation for such events and during actual emergencies, student cooperation—inclusive of following all instructions from school personnel—is required. For fire drills, which occur monthly, students are to:

- be mindful of fire exits throughout the building.
- upon sounding of the fire horns, exit the building calmly, orderly, quickly, and quietly.
- hold the exit door open if you are the first to get to the exit. Close the door if you are the last one to reenter the building.

- move to the opposite side of all roadways away from the building. Stand with your class. Roll will be taken.

Pupils will return to the building only upon notification from an administrator, either through the PA or bell systems. No one is to remain in the building during fire drills. Students must go through security checks upon reentering the building (i.e., passing through metal detectors, etc.).

Closed periods: If necessary, administration may enact closed periods either temporarily or permanently. If a period is closed, it means that hallway movement is highly limited with hall passes issued for emergencies only.

I Love You Guys – Standard Response Protocol (SRP): This is the approved emergency response protocol for the Pittsburgh Public Schools. Students will be educated and drill on SRP in order to help keep them safe.

FIRE DRILLS

Consider all fire alarms as either a drill or emergency and proceed with evacuation of the building unless cancelled via the intercom. Every fire alarm must be treated as a potentially serious event.

- Be mindful of fire exits throughout the building.
- Upon sounding of the fire horns, exit the building calmly, orderly, quickly, and quietly.
- Hold the exit door open if you are the first to get to the exit. Close the door if you are the last one to reenter the building.
- Move to the opposite side of all roadways away from the building. Stand with your class. Roll will be taken.
- You are to return to the building only upon notification from an administrator. No one is to remain in the building during fire drills.
- All pupils will reenter the building through the red roof entrance or main entrance with their teacher and classmates.
- Once teachers are cleared to re-enter the building, they will report directly to their classrooms or assigned hall duties to assist with moving students back to classes.

Students and staff may return to the building only upon notification from an administrator, either through the PA or bell systems. No one is to remain in the building during fire drills. Students must go through security checks upon reentering the building (i.e., passing through metal detectors, etc.).

FIRE TOWERS

Fire towers are for emergency use only. Students are prohibited from using them, except in the event of emergencies and fire drills. Exceptions: 1st floor Fire Tower H for accessing the playground and other extenuating/rate circumstances approved by administrators.

FOOD AND DRINK

Food and drink are not to be consumed anywhere in the building during regular or extended schools hours, excluding the cafeteria during breakfast, lunch, and study hall periods. Consumption of food or drink by students in corridors and/or classrooms during school hours is prohibited and subject to disciplinary action. Exceptions to this provision may be made upon administrative approval and/or discretion or via physician's note. Students are permitted to carry and use water bottles during the school day, unless the principal revokes that privilege (individually or generally).

GRADE-LEVEL PROMOTION AND RETENTION

- Students who fail both Communications and Math ("E" averages) will be retained under most circumstances to their respective grade levels regardless of any other grades earned in different subjects.
- Students who fail either Communications or Math ("E" averages) along with "E" averages for the equivalent of two (2) credits of courses will be retained under most circumstances to their respective grade levels. For example, Pupil 1 earned a "C" in Communications, an "E" in Math, an "E" in Social Studies, an "E" in Art, an "E" in PE/Health, but passes all other classes. This scenario would equal that pupil being retained.

HALF DAYS – DISTRICT PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Eight (8) school days per year operate at half instructional days. Please refer to the district calendar found on the PPS website for those dates: [2024-2025 PPS District Calendar](#).

HALL PASSES

Students are prohibited from being in the hallways during class sessions and lunch periods without a hall pass. The only acceptable hall pass at South Hills Middle School is the official Pittsburgh Public Schools blue Corridor Pass (Code ELE-H-9 662704). Non-compliance with this provision or use of forged and/or fake hall passes will be considered a violation of the Code of Student Conduct, which may result in discipline.

HALL SWEEPS

To maintain a safe, orderly, and intellectual environment, administration may have to enact hall sweeps. The procedures for this are determined by the administration. The goal is to encourage students to be where they are supposed to be—in class and learning. Progressive measures, including conferences with the principal and other positive supports, may be utilized as part of a hall sweep.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

Any accident or illness must be immediately reported to the instructor or closest available staff member. The teacher will refer the student to the school nurse, who will evaluate the extent of the injury or illness. The student's parent/guardian or emergency contact person will be contacted if it is deemed necessary to transport a student to a healthcare professional or hospital.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

- Bound by the Code of Student Conduct (PPS) and local school (South Hills MS) rules – strictly enforced.
- The library/media center is a resource available to all students and staff.
- The atmosphere of the library/media center: Quiet, productive, and resourceful. To maintain an atmosphere conducive to reading and research, group discussions and socializing are not permitted in the library during regular use. The librarian will warn students who insist on ignoring this regulation. Continual violations will result in suspension from the library.
- Teachers may bring students to the library/media center for class upon arrangements made with the Librarian.
- The library/media center is open to students and staff during lunch periods to accommodate those who may benefit from it. Students must earn that privilege via the school's PBIS system.
- When applicable, study halls will be held in the library/media center.
- When applicable, students assigned to study halls may be sent to the library/media center for academic and research purposes.
- Students are financially responsible for lost, damaged, and unreturned library resources.
- Books are to be returned to the charging desk. All students must leave the library through the door near the charging desk.
- Students who wish to do research should have a library pass signed by the subject teacher.

- When leaving the library, all books and borrowed items must be scanned.
- Destruction of library property, leaving the library without permission, skipping, and continual violation of library rules will result in after school detention, reimbursement, and/or suspension as determined appropriate.
- The librarian reserves the right to establish classroom/library rules in addition to the list noted above.

LOCKERS

Your designated teacher will assign a locker for your individual use for storage of books, clothing, and personal belongings (hats and coats will not be permitted on persons during school hours). Students are also required to obtain locks to be used during swimming and gym classes. Locks are also available in the Main Office on a first come, first serve basis. The school has a limited amount of combination locks. Secure reliable locks and keep the combinations safe. The school is not responsible for stolen property. Incidents of theft or loss should be reported to the security.

Lockers are the property of the School District of Pittsburgh. The school has the right to inspect the locker and its contents. This is necessary to ensure lockers are being used in accordance with the intended purpose and to eliminate fire and other hazards, to maintain sanitary conditions, or to attempt to locate lost or stolen materials.

Locker clean-up: Periodically, pupils will be directed to clean up their lockers to be inspected by staff for cleanliness and hygiene. This typically occurs at the end of quarters and semesters.

LOCKER BLOCK

Students are prohibited from hanging out/loitering in the locker block, inclusive of the locker rows in the cafeteria (both located on the 1st floor). Non-compliance with this may be considered unauthorized presence, which may result in disciplinary action.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found is in the Main Office. Students who find lost items are asked to bring them to the Main Office. If you lost something, please come to the Main Office, so that you may retrieve it. Lost items will be kept in a secure place, until claimed by rightful owners upon verification by an administrator. Unclaimed items will be donated to charitable organizations or disposed of as per administrative discretion.

MAIN OFFICE

The Main Office is the hub of South Hills Middle School, for the Nurse's Office, Principal's Office, Restorative Behavioral Intervention (RBI) Center, Security Office, and Student Services is located there. Access to all Main Office departments requires permission from an adult and/or a valid blue PPS hall (corridor) pass, excluding emergencies and other extenuating circumstances. Entering the Main Office without a valid hall pass will be considered unauthorized presence, which may result in disciplinary action.

PHOTO/VIDEO/INTERVIEW

Throughout the school year, special programming provides the opportunity for local media, the school, and/or the school district to host or carry stories, photograph, or video school-related events. Parents/Guardians who do not want their children to participate in such functions may opt their children out. Waivers will be given to students on the first day of school and are also available on the district website.

PROMOTION CEREMONY – GRADE 8

The 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony is held annually to celebrate those who successfully completed and passed

middle-level studies. The ceremony is traditionally held in the neighboring John A. Brashear High School Auditorium. Note the following important information regarding 8th Grade Promotion:

- We want all 8th graders to enjoy their promotion ceremony. We expect all 8th graders to be in good standing, so that they may participate in it.
- Failure to attend will result in exclusive from the ceremony – exceptions: legal excuses documented with physician notes, court/legal documents, pre-administrative-approved educational journeys (vacations), and funeral functions evidenced with an obituary. The school reserves the right to facilitate make-up rehearsals, but that is at the discretion of the administration.
- Attire requirements: Please refer to the Dress Code section of this document for more information about the dress code for 8th Grade Promotion.

RESTROOM USE

Students have scheduled restroom breaks during their Communications and Mathematics classes. Teachers will escort students to the restroom at the scheduled restroom break time. Restrooms are also available during lunch periods. Students are to ask a supervising adult to use the restroom during lunch periods. In cases of emergencies, teachers will give a student a hall pass to use the restroom. Students are to adhere to the PBIS expectations for restroom behaviors while using the restroom.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Schedule changes are generally not made once the school year, semester, or quarter has begun, except in rare cases where extreme or extenuating circumstances make it necessary. While we understand the desire to be with friends or preferred teachers, we encourage students to embrace the opportunities in their assigned classes, as changes for these reasons are not permitted.

TELEPHONE USE – CALLING HOME

In the event of emergencies or other situations deemed appropriate by building administration, students may contact their parents/guardians from the Main Office student telephone during school hours. Prohibited: Casual phone calls or chronic phone calls, especially those that are disruptive to the school.

TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER RESOURCES

Textbooks, tools, supplies, and other resources are provided to students for educational purposes. Students are responsible for properly maintaining such resources. Financial obligations and/or disciplinary action may be levied against individuals who lose, misuse, and/or willfully damage school-issued educational resources (i.e., textbooks, computers, etc.).

TUTORING SERVICES

Tutoring service for students may be arranged through the classroom teacher, instructional team leaders, and/or counselors. After-school tutoring may also be offered.

VALUABLES

Please do not bring expensive clothing, jewelry, and other items to school. Neither the school, nor the Pittsburgh Public School District, may be held responsible for loss of such items. Radios, tape players, Walkman/CD players, MP3 players, pagers, cell phones, etc. are not permitted in school during school hours. Students should not display these items on their person any time. These items will be confiscated by security, administration, or a teacher and either returned to the student at the end of the school year or to the parent/guardian following a school conference.

VACATIONS/EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS

Students taking vacations during the school year must follow this procedure prior to embarking upon their journey. Parent/Guardian: Submit a written letter or email to the building principal, which discloses the following:

- Name of student(s) going on the journey;
- Dates of the journey, emphasizing dates child will not be in school and anticipated return date;
- Educational purpose of the journey (i.e., how it ties to specific subjects your child is currently studying).

Submit the completed form to the building principal a minimum of five (5) days prior to scheduled excursion.

Students are responsible for obtaining assignments three (3) days prior to departure; students are responsible for submitting completed assignments within three (3) days of returning to school. The maximum number of days that can be approved: ten (10) without permission of central office. Approved vacations/educational journeys are considered excused absences. As with all excused absences, these days may count toward the district's fifteen (15) day attendance standard. Please be advised: Submission of an educational journey request does not guarantee administrative approval. If unapproved, days missed because of given excursion will be deemed unexcused.

WORK PERMITS

Work permits may be obtained in the Main Office, online at [PPS Work Permit link](#), or at the Pittsburgh Board of Education Building, located at 341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. The school's Student Services department is available to assist students/families with work permits. Note: Work permits are non-applicable for most middle-school students.